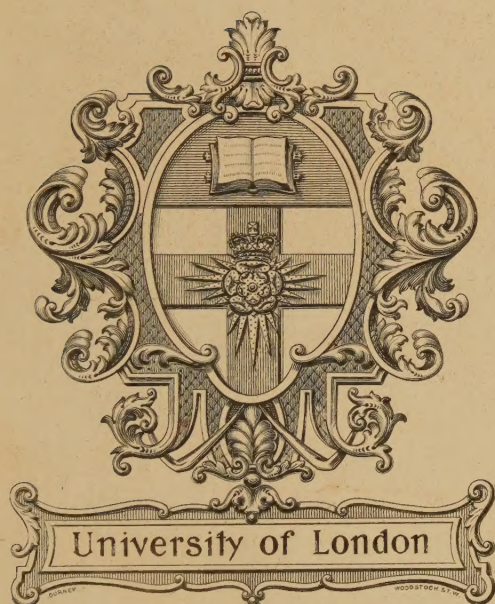


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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

47^o VICTORIÆ, 1884.

VOL. CCLXXXIX.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE ELEVENTH DAY OF JUNE, 1884,

TO

THE THIRD DAY OF JULY, 1884.

Sixth Volume of the Session.

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Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ECCLIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL [Bill 10]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(Mr. A. A. Campbell)

Amendment proposed.
To leave out from the words "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "an assessment is satisfactory which proposes to continue for the present and maintainance of ecclesiastical buildings belonging to one religious denomination, any system of compulsory general assessment,"—(Mr. Arthur Bland)—inserted thereat.
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."—After long debate, Question put.—The House divided.
Ayes 103, Noes 100; Majority 3.—(Div. List, No. 118.)
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Original Question again proposed 489

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Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

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After short debate, House in Committee (according to order); Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Thursday* next.

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EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—SUAKIN AND NILE RAILWAY—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 588

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [TENTH NIGHT]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [Progress 13th June] .. 589
After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday*.

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill [Bill 231]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(Colonel Colthurst) .. 657
It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes before Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTIONS.

—o—

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE ON WEDNESDAYS)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That on Wednesdays, if the Debate on the first Order of the Day, or any Order that has been reached by Two o'clock (not being a proceeding in Committee, nor on the Consideration of a Bill as amended, nor on the Consideration of Lords Amendments) be continued until Five o'clock, Mr. Speaker shall put the Question

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then under discussion; and, if the Previous Question, or a Motion of Adjournment, or an Amendment to the Main Question shall have been moved, they shall be severally put, and afterwards the Main Question shall be put without further Debate,"—(<i>Mr. Stevenson</i>)	658
After debate, <i>Moved</i> , "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(<i>Mr. Puleston</i>):—Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 115, Noes 92; Majority 23.—(Div. List, No. 122):—Debate adjourned till To-morrow.	
CHARGES AGAINST IRISH OFFICIALS—MR. FRENCH, &C.—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the conduct of the Government with regard to the criminal charges against James Ellis French, County Inspector Royal Irish Constabulary, Gustavus Cornwall, Secretary to the General Post Office, and George Bolton, Crown Solicitor,"—(<i>Mr. Arthur O'Connor</i>)	679
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—o—

Church Patronage Bill [Bill 17]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. E. A. Leatham*) 723

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, affirming the principle that Church Patronage is a trust to be exercised for the benefit of the parishioners, is of opinion that no reform in the Law affecting Church Patronage will be efficient or satisfactory which does not enable the parishioners to veto the presentment to a benefice of any clergyman whom they consider unsuitable,"—(*Mr. Albert Grey*),—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 141, Noes 83; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 124.)

Main Question put, and agreed to:—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. E. Stanhope*):—Question put, and agreed to:—Bill committed to a Select Committee.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Yorkshire) Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Charles Wilson*) 769

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

—o—

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878 (Districts) Bill—Ordered (<i>Mr. Hastings, Sir Edmund Lechmere, Lord Moreton, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Mr. Duckham</i>); presented, and read the first time [Bill 253]	770
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Cork Butter Market Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord FitzGerald*) .. 771
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed*.

Benefices (Tiverton Portions) Consolidation Amendment Bill

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Bishop of Exeter*) .. 777
After debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly.

Great Seal Bill (No. 83)—

Amendments *reported* (according to Order) 778
After short debate, Bill to be read 3^a *To-morrow*.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PARISHES OF ROTHWELL AND YETMINSTER—RESOLUTION—

Moved to resolve—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the recent action of the Education Department with regard to the parishes of Rothwell and Yetminster is contrary to public policy and to the intention of the Education Act of 1870,"—(*The Lord Stanley of Alderley*) 779
After short debate, on Question? *Resolved* in the *negative*.

HOUSE OF LORDS—ELECTRIC LIGHTING—Question, Lord Greville; Answer, Lord Sudeley .. 784

MOROCCO—THE SHERIF OF WAZAN—A FRENCH PROTECTORATE—Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr; Reply, Earl Granville .. 785

AFRICA (SOUTH COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA—MOTION FOR PAPERS—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Reports addressed by the Naval Commander-in-Chief on the coast of South Africa to the Lords of the Admiralty in reference to the Bay of Angra Pequena and adjacent islands and mainland,"—(*The Viscount Sidmouth*) .. 787
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

Improvement of Lands (Ecclesiastical Benefices) Bill [H.L.]—Presented (*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*); read 1^a (No. 131) .. 789

[6.45.]

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QUESTIONS.

—o—

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—CASE OF ANDREW M'CALE (Co. CAVAN)—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 790

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. ALBERT HUTTON (Co. CAVAN)—Questions, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 790

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TRIM QUARTER SESSIONS—Question, Mr. Sheil; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 791

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Representation of the People Bill [Bill 119] [ELEVENTH NIGHT]— Bill considered in Committee [<i>Progress 17th June</i>]	830
After long time spent therein, Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 249.]	
Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 206]— Bill considered in Committee [<i>Progress 9th June</i>]	886
After some time spent therein, Bill reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow, at Two of the clock.	
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill— <i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow, at Two of the clock,”—(Mr. Courtney)	932
After short debate, Motion agreed to:—Second Reading deferred till To-morrow, at Two of the clock.	
Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Amendment Bill [Bill 245]— Bill considered in Committee	934
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Settled Land Bill [Lords] [Bill 247]— Bill considered in Committee	935
After short time spent therein, Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time To-morrow, at Two of the clock.	

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Criminal Lunatics Bill—Ordered (Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt); presented, and read the first time [Bill 256]	936
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LORDS, FRIDAY, JUNE 20.

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS—EFFICIENCY OF THE HOUSE—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—	
Moved, “That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of promoting the efficiency of this House,”—(<i>The Earl of Rosebery</i>)	937
After debate, Amendment moved, to insert after (“promoting”) the words (“by life peerages or otherwise,”)—(<i>The Earl Granville</i>):—On Question? their Lordships divided; Contents 44, Not-Contents 86; Majority 42.	
Division List, Contents and Not-Contents	973
Resolved in the negative.	
On Question, “That the original Motion be agreed to?” their Lordships divided; Contents 38, Not-Contents 77; Majority 39.	
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Resolved in the negative.	
Legitimacy Declaration Act (1858) Amendment Bill [H.L.]—Presented (<i>The Earl of Onslow</i>); read 1 st (No. 134)	975
	[7.30.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, JUNE 20.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

Great Western Railway (No. 1) Bill (by Order)—	
Moved, “That the Bill be now read the third time,”—(<i>Sir Charles Forster</i>)	976
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word “now,” and at the end of the Question to add the words “upon this day three months,”—(<i>Mr. William Fowler</i> .)	
Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question:”—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, <i>withdrawn</i> .	
Main Question put, and agreed to (Queen’s Consent signified:)—Bill read the third time, and passed, with a New Title.	

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

—o—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 4) Bill [Bill 202]—	
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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill [Bill 109] <i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read a second time,” — (Mr. Trevelyan)	999
After long debate, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till <i>this day</i> .	
The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes before Seven of the clock.	
The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.	
[House counted out.]	[9.5.]

LORDS, MONDAY, JUNE 23.

EGYPT — THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE — Ministerial Statement, Earl Granville : — Short debate thereon	1043
Fisheries (Ireland) Bill (No. 77) — <i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read 2 ^a ,” — (The Marquess of Waterford)	1059
After short debate, Motion agreed to : — Bill read 2 ^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.	

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Representation of the People Bill [Bill 249] [FIRST NIGHT]—

Bill, as amended, <i>considered</i> ..	1146
After long debate, Debate <i>adjourned</i> till To-morrow, at Two of the clock.	

Royal Courts of Justice Bill [Bill 139]—

Bill <i>considered</i> in Committee [<i>Progress 9th June</i>] ..	1187
After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon <i>Monday</i> next.	

Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) (re-committed) Bill [Bill 254]

Order for Committee read:— <i>Moved</i> , "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(Mr. Hibbert) ..	1198
After short debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill <i>considered</i> in Committee.	
Bill <i>reported</i> ; as amended, to be considered To-morrow, at Two of the clock.	

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill—

Order for Committee read:— <i>Moved</i> , "That this House will, upon Thursday, resolve itself into the said Committee" ..	1199
Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "upon Thursday," in order to insert the words "To-morrow, at Two of the clock,"—(Mr. Harrington,)—instead thereof.	
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:—"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, <i>withdrawn</i> .	
Main Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Committee <i>deferred</i> till Thursday.	

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County Courts (Ireland) Bill [Bill 104]—	
Order for Committee read ..	1202
Bill <i>considered</i> in Committee; Bill, as amended, to be <i>printed</i> [Bill 258]; <i>re-committed for Thursday.</i>	
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878 (Districts) Bill—	
Order for Second Reading read ..	1202
After short debate, Bill read a second time, and <i>committed for Thursday.</i>	
Trustees of Settlements Bill [Bill 255]—	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read a second time,”—(<i>Mr. Tomlinson</i>)..	1203
After short debate, <i>Moved</i> , “That the Debate be now adjourned,”—(<i>Mr. Courtney</i> :)—Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Debate <i>adjourned till Friday.</i>	
Licensing Act (1872) Amendment Bill [Bill 248]—	
Order for Second Reading read ..	1203
After short debate, Bill read a second time, and <i>committed for To-morrow.</i> [2.45.]	

LORDS, TUESDAY, JUNE 24.

NEW PEER —James Earl of Seafield in the Peerage of Scotland, created Baron Strathspey of Strathspey in the counties of Inverness and Moray in the Peerage of the United Kingdom.	
PUBLIC HEALTH—CHOLERA —REPORTED OUTBREAK AT TOULON, FRANCE— Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Lord Carrington ..	1204
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill (No. 103)—	
Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read ..	1205
House in Committee accordingly; Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on <i>Thursday</i> next.	
Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No. 107)—	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read 3 ^a ,”—(<i>The Earl of Dalhousie</i>) ..	1208
After short debate, on Question? their Lordships <i>divided</i> ; Contents 101, Not-Contents 45; Majority 56 :— <i>Resolved</i> in the affirmative; Bill read 3 ^a accordingly.	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill do pass,”—(<i>The Earl of Dalhousie</i> :)—Amendments made; Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill <i>passed</i> , and sent to the Commons.	
Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment Bill [H.L.]— <i>Presented</i> (<i>The Lord Chancellor</i>) ; read 1 ^a (No. 152) ..	1223
	[7.30.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, JUNE 24.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

Smith's Trust Estate Bill [Lords] (<i>by Order</i>)—	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read the third time,” — (<i>Sir Charles Forster</i>) ..	1224
After short debate, Motion <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill read the third time, and <i>passed</i> , without Amendment.	

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QUESTIONS.

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POST OFFICE—LICENCES TO TELEPHONE COMPANIES—Questions, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Fawcett	1232
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PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone	1248

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 249]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Further Proceeding on Consideration, as amended 1248
 After debate, Bill to be read the third time upon *Thursday*; and to be printed. [Bill 260.]

Medical Act Amendment Bill [Lords] [Bill 207]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(Mr. Mundella) .. 1259
 After debate, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes before Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

[House counted out.] [9.5.]

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PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BUSINESS—ESTATE BILLS—NEW STANDING ORDER— RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That in the case of any Estate Bill, the Committee on the Bill shall report specially to the House if the Bill contains provisions extending either the term or the area of any Settlement of Land, and the Report of the Committee shall be printed and circulated with the Votes,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold*) .. 1279

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Ordered, That the said Resolution be a Standing Order of the House.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

—o—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 4) Bill [Bill 202]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* ... 1287

After debate, Bill to be read the third time *To-morrow*.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

—o—

EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—VOTE OF CENSURE

—Notices of Motion, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Arthur Arnold .. 1304

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Cemeteries Bill [Bill 21]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Richard*) .. 1305

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Beresford Hope*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question : "

—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 176, Noes 154; Majority 22.—(Div. List, No. 134.)

Main Question again proposed.

It being after a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*. [5.55.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, JUNE 26.

THE SUEZ CANAL—Explanation, Earl Granville .. 1333

EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—VOTE OF CENSURE

—Notice of Motion, The Earl of Carnarvon .. 1333

Secretary for Scotland Bill (No. 79)—

Moved, "That this House do now resolve itself into a Committee on the said Bill,"—(*The Earl of Dalhousie*) .. 1334

After short debate, on Question? *Resolved* in the affirmative:—House in Committee accordingly.

Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Monday* next; and Bill to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 157.) [7.45.]

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Manchester Ship Canal Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(Sir Charles Forster) .. 1372
After debate, Question put, and agreed to :—Bill read a second time, and committed.

QUESTIONS.

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EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—VOTE OF CENSURE—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone ..	1431
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LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL—Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Mr. Gladstone	1432

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill [Bill 260]—

- Moved*, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 1432
After debate, Motion agreed to, nemine contradicente:—Bill passed.

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Medical Act Amendment Bill [Lords] [Bill 207]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th June],
 "That the Bill be now read a second time :"—Question again pro-
 posed :—Debate resumed .. 1455
 After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time,
 and committed for Monday next.

Elections (Hours of Poll) (re-committed) Bill [Bill 97]—

Order for Committee read :—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave
 the Chair,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke*) .. 1463
 Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end
 of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be referred to a
 Select Committee,"—(*Mr. E. Stanhope*),—instead thereof.
 Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part
 of the Question :"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.
 Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and
agreed to :—Bill considered in Committee .. 1469
 After some time spent therein, Bill reported ; as amended, to be considered
 upon Thursday next, and to be printed." [Bill 261.]

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill—

Bill considered in Committee .. 1500
 After short time spent therein, Bill reported ; as amended, to be considered
 upon Monday next.

Criminal Lunatics Bill [Bill 256]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*) .. 1511
 After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time,
 and committed for To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

Colonial Prisoners Removal Bill [Lords] [Bill 257]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Evelyn
 Ashley*) .. 1511
 After short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and
 committed for Monday next.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [20th
 June] .. 1513
 After short debate, Debate further adjourned till Thursday next.

Personal Estate (Scotland) Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Cochran-Patrick, Mr. Sellar, Mr.
 Arthur Elliott, Mr. James Campbell, Dr. Webster, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Dalrymple*); pre-
 sented, and read the first time [Bill 262] .. 1514

Naval Discipline Act (1866) Amendment Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman,
 Sir Thomas Brassey*); presented, and read the first time [Bill 263] .. 1515
 [3.0.]

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PUBLIC HEALTH—OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA AT TOULON, FRANCE—Question,
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 servations, Earl De La Warr, Lord Norton ; Reply, Lord Carlingford :
 —Short debate thereon .. 1519

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Newcastle Chapter Bill (No. 130)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d,"—(*The Lord Bishop of Durham*) .. 1541

After short debate, Motion agreed to:—Bill read 2^d accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

[7.45.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, JUNE 27.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY—Questions, Mr. Jacob Bright; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ..	1543
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GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE COINAGE—LOSS ON COINING—Question, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer ..	1546
IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. EDWARD GREER—Questions, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan ..	1546
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MOTION.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL, THIRD READING (ENTRY IN THE VOTES)—Observations, Mr. Pell ..	1560
---	------

After debate,

Moved, "That the honourable Member for South Leicestershire having called attention to the fact that the Question, that the Representation of the People Bill be read the third time, was challenged by him, the entry in the Votes of the proceedings on the Third Reading of the Bill be corrected by omitting from the Votes the words 'Nemine Contradicente,'"—(*Sir Stafford Northcote*.)

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REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL, THIRD READING (ENTRY IN THE VOTES)—
continued.

Amendment proposed, to insert after the word "him," the words "and by another Member,"—(*Mr. Pell*:)—Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 82, Noes 125; Majority 43. .. 1574

Division List, Ayes and Noes .. 1581

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [20th June],

"That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:

—Debate *resumed* .. 1583

After debate, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood *further adjourned till this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes before Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

CROFTERS AND COTTARS (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND)—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners upon the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland demands the immediate attention of the Government, with the view to giving legislative and administrative effect to its recommendations,"—(*Mr. Macfarlane*,)—instead thereof 1604

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, [House counted out.] [12.15.]

LORDS, MONDAY, JUNE 30.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPEALS—CASE OF R. JOHNSTON *v.* MARY McATASNEY AND PATRICK MOAN—

Motion for Papers (*The Lord Castletown*) .. 1639

Motion *agreed to*:—*Ordered* to be laid before the House.

Secretary for Scotland Bill (No. 157)—

Order of the Day for Report of Amendments to be received, read .. 1640

Amendments *reported* accordingly.

Schedule, Part II., page 4, *moved* to leave out ("Educational Endowments, 45 and 46 Vict. c. 59, except Section 32,")—(*The Earl of Camperdown*) .. 1644

After short debate, on Question? their Lordships *divided*; Contents 55, Not-Contents 38; Majority 17.

Division List, Contents and Not-Contents .. 1652

Schedule, as amended, *agreed to*:—Bill to be read 3^a on *Tuesday* the 8th of *July* next.

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AFRICA (SOUTH-WEST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA—ADDRESS FOR PAPERS— <i>Moved</i> , "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of a letter addressed by a mercantile house in the Cape Colony to the Colonial Office in July 1883, with reference to Angra Pequena, with the Secretary of State's answer to that document,"—(<i>The Viscount Sidmouth</i>)	1653
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) <i>withdrawn</i> .	
EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—P.P. No. 22 (1884)—Question, Observations, The Earl of Galloway, The Duke of Marlborough; Reply, Earl Granville	1656
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	[7.0.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, JUNE 30.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

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ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—VISIT OF THE LORD LIEUTENANT TO BELFAST—Questions, Sir Thomas Bateson, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan; Question, Mr. Healy; [No reply]	1663
INDIA (MADRAS)—VIJJIARAGHAVA CHARIAR—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross	1665
THE CIVIL LIST—REVENUES OF THE EPISCOPAL SEES OF SCOTLAND—Question, Mr. Webster; Answer, Mr. Courtney	1665
SCOTLAND—THE CHAPEL ROYAL—WARRANT OF 9TH FEBRUARY, 1873—Questions, Mr. Webster, Mr. Dick-Peddie; Answers, Mr. Courtney	1666
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. MURRAY KER, J.P.—CASE OF ——— MULLIN—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan	1667
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—WICKLOW CO.—MR. WINGFIELD—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan	1669
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NEW SOUTH WALES—THE "FOREIGN SENATE"—Questions, Mr. John Redmond; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley	1670
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POOR LAW (IRELAND)—INQUIRY AT BALLYCASTLE UNION—MR. R. T. HAMILTON—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan	1672
PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—SMALL-POX—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. George Russell	1674
BURIAL GROUNDS (IRELAND)—BALLYHAUNIS, CO. MAYO—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan	1674
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DEAN FOREST AND HUNDRED OF ST. BRIAVELS BILL—RIGHTS OF THE FREE MINERS—Question, Colonel Kingscote; Answer, Mr. Courtney	1677
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THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—ATHLONE CO.—RELIGIOUS PERSUASION OF COUNTY OFFICIALS—Question, Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan	1679

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TRADE AND COMMERCE—COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN—Question, Mr. J. Stewart; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ..	1681
JAMAICA—THE NEW CONSTITUTION—THE FRANCHISE—Question, Mr. Serjeant Simon; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley ..	1681
ARMY—COST OF THE GENERAL STAFF—Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington ..	1682
ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS—CASE OF SERGEANT MAJOR WALSH—Question, Colonel O'Beirne; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter ..	1682
IRISH LAND COMMISSION—MR. EDWARD GREER, A SUB-COMMISSIONER—Questions, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan ..	1683
PUBLIC HEALTH—THE CHOLERA—Questions, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answers, Mr. George Russell ..	1684
FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE SALMON FISHERIES—EMPLOYMENT OF A GUN-BOAT—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman ..	1685
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RUMOURED CAPTURE OF BERBER—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ..	1686
PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—POLICE SUPERANNUATION BILL—Question, Major General Alexander; Answer, Mr. Gladstone ..	1687
EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE—Questions, Mr. Lewis, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, The Chancellor of the Exchequer ..	1687
EGYPT—THE NEUTRALIZATION OF THE SUEZ CANAL—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ..	1688
STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE "NISERO"—Questions, Mr. Storey; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ..	1688
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE ROYAL ACADEMY—Question, Sir Robert Peel; Answer, Mr. Gladstone ..	1689

MOTION.

EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—THE VOTE OF CENSURE—MOTION—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion on Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France),"—(<i>Mr. Gladstone</i>) ..	1689
After short debate, Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 148, Noes 190; Majority 42.	
Division List, Ayes and Noes ..	1699

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered" ..	1702
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(<i>Sir R. Assheton Cross</i>):—After short debate, Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 35, Noes 139; Majority 104.—(<i>Div. List, No. 140.</i>)	
Original Question again proposed ..	1707
After short debate, <i>Moved</i> , "That this House do now adjourn,"—(<i>Sir Eardley Wilmot</i>):—Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 32, Noes 85; Majority 53.—(<i>Div. List, No. 141.</i>)	
Original Question again proposed:—After short debate, <i>Moved</i> , "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(<i>Mr. Hicks</i>):—Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 22, Noes 83; Majority 61.—(<i>Div. List, No. 142.</i>)	
Original Question again proposed:—After short debate, Question put, and agreed to:—Bill considered:—Further Proceeding on Consideration, as amended, deferred till Thursday.	

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Police Bill [Bill 56]—	
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Mr. Hibbert</i>)	1712
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(<i>Viscount Folkestone</i>):—	
After short debate, Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 18, Noes 56; Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 143.)	
Original Question again proposed	1723
After debate, Original Question put, and agreed to:—Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday 10th July.	
Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill—	
Moved, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered,"—(<i>Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland</i>)	1733
After short debate, Question put, and agreed to:—Bill, as amended, considered:—Bill to be read the third time upon Thursday.	
Intestates Estates Bill [Lords] [Bill 168]—	
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st April]:—	
"That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate resumed	1735
Question put, and agreed to:—Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday.	
Dean Forest and Hundred of Saint Briavels Bill [Bill 184]—	
Moved, "That the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next"	1735
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "next," in order to add the words "21st July,"—(<i>Mr. Warton</i>),—instead thereof.	
Question proposed, "That the word 'next' stand part of the Question:"	
—Amendment and Motion, by leave, withdrawn:—Bill to be read a second time upon Monday 14th July.	
Merchant Shipping Bill [Bill 1]—	
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment on Second Reading [19th May]. To leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(<i>Mr. Mac Iver</i>)	1736
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"	
—Moved, "That the Adjourned Debate be postponed until Monday next,"—(<i>Mr. Courtney</i>):—After short debate, Motion agreed to:—Debate further adjourned till Monday next.	
Middlesex Registry of Deeds Bill [Bill 169]—	
Order for Committee read:—Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(<i>Mr. Courtney</i>)	1740
After short debate, Motion, by leave, withdrawn.	
Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(<i>Mr. Courtney</i>):—After further short debate, Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 126, Noes 33; Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 144.)	
Medical Act Amendment Bill [Lords] [Bill 207]—	
Order for Committee read:—Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(<i>Mr. Mundella</i>)	1747
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(<i>Colonel King-Harman</i>):—	
After debate, Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 55, Noes 87; Majority 32.—(Div. List, No. 145.)	
Original Question again proposed	1762
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(<i>Mr. Biggar</i>):—Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 45, Noes 86; Majority 41.—(Div. List, No. 146.)	

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Medical Act Amendment Bill—continued.

Original Question again proposed:—*Moved*, “That the Debate be now adjourned,”—(*Mr. Macartney*):—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 33, Noes 75; Majority 42.—(*Div. List*, No. 147.)

Original Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 78, Noes 29; Majority 49.—(*Div. List*, No. 148.)

Bill *considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883)
Amendment Bill [Bill 231]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1767

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday*.

Trustees of Settlements Bill [Bill 255]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [23rd June] 1769

After short debate, Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday*.

[House counted out.] [1.30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, JULY 1.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL—Notice of Motion, Earl Cairns .. 1770

EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—THE VOTE OF CENSURE—Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, Earl Granville:—Short debate thereon 1770

RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—PARSONSTOWN AND PORTUMNA RAILWAY—Question, The Earl of Rosse; Answer, Lord Thurlow 1780

New Parishes Acts and Church Building Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*); read 1^a (No. 171) 1780

Post Office Protection Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Thurlow*); read 1^a (No. 172) .. 1781

Educational Endowments (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*); read 1^a (No. 173) 1781
[5.15.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, JULY 1.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—KILDYSART BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Kenny; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1781

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF ——— GARDINER—Questions, Mr. Kenny; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1782

PRISONS (ENGLAND)—CHATHAM CONVICT PRISON—VISIT OF MAJOR BLAIR, R.M., TO ONE OF THE CROSSMAGLEN CONVICTS—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1783

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE POST OFFICE AT ATHLONE—Question, Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1783

WEST INDIES—THE ENGLISH CHURCH AT GRENADA—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1784

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES—MR. CORRY CONNELLAN'S PENSION—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1784

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EVICIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF BRYAN MERRIMAN—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan	1786
TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—THE GRANARD JUNCTION TRAMWAY COMPANY—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland	1788
POOR LAW (IRELAND)—EVICIONS AT GWEEDEORE—Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan	1789
FRANCE AND CHINA—MEDIATION—Questions, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice	1789
LAW AND JUSTICE—THE COUNTY PALATINE OF LANCASTER—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Attorney General	1790
FRANCE AND MADAGASCAR—HOSTILE OPERATIONS—THE VOTE OF CREDIT—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice	1790
HAMSTEAD HEATH ACT, 1871—Question, Mr. D. Grant; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg	1791
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN) — THE MAHDI—Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington	1792
EGYPT—STATE OF THE PRISONS—Questions, Mr. W. E. Forster, Mr. Healy, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Gladstone	1793
SPAIN—QUARANTINE—Questions, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Storey; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice	1796
PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. Rylands, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. H. S. Northcote, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Mr. Gladstone	1797

MOTION.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—SMALL POX EPIDEMIC—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in view of the alarming increase of Small Pox in London, this House calls upon Her Majesty's Government at once to apply to the Metropolis those rational principles of prompt and direct preventive administration, the efficacy of which in circumscribing Small Pox Epidemics has been demonstrated by the experience of Glasgow and other large towns,"—(Dr. Cameron) .. 1798

After debate, *Previous Question* proposed, "That the Original Question be now put,"—(Sir Charles W. Dilke.)

[House counted out.] [7.0.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, JULY 2.

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS—CREATION OF PEERS—Notice of Question, Mr. Labouchere .. 1819

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill [Bill 22]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(Mr. Gray) .. 1820

After short debate, Question put, and agreed to:—Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

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Compensation for Improvements (Ireland) Bill [Bill 71]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Colonel Nolan*) .. 1834

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Trevelyan* :)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* next.

High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings) Bill [Bill 121]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Whitley*) .. 1836

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months,"—(*Mr. Morgan Lloyd*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question :"

—After short debate, Question put :—The House *divided* ; Ayes 87, Noes 64 ; Majority 23.—(*Div. List, No. 149.*)

Main Question put, and *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* next.

East Indian Unclaimed Stocks Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Kynaston Cross, Mr. Courtney*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 269] ..

1855

[5.50.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, JULY 3.

EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—THE VOTE OF CENSURE—Observations, Earl Granville, The Marquess of Salisbury .. 1856

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL—Notice to amend Amendment, The Duke of Argyll ; Question, The Marquess of Salisbury ; Answer, Earl Granville .. 1857

Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment Bill (No. 152)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1857

After short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE IRISH MILITIA—Question, The Earl of Granard ; Answer, The Earl of Morley .. 1860

Naval Enlistment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Northbrook*) ; read 1^a (No. 175) 1860

Women's Suffrage Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Denman*) ; read 1^a (No. 176) .. 1860

[5.30.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, JULY 3.

PARLIAMENT—STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW, AND COURTS OF JUSTICE, AND LEGAL PROCEDURE—

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the Criminal Lunatics Bill on *Thursday* next, at Twelve of the Clock.

NOTICE.

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS—CREATION OF PEERS—Notice of Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett .. 1861

QUESTIONS.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNING BODIES (IRELAND)—PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ACTS—Question, Mr. Healy ; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland .. 1861

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THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—ROAD SESSIONS, BALLYCONNELL, CO. CAVAN —Questions, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Healy ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan	1863
POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELY DISPENSARY, CO. FERMANAGH—USE OF BUILD- ING FOR PARTY PURPOSES—Question, Mr. Healy ; Answer, Mr. Tre- velyan	1863
TRUST INVESTMENTS—COLONIAL GOVERNMENT STOCKS—Question, Sir William M'Arthur ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer	1864
QUEENSLAND—ENGLISH IMMIGRANTS—Question, Mr. Samuel Smith ; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley	1865
POST OFFICE—APPOINTMENT OF SURVEYORS' CLERKS — Questions, Mr. Healy ; Answers, Mr. Fawcett	1866
THE MAURITIUS—MR. NAPIER BROOME, ACTING GOVERNOR—Question, Mr. Whitley ; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley	1867
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LAW AND POLICE—STEAMBOAT ROBBERIES—Question, Mr. Moore ; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain	1869
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—SOUTH KENSINGTON EXHIBITIONS (EX- PENSES)—Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, Mr. Mundella	1869
EGYPT—DR. CROOKSHANK'S REPORT—Question, Mr. Bourke ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice	1869
MOROCCO—PRISONS—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice	1870
LAW AND JUSTICE—ASSIZES—PLYMOUTH AND EXETER—Questions, Mr. Stewart MacIver, Mr. H. S. Northcote ; Answers, The Attorney General	1870
EGYPT—ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD—Questions, Mr. Coleridge Kennard, Mr. T. P. O'Connor ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitz- maurice ; Question, Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy ; [No reply]	1871
ARMY—MILITARY EXAMINATIONS—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton ; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter	1872
EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer	1872
STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE "NISERO"—Questions, Mr. Storey, Mr. Brogden, Mr. Bourke ; An- swers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice	1873
EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON—Question, Mr. Ash- mead-Bartlett ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice	1875
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—Ques- tion, Mr. J. W. Barclay ; Answer, Mr. Dodson	1875
CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS—SUSPENSION OF CORRUPT BOROUGHs— Question, Baron Henry De Worms ; Answer, The Attorney General	1875
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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (IRELAND)—PARTY EMBLEMS AT ARMAGH— CATHOLIC EMBLEMS—Questions, Mr. Beresford, Mr. T. D. Sullivan ; An- swers, Mr. Trevelyan ; Question, Mr. Healy ; [No reply]	1877
INTESTATE, &c. ESTATES (IRELAND)—ESTATE OF THE LATE MRS. HELEN BLAKE—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Colonel Nolan ; Answers, Mr. Courtney	1878
LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT—THE SELECT COMMITTEE—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan	1879
EVICCTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICCTIONS AT GWEEDORE, CO. DONEGAL—Questions, Mr. Sexton ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan	1880

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CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES—MR. CORRY CONNELLAN'S PENSION—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Gladstone	1881
EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Puleston, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Gladstone	1882
PARLIAMENT—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. J. A. Campbell, Mr. T. A. Dickson, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answers, Mr. Gladstone	1884
ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER SURGEONS—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter	1885
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE—Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer	1886
SCOTLAND—CROFTERS AND COTTARS IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, Mr. Courtney	1887
EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—CRUELITIES AND ABUSES IN GAOLS—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Gladstone	1888
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE ROYAL ACADEMY—Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone	1888
MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—Questions, Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Gorst, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir William Harcourt	1889
PARLIAMENT—NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (RULE 2)—STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE "NISERO"— <i>Moved</i> , "That this House do now adjourn,"—(Mr. Storey) After debate, Motion, by leave, <i>withdrawn</i> .	1891
PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—THE NATIONALIST MEETING AT DROMORE—Personal Explanation, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan	1922

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

London Government Bill [Bill 171]—

Moved "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(Secretary Sir William Harcourt) 1924

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "while ready to consider the question of a reform in the Government of London, this House declines to assent to a proposal by which the control over the levying and expenditure of rates would be vested in one central body to the practical extinction of the local self-government of the various cities and boroughs of the Metropolis,"—(Mr. Ritchie),—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(Mr. W. M. Torrens:)—Motion agreed to:—Debate adjourned till To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

Elections (Hours of Poll) Bill [Bill 261]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1986
After short debate, Bill to be read the third time To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

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* [July 3.]

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill [Bill 231]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1997

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr.*

Healy :)—Question put:—The House *divided* ; Ayes 9, Noes 37 ; Ma-
jority 28.—(Div. List, No. 152.)

[House counted out.] [[2.30.]

L O R D S.

NEW PEER.

TUESDAY, JUNE 24.

James Earl of Seafield in the Peerage of Scotland, created Baron Strathspey of Strathspey in the counties of Inverness and Moray in the Peerage of the United Kingdom.

TOOK THE OATH.

MONDAY, JUNE 30.

The Marquess of Normanby.

SAT FIRST.

TUESDAY, JUNE 17.

The Viscount Torrington, after the death of his uncle.
The Earl of Sandwich, after the death of his father.

MONDAY, JUNE 30.

The Earl of Doncaster (Duke of Buccleuch), after the death of his father.

C O M M O N S.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11.

For *Surrey County (Mid Division)*, v. Sir Henry William Peek, baronet, Chiltern Hundreds.

FRIDAY, JUNE 20.

For *Leicester Borough*, v. Peter Alfred Taylor, esquire, Manor of Northstead, in the county of York.

For *Warwickshire County (Northern Division)*, v. William Bromley-Davenport, esquire, deceased.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

MONDAY, JUNE 16.

Lincoln City—Joseph Ruston, esquire.

Athlone Borough—Justin Huntly M'Carthy, esquire.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN—*continued*.

MONDAY, JUNE 23.

Southampton County (Southern Division)—Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Wellington John Fitz-Wygram, baronet.

Surrey (Mid Division)—Sir John Whittaker Ellis, baronet.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27.

Leicester Borough—James Allanson Picton, esquire.

THURSDAY, JULY 3.

Warwick County (Northern Division)—Philip Albert Muntz, esquire.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SIXTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 11th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Surrey County (Mid Division), *v.* Sir Henry William Peek, baronet, Chiltern Hundreds.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) [19], *debate adjourned*.

Select Committee—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.)* [55], *nominated*.

Report—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) (Saint James, Westminster, &c.)* [195]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (Unions of North Dublin, &c.)* [189]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Bandon Waterworks)* [188]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9) (Parishes of Ashen, &c.)* [191]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10) (Parishes of Charley, &c.)* [192]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Walsall and District Tramways, &c.)* [193]; Tram-

ways Provisional Orders (No. 4) (Colchester, &c.)* [196]; Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Alperton and Sudbury Water, &c.)* [182].

QUESTION.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—
REPORTED FALL OF BERBER.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Not seeing the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in his place, I beg to ask, Whether any Member of the Government can give the House any information as to whether the reported fall of Berber has been confirmed or otherwise? Possibly the Secretary to the Admiralty will be able to answer the Question.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Any news of that sort would not be likely to come to the Admiralty. I have not heard anything of it.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 19.]

(Mr. James Campbell, Sir John Hay, Mr. Dalrymple.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to amend the law regarding ecclesiastical assessments, and especially to remove a grievance in certain parishes which was felt by a class of heritors or owners of land known as feuars. The present state of the law gave rise to the grievance which was found to operate to the injury of the Church of Scotland. His right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) and his hon. Friend the Member for Bute (Mr. Dalrymple) had joined him in bringing in the Bill; but that fact did not imply that the measure was one which could only properly come from the Opposition side of the House. It so happened that his hon. Friends and he were the only Members of that House who had lately taken part in the business of the Church of Scotland as members of its General Assembly. Their names, therefore, were to be accepted not as representing a political Party, but as those of Members of the House who might be supposed to have some title to speak on behalf of the Church of Scotland in that matter. Yet it was not unfitting that that Bill should emanate from his side of the House, because the late Government introduced a Bill on the same subject in 1876, the main lines of which Bill were followed in the measure now before the House. But the object of the Bill was one which had no connection whatever with Party politics, in proof of which he might mention that the first Petition presented to the House on the subject of the measure was in its favour, and from the executive committee of a local Liberal Association in Scotland. He asked the indulgence of the House while he shortly explained the state of matters that had given rise to the necessity for legislation of this kind. The old endowments of the Church of Scot-

land consisted mainly of stipends paid out of teinds or tithes, and of a burden upon land for the erection and maintenance of church and manse, and for the provision of a glebe, in each of the original parishes. This Bill had nothing to do with ministers' stipends, or with the Law of Teinds. It had to do only with the obligation to provide and maintain churches, manses, and glebes in certain of the old parishes. The obligation to which this Bill referred applied only to the old parishes; in other words, to 924 of the parishes of Scotland. The number of churches connected with the Established Church in Scotland was 1,501; but only 924 of these were churches of old parishes, and even the whole of these would not be affected by the Bill. There were, besides, 329 new parishes which were provided for otherwise, and 248 unendowed chapels. So far as regarded the maintenance of the parish church, the burden had been imposed on the land of Scotland for upwards of three centuries. It was originally imposed by the Act of the Scottish Parliament of 1572; the obligation to provide manses and glebes was introduced at a somewhat later date. But for generations past every purchaser of land in Scotland had been aware of this burden, and had taken it into account in making his purchase. As to the manner in which this burden upon heritors was distributed, a word or two of explanation might be necessary. In the time of Cromwell, Commissioners were appointed to make a valuation of the rental of all lands of the parishes in Scotland for the purpose of levying the cess or land tax. That valuation was revised at the Restoration, and was afterwards, and was still, known as the "old valued rent." The burden of erecting and repairing churches and manses was in practice distributed amongst the heritors of the parish in proportion to their several valued rents, with this exception, that when the parish was not wholly rural, but partly rural and partly urban, or partly landward and partly burghal, as they said in Scotland, the assessment on the heritors in the country part was upon their valued rent, and on the heritors of the town part upon their real rents—the actual yearly value of their lands and heritages. By a decision of the House of Lords, however, in 1802, in what was

known as the Peterhead case, it was declared that in a mixed parish the burden should be laid on the same principle over the whole of the parish, and that it should be upon the real rent. That decision affected the class of heritors called feuars, who had acquired plots of ground not by purchasing them outright, but by taking them subject to payment of a perpetual rent or feu-duty. This class of proprietors in country parishes had almost, if not altogether, formerly escaped all liability for ecclesiastical assessments. The liability had in some cases been reserved by the heritor who had disposed of the feu, or, if not, it was so small, being only a fraction of the valued rent, that it was no burden to the feuwar. Although the decision of the House of Lords was declared in the Peterhead case in 1802, it was not generally acted upon for many years. The heritors preferred to bear the whole burden themselves rather than throw a small part of it upon the feuars. In some cases the liability to assessment for church and manse was expressly reserved by the heritor in setting off the feu. It was to be remembered that at that time the position of a heritor had a political value, which was liable to be reduced if he gave off part of his heritable burdens to others. That political value might be understood when he reminded the House of the kind of votes—which were often heard of in the discussion of the Reform Bill—called “paper votes.” And, again, the application of the law as thus declared necessitated a special valuation of the lands in a parish. Thus it was that for half-a-century, as he had said, the decision of the House of Lords in the Peterhead case made little change in the practice of heritors. But in 1854 an Act was passed for Scotland which made a great change. The Valuation Act was passed in that year, establishing a uniform annual valuation of all lands according to real rent, for the purpose of being used in public assessments. The passing of that Act drew public attention to real rental, and by the annual register of such rental gave facilities for assessment upon that principle. In consequence it had happened that since 1854, in many parishes in which outlay had been required on churches and manses, the heritors had called upon the feuars to bear their

share of the burden, the assessment being on real rents, an assessment which told comparatively hard upon the feuars. This had been felt by the feuars to be a grievance, because for a long period no such liability was recognized, and because even after the liability was declared in 1802 it was virtually left in abeyance until the passing of the Valuation Act in 1854. The resistance of feuars in some instances to the payment of those burdens had been used to excite prejudice against the Church of Scotland. The assessment being for Church purposes, the Church suffered by the feuars’ grievance, although the grievance was not of the Church’s making, and was due simply to a difficulty, or a difference of interests, between the two classes of heritors. The Church receiving injury from the existence of the grievance, it was sought by this Bill to remove it, both on account of the feuars and in the interest of the Church. As to the reality of the grievance, he invited the attention of the House to what was said on the subject in 1877 by Lord Watson, who was then Lord Advocate—

“It had been very fairly admitted on all hands that for a period of something less than two centuries—since the Union—this had been a parochial burden, and a burden upon land; and he ventured to say that, with very few exceptions, if they were to investigate the transmission of landed estates in Scotland from one proprietor to another, they would certainly find that those who held land now to the largest extent, held it on the footing that they did not pay the full value the property would otherwise yield, because of the burdens placed upon it by the law of the land. It mattered not whether this was Statute or Judge-made law, it had been an inherent part of the land laws of the country for two centuries. The payment was a burden on the land, and if they removed it they would be making a present of it to the proprietor, not merely relieving him of a tax. This being the case, he was bound to say further that so far as he was personally concerned he entirely agreed with what had been said on both sides with regard to the incidence of that burden in more recent years. He had always thought that the incidence of the burden upon feuars had been exceedingly severe, and not what was contemplated by the law, or what was thought to be right even by the majority of those who had borne the burden during the time that it had existed. They knew very well that it had not been always exacted from feuars. Heritors had acted very handsomely in that matter. He quite admitted that the legal liability of the feuars did not admit of dispute—the question was how to adjust the burden. In recent times the word “feuars” had a very different meaning from that which it bore in times past. A feuwar now

was a person who acquired a portion of a heritor's property for commercial purposes unconnected with the occupation of the land; and universally the feu-rent was greatly in excess of the agricultural value of the land at the time the impost was first made. What was admitted practically by the heritors to be a grievance was that when a man had built business premises or a house, such premises were subject to that old assessment, and paid in many cases more than the land itself. It was also well known that throughout the time the impost had existed it had not been exacted except in rare cases on such property; and it was an undoubted fact, which had been referred to again and again in these debates, that the passing of the Valuation Act of 1854, which gave the value of every one of these properties on the Register, had led to the exaction of the tax from that class of feuars. He believed that but for the passing of that Act, which was a most valuable and useful measure, they never would have heard of this grievance at all."—(3 *Hansard*, [235] 1155-6-7.)

And what had this grievance led to? There had been in Scotland from time to time cases which had caused popular sensation of a local kind, arising from resistance on the part of the feuars to pay this assessment; and in saying that he was quite willing to admit that the grievance was a serious one to the feuars. He would give an illustration. In the parish of Old Meldrum, in Aberdeenshire, the repairs of the manse had been neglected for some time, and there was an old sum of arrears due, so that when an assessment had to be levied on account of the manse, the total reached the sum of £1,700. One hundred and fifty-six feuars were called upon to contribute their proportion of the assessment, varying from £40 to 2s. 6d. each, the total sum due by them amounting to £435. Fourteen of the 156 feuars refused to pay, and insisted upon having their effects sold to meet the call. That occasioned a local scandal. Although it was regarded very much as of the nature of a joke, the whole case was not favourable either to the Church or to the parish. The evil effects did not end with the parish in which such scenes occurred, because the dread of similar difficulties prevented church repairs being attended to in other parishes. The question was, what was the remedy? The remedy was not the abolition of these burdens upon the land, and the substitution of a voluntary assessment, as was proposed several times in the former Parliament. This was not a parallel case to the Church rates in England. These were rates that might or might not be im-

posed, according as the majority of the ratepayers of a parish might decide. This burden in Scotland was a distinct and special burden on the land of the parish. The Church might be said to have a property in it. The churches, manses, and glebes in Scotland were the property of the heritors—not their property to do with as they pleased, but their property in this sense, that they were vested in them for Church uses, and the churches and manses were under their control. If the heritors were to be relieved of the burden of maintaining those properties, they would require to hand them over entirely to the Church. This had not been proposed, and heritors had shown no desire to be relieved of the burden. The proper remedy was to remove the feuars' grievance, without, if possible, altering the position and responsibilities of the other heritors. The last attempt in this direction was made in 1876, when a Bill was introduced by the late Government. The main principle of that Bill was to exempt feuars from their liability to assessment in respect of their buildings, leaving them liable on account of their land only; but that provision, standing alone, threw a greater burden on the other heritors, who, therefore, found a grievance on their part in having a heavier liability laid upon them than the law had hitherto imposed. It was believed that it was mainly on account of that difficulty that the Bill of 1876 was withdrawn. The present Bill avoided that difficulty by making it incumbent upon those who promoted the assessment—that was, the friends of the Church in the parish—to provide, by subscription or otherwise, the sums which feuars were to be excused from paying. The Bill left untouched the liabilities about which there never had been any doubt, and it exempted the feuars from a burden about which there had been a doubt; and in exempting them from that portion of their present liability, it laid a burden on those in whose interest the assessment was made—namely, the friends of the Church in the parish. These were sufferers at present from the existing state of things, and might be presumed to be willing to make some sacrifice in order to have a better state of things introduced. There were minor provisions in the Bill regarding which he need not detain the House. There

was the exemption of those whose yearly rental was under £4. They were exempted altogether. That provision had been complained of by some critics of the Bill; but the fact was that such very small assessments were scarcely worth the cost of collection. In practice these very small heritors were not called upon to pay, and there would be a convenience in having them distinctly excluded. Again, it had been objected to the Bill that it proposed to exempt from assessment the churches and mansees of other denominations in the parish. That provision was in the Bill of 1876, and there was no objection made to it then. It seemed to be rather a generous thing to do, and yet it was objected to at present. He believed there were assessments from which churches and other institutions were exempted now, and it seemed to be not an unfitting thing that in this particular assessment this exemption should be made. Of course, it would not be difficult to withdraw the exemption if the ministers and members of other denominations positively insisted upon it. But on what grounds was this Bill as a whole opposed? An objection had been brought against it that it did not include burghs. The law as to burghs might call for improvement, but that was altogether a different subject. The Bill applied to the kind of parish in which the feuars' grievance had been mainly, if not exclusively, felt; and it had been recognized before that this was a subject large enough to be dealt with in a separate measure. But the Bill was opposed, also, because it was said that no measure would be satisfactory which proposed to continue for the provision and maintenance of ecclesiastical buildings belonging to one denomination any system of compulsory general assessment. One would suppose that this Bill proposed to re-enact something which was falling out of use or had fallen out of use. The Bill did not propose to do more than amend the incidence of an assessment already in use. The Bill did not deal with what might properly be called a general assessment at all. It dealt with a parochial assessment on heritors whose property was specially burdened with this particular liability. But another objection was that it was inexpedient to deal with this subject except in connection with a

measure for Disestablishment. The advocates of Disestablishment had been accustomed to dwell with great pathos on this liability of feuars for ecclesiastical assessments. One would imagine that a measure to remove the grievance would have commanded their support; but they were not to touch it until they set about disestablishing the Church. That would seem to mean that those who were assailing the Church considered that they had a vested interest in any fault or blemish which affected her, and that no evil was to be touched if the removal of that evil would benefit the Church. How should the remedying of these grievances stand in the way of any agitation for Disestablishment, if such an agitation was ever to commend itself on its own merits to general favour? That question would surely be argued by those who were in favour of it on broader grounds than on the merits of a Bill of this sort. If the advocates of Disestablishment had confidence in their own cause, they ought to be ready and willing to remove a specific evil, which could be remedied without trenching on the general question of the connection between Church and State. These two objections were singularly out of proportion with the scope and nature of this Bill. The Bill aimed at removing a practical grievance; but it did not, in doing so, lay any new burden on anyone who might be expected to raise his voice through the amendments to which he referred. Those who might be expected with most reason to demur to the Bill were the members of the Church of Scotland, who in the parishes affected by it would have to make up what the feuars were excused. It was true they had to set against this new burden the great advantage of being relieved from the injurious effects of the feuars' grievance. In some parishes, he admitted, the proportion to be raised by subscription would be considerable; but with the feeling which existed as to the unfairness of the incidence of the assessment, the law must, without some remedy of this kind, be largely inoperative at present in such parishes. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had shown that it approved of the Bill. It had pronounced in its favour almost unanimously, only the mover and seconder voting for an amendment, and that amendment being one rather for

delay than one against the Bill. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. J. A. Campbell.*)

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT, in rising to move, as an Amendment—

"That no measure is satisfactory which proposes to continue, for the provision and maintenance of ecclesiastical buildings belonging to one religious denomination, any system of compulsory assessment,"

said, that in the remarks with which the hon. Member opposite had introduced his Bill, he told them frankly that he, and those who agreed with him, as members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, were actuated mainly, if not solely, by a regard for the interests of that Church. He disclaimed altogether that way of looking at the question. They were there to look at the matter from a public point of view, and not as members of one denomination or another; and it was because he had looked at the matter in that light that he regarded the measure just brought before the House as a thoroughly bad measure in principle and utterly unworkable in practice. The hon. Member treated this question as if it were to some extent new as regarded dealing with ecclesiastical assessments. The hon. Member rather complained of his Amendment on the ground that it was too large for his Bill—that his Bill was a partial Bill, dealing with an assessment which he did not consider a general assessment. The subject now brought before the House was an old subject, which had been brought before the House again and again; and in dealing with it on previous occasions the House had come to this conclusion, which he begged the House not to recede from—namely, that these ecclesiastical assessments for the purpose of maintaining the fabric of one religious denomination were unsound in principle. In 1871 Mr. Duncan M'Laren brought forward a Bill for the entire abolition of these compulsory ecclesiastical assessments in Scotland, and the second reading was carried by a considerable majority. They were told that the question was altogether different from and unlike the matter of Church rates in England. He asked why? What was the case in England? Church

rates in England were levied upon the occupiers of the parish and upon persons of different creeds for the maintenance of the Church. In Scotland the practice had been to raise this assessment, not upon occupiers, but upon proprietors; and the distinction between the two cases he fully admitted. But it was raised irrespective of the religious persuasion of those who paid the tax or burden. He must say he felt a little inclined to complain of the hon. Member for having prefixed to this Bill a memorandum explanatory of the objects of the Bill and the views of the law held by the hon. Member himself. He complained of that, because he considered the memorandum did not give a correct view of the law as it now stood. The fact was, after the valuation in the time of Cromwell, which was confirmed at the time of the Restoration, that cess became the only means of estimating the value of the property in the parish, and it was no doubt the usual rule to apply that cess to find out the value of the property, and to assess upon it. Long ago it had been recognized that the class of feuars was assessable; and, as far as he could make out, the law seemed to have been that persons now proposed to be exempted were liable. In the case of Crieff, in 1771, where the parish was burghal-landward, the Court of Session ruled that the assessment for the cost of a new church should be imposed on the heritors according to the valued rent, "and on the inhabitants of the urban district," according to the "real rent" of their respective properties. This double rule of assessment was again applied by the Court of Session in the subsequent case of Peterhead, where the parish was also burghal-landward. On appeal, the House of Lords reversed this, holding that one uniform rule of assessment was to be applied to both districts, and that in burghal-landward parishes assessment should be on real rent. He held that the two cases did not show that those persons were previously not assessable on the real rent. On the contrary, where there was a large village full of feuars the parish was divided, and those persons were in law liable to contribute to the Church on the real rent. That, he submitted, was the view of the law on the subject. Again, the Valuation Act of 1854 did not propose to alter in any way the incidence of

taxation. It did provide a convenient rule corresponding to the facts of the case. It did provide the means of ascertaining what was the real and actual value of the property for the time being in each county in Scotland. It provided that, as a general rule, the assessments should be taken upon it; but it did not provide that, as a matter of law, lands which were not assessable on real rents before should be assessable on real rents afterwards. It had been maintained that it was not a usual but a rather rare thing to assess on the real rent; but a Return obtained by Lord Balfour entirely contradicted any such belief. This Return extended over 10 years, and gave the amounts levied in each parish for the maintenance of churches and manse for 10 years up to 1879. The total amount raised was about £400,000. Of that £242,000 was levied on valued rent, and about £156,000 on real rent, so that the sum levied on real rent bore a considerable proportion to the whole sum raised. The Bill, instead of applying to only a few parishes, applied to 900 parishes of the recognized real parishes of the Church of Scotland.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL: That includes parishes wholly in burghs which are not affected.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, it was perfectly true that the Bill did not apply to purely burghal parishes, but he had reason to believe the number of these was extremely small. According to the Return, the sum raised in 10 years in the parish of Heriot, Presbytery of Dalkeith, was £1,864. That was raised on real rent, and the number of heritors was seven. In Lasswade, £990 was raised in 10 years on the valued rent, the number of heritors being 21; and the following note appended to these figures showed how the money was spent:—

“The years 1877-8-9 were exceptional, the roof of the church having been renewed, and a large addition having been made to the manse. In ordinary years the average was about £24.”

In the parish of Kiltearn, in the Presbytery of Dingwall, the amount raised on real rent was £145, the number of heritors being 11. In the Presbytery of Dornoch there were a number of parishes in which considerable sums were raised on valued rent in these 10 years. He found that, practically, in

these parishes there were no persons for whom it would be worth while to maintain either parish church or manse. In the parish of Lochalsh, where there was but one heritor, £939 was raised, the amount being paid by that one individual. The population of that parish numbered 2,319 persons; but they included only six male and three female communicants and about 30 adherents. He did not mean to say that these Highland parishes were fair samples of the parishes throughout Scotland; but this Bill applied to those parishes, and this was the strongest case against such a Bill applying to the whole of Scotland. In the South of Scotland, in more populous parts, no doubt the Church was much better supported by the bulk of the people; but in these parishes he had no doubt that the means would be amply sufficient to maintain the church and the manse by voluntary subscriptions. With regard to the remedy proposed by the Bill, there were some difficulties, to his mind, as to what was meant by some of the clauses of the Bill. Clause 3 provided that—

“In regard to landward parishes—where it was legal to impose assessment according to valued rent—that it be so resolved by two-thirds in value of the heritors liable to contribute according to such valued rent present and voting at a meeting of such heritors,” &c.

In some parishes it would be found that one heritor represented two-thirds of the value, and in a considerable number of cases in all probability three or four heritors would nearly represent two-thirds of the value. As he read the 3rd section, unless two-thirds of the heritors assented, the valued rent was not to be taken, and in such a case what would happen? Was the whole rent to be taken, exclusive of buildings, as provided by Clause 4? If valued rent was not taken, then the provisions of the Bill were, to his mind, positively extraordinary. What was proposed to be done by Clause 4 in landward parishes, where real rent had practically been the rule of assessment? It was proposed, as he understood it, that land should be valued for the purpose of assessment in a way which was entirely new in Scotland. It was not merely feuars to whom this Bill applied; but what did it propose to do? It proposed to introduce a new column in re-

gard to the Valuation Roll of Scotland, in which should be entered the value of the land after deducting the value of the buildings upon it. That was done in a very simple manner by defining the word "buildings." This was the definition, and he should like hon. Gentlemen interested in agricultural matters to take notice of it—

"Buildings shall include all houses, works, erections, and constructions of whatever kind, except houses, works, erections, and constructions connected with the occupation of land as an agricultural or pastoral subject."

If farm buildings had been put up, if a farm at the end of a lease had been largely added to, and in consequence appeared on the Roll as of high value, these buildings were to be taken as swelling the value of the land; but if factories were erected, if some wealthy manufacturer built extensive works, which increased the value of the land considerably, that increased value was to be deducted from the value upon which the assessment was to be obtained. He could not conceive anything more contrary to the whole principle of the Valuation Act of 1854. That Act proposed to fix a value from year to year on lands or heritages which were defined by the Act to include houses, railways, factories, works, and so on; and that was the basis on which the assessment, if it was required at all, ought to be taken. Why, in the name of common-sense, in the provision in favour of railways, were the buildings belonging to the Railway Companies to be excluded before the value of the land belonging to them was assessed? It was an absurdity to say that, before rating the North British, or any other Railway Company, they should first deduct the value of the refreshment rooms, station-masters' houses, and other buildings. He did not understand the object of the provision, or how anyone could support it. He could understand the question being discussed as to whether or not the voluntary principle, or as to whether or not the rating principle, was right; but he could not quite follow the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, who said that they should maintain an assessment, and that it should not be general—that they were to exempt persons on no intelligible principle whatever—not only small feuars, but other persons who were perfectly well able to bear this burden. If the Church was

to be supported as a public building by the parish, let it be supported, as were the parish schools, by an assessment upon everybody. If not, let them give up the compulsory assessment altogether, as had been done in England, and let the Church rely upon voluntary support, which was amply sufficient to do its own repairs. He had noticed in previous discussions on this subject a very important matter referred to by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson). The objection was on former occasions brought forward that by such a Bill as this, they were proposing to get rid of the compulsory assessment on land, and giving to the landed proprietors what they had no right to receive. In supporting his Amendment, which he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow would do, he would ask him not to commit himself to any such way of dealing with assessments. That might affect the question of the Bill brought forward by Mr. Duncan M'Laren; but his Amendment did not pledge anyone as to what was to be done with these assessments after they had ceased to be compulsory. The natural and proper thing was that these uncertain burdens should be commuted. The hon. Baronet the Member for North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke) on previous occasions had suggested what seemed a very proper thing to do—namely, that these uncertain burdens should be commuted, and having been commuted, then "there they are." He did not know that the hon. Baronet went further than to say "there they are;" but then the question would arise whether those belonged to the landlord, or were amounts that might be dealt with in some way useful to the parish. Some of the remarks that had fallen from the hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill he agreed with; but he utterly condemned the tactics of those who resisted reforming the Church on the ground that they could not get absolute and immediate Disestablishment. His Amendment was, no doubt, a declaration in favour of certain charges hitherto borne by the State being voluntarily supported, and no doubt it was to that extent a concession in the direction of Voluntaryism. It might be said to be a measure of partial Disendowment. No doubt it was; but he thought it was almost an insult to the Church of Scotland, considering the great sums

which were raised year by year, to suppose that it was not able, out of its own funds, to repair its church roofs, and keep its manse in order. The inevitable tendency in Scotland was in favour of the Voluntary principle, and this tendency was not peculiar to Scotland. The same thing was seen in England. In old days money was frequently given by Parliament, or provided out of public funds, for building churches. Why, St. Paul's Cathedral itself was said to have been built, after the Fire of London, out of money raised by a tax on coals. In the year 1818 the sum of £1,000,000 was raised by Parliament; and seven years later another £1,000,000 was raised, to extend the Church accommodation in England. But the days of Church Building Acts had long since passed away; and yet never had there been a time when Church extension had gone on at a greater rate than in recent times. There were 329 *quoad sacra* parishes in which the Church buildings were provided otherwise than out of public funds, and also the stipends of the ministers. That was the direction in which the Church of Scotland ought to look for its real strength. This question of Voluntaryism *versus* State was assuming every day, as far as endowments went, a position of less importance. Every day it was the practice of State Churches to rely more and more on voluntary aid. Look at the Free Church of Scotland. That Church raised something like £600,000 a-year; the United Presbyterian Church, £400,000 a-year; and in a paper which had been addressed to them, not very courteously, as "Disestablishment Agitators," it was declared that the Established Church raised about £500,000 per annum, including in that the interest upon previous sums voluntarily contributed. That made £1,500,000 per annum contributed to the support of Presbyterians in Scotland. What was the state of matters on the other side? The whole amount of State support given to the Established Church of Scotland he did not think amounted to £400,000. Therefore, only a fraction, and, in proportion, a smaller fraction every day, came from the State. He thought that enabled them to look very hopefully to the future of this question. They saw before them the ultimate matter in which these State questions would be settled. They had

to look at the matter as representing their constituencies, and in the interest of the country, not on behalf of one ecclesiastical organization as compared with another. It was the duty of Parliament to judge each question as it came up on its own merits. It was almost repulsive to his feelings that people should be actuated with so much hostility to the Church of Scotland as not to be able to regard such a question on its merits—that they would refuse all reforms to the Established Church while it existed, and would seek by keeping up "a raw" to make it unpopular and weak. He felt that very strongly; and whatever might be the view of a few individual members of the different Churches, he believed his own feelings were shared by the great body of the Presbyterians of Scotland. He had found these sentiments actuating many persons and many different persuasions, and they did not feel that by taking up such a line as he had described they were at all less true than others were to the Voluntary principle. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. R. P. BRUCE, in seconding the Amendment, said, he did not think it would be necessary for him to attempt, nor should he be competent to discuss, as had been so ably done by his hon. Friend, the present laws, and the precise effect this Bill would have; and he should content himself with saying that he considered the present system of ecclesiastical assessments as vexatious and unjust, and that the Bill now before the House would not deprive the system of these characteristics. The system proposed by the Bill would still be a vexatious and unjust one. The machinery by which it would be carried out would be still more troublesome, complicated, and unfair. What he would like to remark upon especially was the admission which this Bill seemed to contain. It seemed to contain the admission of the injustice of these compulsory assessments. He was aware that the Mover of the Bill had attempted to draw a very fine and ingenious distinction between the burden as it fell on the landowners and the burden as it fell on the feuars. There might be a distinction between the two cases. It might be, as the hon. Member seemed very anxious to prove, that it

would be improper to relieve the land-owners of this burden, although it was, perhaps, rather surprising, as coming from the Conservative side of the House, that any proposal to reduce any of the burdens on land should be treated as a monstrous proposal. But whether that was so or not—whether the landowner ought to be relieved or not—he should say that the proceeds of this burden belonged to the State as a whole, and not to one particular Church; and, therefore, if the burden was to be maintained, or if it was to be commuted, the proceeds arising from it ought to go to some national purpose. It seemed to him that the object of this Bill had not really been to draw this fine distinction, and to relieve one class of those who bore the burden. It seemed to him that what the authors of the Bill had really had in their minds was this. “We know,” they seemed to say, “that this burden is regarded as intolerable in Scotland by the large majority of the ratepayers; therefore, we will try to exempt those who are most likely to cry out and resent it. We will relieve the buildings belonging to the various Voluntary Churches; we will exempt altogether the smaller feuars; and we will trust to the larger heritors patiently enduring and paying the tax, although they may consider that it is an unjust one.” There was another point of interest, and a much more satisfactory point, in his view. This measure was in itself a measure of partial Disendowment to the extent to which the Church was to lose by the exemption of some of those who were liable to these rates, to the extent it was proposed that the Established Church should in future rely upon the voluntary contributions of its own members and adherents. That was a very satisfactory part of the Bill. It showed that the Established Church saw in what direction it must look for its maintenance. He very cordially concurred in what his hon. Friend (Mr. Elliot) had said on that subject; but he thought his hon. Friend had rather over-stated the amount contributed in one way or another by the State towards the support of the Established Church. In his belief, it did not greatly exceed £300,000 a-year; and if, as they were told, the Established Church last year raised nearly £600,000, it was clear that already the Church was to the

extent of two-thirds of its revenue a Voluntary Church. He was sure there were very few in Scotland—he hoped none—who wished to see the Church of Scotland impoverished or injured as a Church; but he thought there were many, and many members of the Church itself, who were thoroughly convinced that the claim put forward by the Voluntary Church—that of complete religious equality—was a just claim, and one which must be granted. Therefore, they would gladly see the Established Church in a position to maintain itself without having to rely upon State funds. Before sitting down, he would like to say one word in reference to the other Amendment which appeared upon the Paper. His hon. Friend the Member for Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie) held that this subject could only be dealt with in connection with a measure of Disestablishment and Disendowment. He agreed with the hon. Member that this matter could not be finally or completely disposed of except by a measure of that kind. But he thought the hon. Member’s Amendment might be so read as to mean that they would refuse to consider any measure dealing with a portion of the subject, however satisfactorily that portion might be dealt with. He did not say that was the attitude taken by his hon. Friend. For himself, he should not like to take up that position. If this measure had dealt thoroughly and satisfactorily with the question of ecclesiastical assessments, it would have deserved a favourable reception by the House. It was because the Amendment before the House left it open to them to entertain a measure of that kind, and did not in any way shut the door against dealing with that portion of the subject when it was out of their power to deal with the whole, that he considered the terms of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliott) most satisfactory, and he trusted it would be adopted by the House.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word “That” to the end of the Question, in order to add the words “no measure is satisfactory which proposes to continue, for the provision and maintenance of ecclesiastical buildings belonging to one religious denomination, any system of compulsory general assessment,”—(Mr. Arthur Elliot,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR JOHN HAY said, that as his name appeared on the back of the Bill he should like to say a few words with reference to some of the remarks of the hon. Member who had moved its rejection. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of Glasgow (Mr. J. A. Campbell) had entered so fully into the necessity for this measure that he should not venture to detain the House at any length, especially as he was no legal authority upon the legal points, which it appeared to him would be more properly dealt with in Committee, and should not prevent the Bill receiving a second reading. The Bill was desired by the whole Church of Scotland, and in saying that he spoke of a Church which included in its members the largest number of persons of any denomination in Scotland. Therefore, although it might be true there were some persons who objected, he believed that the majority of the people were in favour of maintaining the National Church, and, that being so, they were in favour of this measure, which was to alleviate and do away with the hardship which afflicted and injured the poor members of the Church as well as other persons who had acquired property. It had been suggested that the members of the National Church should themselves devote their means, as they did very largely, for the maintenance of the fabrics of the manse and churches and the ordinances of religion. But it must be remembered that neither the manse nor the churches were the property of the Church of Scotland. They were the property of the nation. The Church of Scotland had no claim to the churches and manse, which were in trust to the heritors for the use of the National Church. That was the condition of these buildings without a doubt; and it would be absurd to suppose that with, perhaps, threats of Disestablishment looming in the distance, the members of the Church of Scotland should be called upon to maintain these fabrics alone when there was no security that they would continue their property. He therefore thought, on that ground, that Parliament, urging upon the National Church of Scotland, upon the majority of the Scot-

tish nation, to undertake the duty of providing from their own personal property for the maintenance of the fabrics of which they might be deprived, was doing what it ought not to do. The fact of the various denominations in Scotland desiring to acquire or to share the revenues of the Church of Scotland was perhaps very natural on their part; but he had not yet heard that either the Free Church or the United Presbyterian Church claimed for themselves a proportion of the endowments of the Church of Scotland. All they desired was that the endowments of the National Church, appropriated years ago for the maintenance of the Christian religion and for the benefit of the poor who were not competent to provide of their means for religious services, ought to be maintained for that purpose. This Bill was meant to relieve the poor, who were unduly and improperly assessed, as they contended, of a burden which had been unjustly imposed upon them. There was no contention, as he understood, that there was any justice in maintaining the burden on this class. All he understood the opponents of the measure to say was that if this grievance was done away with, other grievances would be left which ought also to be done away with. There were two means by which they might arrive at that conclusion. They could introduce measures for the purpose of removing other of the grievances which were too heavy, in their opinion, to be borne; or, in Committee on this Bill, they could extend its provisions to other persons who they might think ought to be included in the relief which was sought to be obtained. He himself, having the strongest belief in the necessity in a Christian country of the maintenance and security by the State of Christian ordinances in some form or other for the poorer classes of the community, should do all he could to preserve the Established Church in whatever section of the Kingdom it might be maintained. He confessed that in the Sister Country he did not see that the destruction of the Establishment had resulted either in good government or in the maintenance of religious ordinances in the way in which they should desire them to be maintained; and, he said, God forbid that Scotland should ever be reduced to the position of Ireland in consequence of the destruc-

tion of the National Church. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen might laugh; but that was his opinion, and he had a right to express it. He looked upon the misappropriation of money given for sacred purposes to secular uses as one which had been condemned by the circumstances which had arisen in Ireland since that robbery took place; and he, for his part, would do all he could to strengthen and sustain the Established Church of Scotland by supporting a measure of this or any other character which would do away with small injustices that injured and, perhaps, prevented the full value of the Church. As to the legal question of the applicability of this measure of the law of Scotland, he was not in a position to speak; but he had this to say, that in the part of Scotland from which he came, and in the burghs he had the honour to represent, there was none of that desire for Disestablishment which was said to exist in some parts of Scotland. The hon. Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. Elliot) had referred to a parish church in the North of Scotland in which there were only six communicants and 20 adherents. But it seemed to him that if 2,460 persons there required to be provided with religious ordinances, that showed that there was an absolute necessity for continuing to provide religious ordinances in the locality. If it was to be said that the heritor was to be bound only to give voluntary subscriptions to the church in which he worshipped, he suspected that the parish churches and the manse in that part of Scotland would suffer considerably. He had no doubt that voluntary contributions would be given of his affluence by the noble person who had been referred to in a manner that might be most advantageous to the public; but he accepted the argument of the hon. Member for Roxburghshire, who seemed to suggest that it was only the parish church in which a heritor worshipped towards the support of which he would be invited to subscribe. The Bill which they were now considering was one of considerable importance. It was one which had his cordial support, and he trusted the House would give it a second reading.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE, who had a Notice on the Paper in the following terms:—

Sir John Hay

"That it is inexpedient to deal with Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland, except in connection with a measure for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of Scotland,"

said, his hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliot), in the beginning of his speech, referred to the motives which had induced the Mover of this Bill to bring it in, and he stated that while the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow (Mr. J. A. Campbell) had admitted that he was chiefly actuated by a desire to get quit of a grievance which was found to do injury to the Church of Scotland; he also admitted that that was not the only end he had in view. He accepted the statement of the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow that he also wished to relieve the feuars of the burden lying on them. But he wished to point out that in a statement with regard to this Bill, which he believed had been sent to all the Scotch Members in the House excepting himself, and which had been issued on behalf of the Church of Scotland, the only ground on which the Bill was defended was that it would effect the removal of a grievance which had been an injury to the Church. Now, had the principal motive been to do justice and to remove a grievance because it was a grievance, he would have had much more respect for the Bill than he had at present. He was not one of those to whom his hon. Friend referred who desired to oppose every effort to improve the Established Church in order that they might be able the more effectually to attack it. He entirely repudiated any such motive, and he knew no one who took part in the Disestablishment agitation who was actuated by a motive so unworthy. But this was a Bill for another purpose—namely, for perpetuating a Church which was not the Church of the people. What had led to the bringing in of this Bill? Since Mr. McLaren, late Member for Edinburgh, tried to pass a Bill for the abolition of Church and Manse Rates in Scotland, the process of collecting and enforcing Church-rates had gone on in Scotland with increasing frequency and severity, and the annual amount raised—which had not been referred to in this House—as shown by a Parliamentary Return issued in 1879, had in the previous 10 years been on the average £42,000 per annum. The hon. Member for the University of

Glasgow had referred to one case about which greater complaint had been made in Scotland than in regard to any other case—namely, the case of Old Meldrum, and he had spoken of that as being a joke. He did not exactly understand whether the hon. Gentleman meant seriously to say that the grievance of the feuars in that case was a joke. The only joke which he knew connected with the case was that the last thing that was taken in payment of the Church rates was the hearse of the village, and he supposed that the joke lay in this, that the Dissenters who refused to pay the rates were prevented from being buried in a decent manner. The real object of this Bill was to strengthen the Church, and to perpetuate these assessments by removing the more glaring injustices connected with them. The hon. Member for the University of Glasgow said that the advocates of Disestablishment in Scotland had always spoken of those grievances with great pathos, and he said he could not understand why they should adopt this mode of opposition to his Bill. They objected to it for very plain and, he thought, sufficient reasons. The principal of these had been stated by his hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliot) in his very able speech; but his hon. Friend had not mentioned one which, he thought, showed more than any other the bad character of this Bill, and that regarded the nature of the exemptions proposed. The chief exemptions proposed were of persons who were assessed under £4 a-year, and of the ecclesiastical buildings of Churches other than the Established Church. Now, there was no principle which he thought could justify the exemption of either of those classes of persons or property. Assuming, as the promoters of this Bill must do, that the church and manse assessments were just in themselves, there was no reason why any class of persons, or any description of property, should be exempted, except on the ground of inability to pay. To relieve Voluntary Churches was simply to present them with a species of bribe in the form of partial endowment which it was not consistent with the principles of these Churches to accept. Why were feuars assessed under £4 to be exempted? The majority of them were not members of the Church of Scotland at all; if they

had been, he believed this measure would never have been introduced. Another objection was the mode in which it was proposed to make up for the deficit caused by the exemptions. The Bill proposed to provide for that being done by what it called private contributions; but if they examined the Bill, they would find that the mode of raising these contributions was a curious one. The kirk-session was to set apart a certain number of the sittings of the church, proportionate to the amount of the assessment of the persons exempted, and they were to be entitled to let those seats to the persons so exempted for a rent equal to or forming any portion of the amount in respect of which they were exempted. What was the result of that? It was simply this, that the persons who now paid those rates—persons who had as citizens and as heritors a right to sit in the church—were to be debarred from that right unless they consented to pay for exemption from the assessment an equivalent in the form of seat rent. This, he considered, was inconsistent with the theory of an Established Church. There were many persons who paid stipend as well as Church rates. Suppose a man was paying stipend to the parish minister, and also this church assessment, but was, by the operation of this Act, exempted from the rate, and suppose he, being asked to pay for his seat-rent, declined to do so, the result would be that he, while assessed for the minister's stipend, would have no legal right to sit in the church and hear the minister. In a debate on this subject some years ago the hon. and gallant Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander) had stated that one of the glories of the Church of Scotland was that it provided the Gospel to all the poor of Scotland without money and without price; but under this Bill heritors paying stipend would have no legal right to go and hear the minister whose stipend they paid. The parishioners, as such, would have no right to sit in the church of the parish, and the parish church would cease to be a national institution as far as they were concerned. His hon. Friend the Member for Fife (Mr. Preston Bruce) had expressed some fear that his Amendment indicated that he was determined that no legislation should take place in the way of removing grievances in connection with the Church

Establishment in Scotland, except as part of a measure for Disestablishment. But he was quite willing to accept his hon. Friend's own statement that no legislation should be allowed in regard to any of these burdens that was not of a satisfactory nature; and what he contended was that the mode of dealing with these assessments now proposed was not satisfactory. He was not one of those who refused any instalment of justice unless they received the whole of it. His objection to legislating in regard to the assessments by themselves, even in a more sweeping form than was proposed in this Bill, was this, that the advocates of Church Establishment in the debates on Mr. McLaren's Bill maintained that these assessments were not a personal charge against the persons who paid them, but were a burden upon the land, and were, therefore, public property for a particular purpose. In that respect they were in the same position as teinds; and what he feared was, that if they dealt with this question in regard to ecclesiastical assessments, apart from the teinds, difficulties would be occasioned when they came to deal with the larger question of the teinds at a later date. They ought, he considered, to be dealt with in the same measure. But his objection to this legislation generally was that there was no consideration which demanded dealing with those assessments which did not apply to everything connected with the support of the Established Church. That being so, he thought there was great risk that in dealing with one injustice connected with the system alone, other injustices might be confirmed. On that account, and because all such legislation as that proposed in this Bill seemed to him to be giving new legislative sanction to the Establishment, he was disposed to resist it. He might not have done so, if Disestablishment had been far off, for then it would have been unwise and imprudent to refuse partial reforms; but his opinion, and he thought the opinion of many in Scotland, was that Disestablishment was in the very near future. And he thought this Bill, and all such legislation as it proposed, was simply an attempt to avert the inevitable. His reason for believing that Disestablishment was not far off, was that the injustice attaching to all Establishments existed in an aggravated de-

gree in Scotland. The evils there were of a very great and glaring nature, and there was a very widespread and strong demand on the part of a large portion of the public for the Disestablishment of the Church. He wished to guard against the supposition that it was only the aggravated nature of the injustice in Scotland that led him to demand the Disestablishment of the Church. He believed the injustice involved in the maintenance of an Established Church to be as real and as much requiring redress when the Established Church was in a large majority as when it was in a minority; but the aggravated nature of the injustice in Scotland, he thought, made the necessity of removing it very urgent, and brought the settlement of the question very near. He did not wish to enter into a discussion of the general question of Disestablishment; but he might be allowed to say, in passing, that he was one of those who objected to the State Establishment of religion in all places and at all times. He thought it was not one of the purposes for which national society existed, that it was a function which the State was not fitted to fulfil, and one which it could not attempt to fulfil without entailing serious evils both on religion and on itself. He could not, however, go into this question now, but would direct attention to the circumstances showing the aggravated nature of the injustice in Scotland. Two years ago a statement, entitled "*The Church: its Position and Work*," was drawn up and issued by a Committee of the Church of Scotland, which embraced a large number of laymen who were well known and highly respected. This statement was not an official one; but it was afterwards adopted with entire approval in the General Assembly. It began by speaking of the Church of Scotland as having been established in 1592 in its present form, and, in like manner, re-established at the Revolution, "in accordance with the wishes and opinions of nearly the whole people of Scotland;" and it proceeded to state that more than 80 per cent of the people of Scotland were still Presbyterians, and adhered to the Westminster Confession of Faith. The statement in connection with the Bill, which had been already referred to, issued by the Church, more boldly placed the number of Presbyterians in Scotland at

85 per cent of the population, thus claiming an advance of 5 per cent in two years. What he wanted to point out was that, in the former statement, the Church Committee recognized and gave its assent to the principle on which the Church of Scotland was established in 1559 and 1690, and suggested that the same principle warranted the maintenance of the Establishment now—and that was that it was agreeable to the inclinations of the people. In the Acts of the Scottish Estates in 1689 and 1690, the chief ground given for the establishment of the Presbyterian Church was its conformity with “the inclinations of the generality of the people.” Assuming for a moment the accuracy of the estimate by the Church in the latter of the two statements he had referred to, that the number of Presbyterians was 85 per cent of the population, he wished to show that this fact did not warrant the inference which it was intended to suggest—namely, that the reasons which led to the establishment of the Church in 1690 still existed and warranted its maintenance now, for, at the time the Church of Scotland was established in 1690, the inclinations of the people pointed to two things. They pointed not only to Presbyterianism as the religion of the country, but towards Presbyterianism being established. Now, during the last 50 years, while the people of Scotland remained, probably, in much the same proportion as at the Revolution, Presbyterian, an enormous change had come over their opinions as to the establishment of the Church; and he thought he could prove that a majority of the population, while maintaining their attachment to Presbyterianism, were opposed to the maintenance of the Establishment. [*Cries of “No, no!” and “Hear, hear!”*] Well, even if less than a majority, there was a vital change in opinion on this subject; at all events, there was a difference between the time when the whole body of Presbyterians were in favour of the Establishment and the state of matters now, when a-half or two-thirds of them objected to the establishment of the Church. If the questions were given, that if there was to be an Established Church, what Church was to be Established? the number of Presbyterians relatively to non-Presbyterians might be sufficient to determine that the present Establish-

ment should be continued; but the number of Presbyterians did not matter in the slightest degree in determining the question whether there was to be an Established Church at all. He thought that the percentage of the population claimed for Presbyterianism both at the time of the Revolution and at the present time was very much over-estimated. To say that nearly all the Scottish population was in 1690 Presbyterian, was utterly inconsistent with what they knew from history. But, coming to the present time, the latter of the two statements sent out by the Church of Scotland mentioned a fact which of itself contradicted the estimate that 85 per cent of the population were Presbyterian. It gave the number of marriages by ministers of various denominations, and showed that a fraction less than 80 per cent—79·77—of the marriages were so solemnized by Presbyterian ministers, and 20·23 per cent by ministers not Presbyterian. But they could not assume that the whole of the people married by Presbyterian ministers were Presbyterians, because there were 600,000 people in Scotland who were non-church-going, and it was well known that these persons went to the parish minister to get married, because, in point of fact, Dissenting ministers would not marry them. That number represented 16 per cent of the population, and if they deducted these marriages from the total number solemnized by Presbyterian ministers, the number of marriages of Presbyterians would be brought down to 65 per cent of all the marriages in the country. What he wanted to show was that Scotland was not to be dealt with as a purely Presbyterian country. There were other interests besides Presbyterian to be dealt with. There were Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Baptists, and other denominations, to whom justice was as much due as Presbyterians. He did not pretend to be able to state the precise number of the Presbyterian population who were connected with the Established Church. In 1878 the number of members claimed by that Church was 515,000; by the Free Church, 250,000; and by the United Presbyterian Church, 175,000; making the number belonging to the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church together, 425,000. In 1851, when a census of church attendance was

taken, it appeared that the attendance was—Church of Scotland, 351,500; Free and United Presbyterian Churches, 442,500; other Churches, 141,000. There had been no official census taken since. There had been various censuses, not official, taken by newspapers in different parts of the country, which showed that the Church of Scotland had about a third of the attendance of the church-going people in Scotland. These censuses were of no great authority, of course, and the Church objected to them—but, he thought, most unfairly—that they had been taken for the purpose of showing that the Church of Scotland had a small attendance. He denied that entirely. He knew they had been taken fairly, whatever the result might be. Then, there was a Parliamentary Return issued in 1874, of the number of communicants connected with the Church of Scotland, which showed the number to be 460,000; and another Return in 1878, obtained on the Motion of Mr. McLaren, which showed the number to be 515,000; thus representing a gain to the Established Church in those four years of 55,000 members. It was generally reckoned that each Church member represented three of the population, so that the result of these Returns was to show that the Church of Scotland had made a gain in those four years of 165,000 adherents. Now, he found that in those four years the whole increase of the population in Scotland was less than 140,000, so that, according to this statement, the Church gained actually 25,000 more than the whole number by which the population of Scotland had increased. Well, that was not a thing impossible in itself; but if such an increase had taken place it must have arisen either from the Established Church having drawn into it adherents of the other religious denominations, or having gained members from the non-church-going population, or by its having done both. But the gain was not from other Churches, because the Free Church had increased by 10,000 members, or 30,000 adherents, in the same time, and the United Presbyterian Church by 7,000 members, or 25,000 adherents, and the Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, and all other denominations, had also largely gained. But, perhaps, it might be said that some great wave of religious revival had swept over the country, and that the increase of all

the Churches was due to the number who had been attracted from the non-church-going population. That theory, however, would not hold, because it was the reiterated complaint of all the Churches that the number of non-church-going people was rapidly increasing. This alleged increase in the numbers of the Church of Scotland was not believed in by any intelligent person outside the Church, because it was notorious that the membership claimed by the Established Church in a large number of parishes was so great as to represent a population greater than that of the whole parish, and that, too, in many cases where there existed in the parish large and flourishing congregations in connection with other Churches. The following paragraph, which appeared in *The Scotsman*, when the Parliamentary Returns appeared, expressed with regard to them the public sentiment at the time:—

“If things go on much longer at this rate the country will be quite unable to supply the Church with communicants. Not a sinner or unbeliever, perhaps not even a Dissenter, will be left to point a moral or adorn a tale, unless in the meantime the Church Extension or the Endowment Schemes put a check upon the tremendous growth, by refusing to provide further house accommodation.”

But these statements were not even accepted by all the members of the Church of Scotland. In the last General Assembly, held two weeks ago, when statistics much the same as those which the Parliamentary Returns furnished were brought forward by Dr. Tulloch, the Rev. Dr. Charteris, of Edinburgh University—a man second to none in the Established Church in ability and in earnestness in the maintenance of the Establishment, but who was too wise to believe that the Church could be strengthened by statements of this kind—said—

“If their membership was so much greater than that of the other two Presbyterian Churches combined, and if these Churches were drifting year by year into stronger motions for Disestablishment, did it not appear perfectly clear that the gulf between them and us, and between their politics on the Church question and the politics of their greater membership, was widening; and yet how did it appear that in the burghs, in the cities, in many other constituencies, it was the politics of the minority that ruled on the Church question?”

This suggested a very obvious test of the accuracy of the Church statistics, and to apply it he would give an illustra-

tion from Dr. Tulloch's own burghs—the St. Andrew Burghs, represented by his hon. Friend (Mr. Williamson). In the parishes of these burghs there was a population of 21,776; and in the burghs, which were not co-extensive with the parishes, the population was 18,605. The Church of Scotland claimed 5,921 members in these burghs, and when that number was multiplied by three it was found it claimed as connected with it 17,763 of the population, leaving for all other denominations only 4,013. At the last election there were 2,396 electors, and the proportion that should have gone to the Established Church, had its strength been what the Returns represented it, was 1,921, and to the non-Established Churches 475. Two Liberals contested the seat—one of whom (Mr. Williamson) was a Disestablisher, and the other, Mr. Bennett, who differed from him mainly in his opinions on the Disestablishment Question. The result was that his hon. Friend, who was in favour of Disestablishment, received 1,258 votes, and the less advanced candidate only 898. One of two alternative deductions might be drawn from that—either that the statistics of the Church were wholly wrong, or that the members of the Church were not generally in favour of Establishment. He did not care much which alternative was chosen. But the injustice involved in the maintenance of the Established Church in Scotland further appeared if comparison were to be made of the religious work done by the National and non-Established Church; and he thought there was no fairer test of the usefulness and earnestness of the religious denominations than in what they contributed for religious purposes. He found that the whole income of the Church of Scotland from various public sources was £381,000 per annum—their own statement was £339,000; but that did not include money obtained from the assessments which were to be dealt with by the Bill before the House to-day, and which amounted, on an average, to £42,000 per annum. What did a Church so largely aided by public money do for itself and for the cause of religion? In the Church's statement referred to it appeared that in nine years it had raised £2,588,000, exclusive of a gift by one member of £500,000 and of seat-rents £433,400; if these were taken into ac-

count, it would appear that in nine years the Church had raised £3,522,000—a handsome sum, which amounted to rather less than £7 per member, if the numbers claimed were allowed. What had the other Churches done in the same period? The Free Church, with 250,000 members, as against 515,000 claimed by the Established Church, raised, in the same period, £4,893,000, and the United Presbyterian Church, with 175,000 members, raised £3,325,700; these two Churches gave more than £17 per member, against £7 given by each member of the Established Church. He had no means of accurately ascertaining the amounts given by other denominations; but he knew they were very large, and taking them at only one-half of the amount given by the Dissenting Presbyterian Churches, they must have amounted to about £2,000,000 in nine years, making for the non-Established Churches £10,224,100, against £3,522,000 raised by the National Church. The public money received by the Church during that period raised its whole income in nine years to £6,846,100, as against £10,224,100 subscribed by the non-Established Churches, of which the members were also as citizens compelled to contribute to the State Church. He thought that condition of things was a very great injustice, and that it ought to be remedied, not piecemeal by such a Bill as this, but by getting quit altogether of the system which alone made it possible. The Church was daily increasing its demands. These church rates were increasing in severity; there were every year augmentations of stipend being made from the teinds; and from a Return presented to Parliament at the beginning of this Session on his Motion it appeared that in the last five years an annual sum was added to the income or stipend of ministers of about £1,200, which, capitalized, represented an annual addition of about £30,000 to the endowments of the Established Church. Could it be wondered at that the injustice shown by this state of things was strongly felt, and that there was a loud outcry for Disestablishment? The advocates of Disestablishment in Scotland were constantly told, even by English Dissenters, that they had no great material grievance, and by Churchmen that they had none

at all, because the religious system which was supported by the State was exactly similar to that which the great majority of them adhered to. He admitted that their material grievances were not so great as those of their Dissenting brethren in England. They had no Scottish Bishops in the House of Lords; they had no priestly pretensions on the part of the clergy of the Established Church; they had no plurality of livings; they had none of the scandals occasioned by the sale of Church patronage; they knew nothing of the social inferiority of Dissenters which was felt in England; and they never knew the exclusion of Dissenters from the parish graveyards. But they were not, for all that, without very tangible material grievances, as the Bill before the House showed, and as the Returns as to augmentations of stipend showed. But he thought they had a grievance greater still, and that lay in the very fact which was brought forward as a reason why they should be content—namely, that there was no distinction between the Established and non-Established Churches in anything belonging to them as Churches which could mark out the former for privilege and State favour. In England there was an intelligible, if not satisfactory, reason why the Episcopalian Church should be the recipient of State favour. It was a great and powerful Corporation, distinguished from the Nonconforming Churches in its doctrines, its ritual, and its ecclesiastical government. Its constitution fitted it more than that of other Churches for State connection and control. But in Scotland there was nothing to mark out the Established Church from the great non-Established Churches. In creed, worship, and constitution they were identical. Now, he would ask his hon. Friends below the Gangway, who were Nonconformists, whether their opposition to an Established Church in England would be lessened if, instead of the Episcopalian Church, they found established—were such a thing conceivable—a great Congregational Union in every respect resembling their own? He thought they would feel that the absence of any intelligible ground for continuing such a state of matters would make it more intolerable than that which existed. It would be felt by them a wanton and gratuitous interference with religious equality. But it was necessary,

in order fully to understand the evils flowing from the maintenance of the Established Church in Scotland, to remember that it tended to defeat one of the very ends for which, on any intelligible theory of Establishment, an Established Church should exist—namely, to unite the nation in religious life. In Scotland, the Established Church not only did not unite the nation, it divided those who, but for it, would be united. In England, those who were outside the Established Church were so almost universally on the ground of differences in creed, or ritual, or Church government, as well as on the ground of its State connection. Their separation from the Church in ecclesiastical feeling was complete. If the Church of England were disestablished to-morrow, they would still be outside of it; and in England, therefore, as a cause of disunion, State connection with the Church acquired less importance than it did in Scotland; because there the ecclesiastical divisions among those who formed the great mass of the nation arose almost wholly from causes connected with the establishment of the Church. He did not suppose that, in the event of Disestablishment, the divisions which now existed would be healed up at once. Their friends of the Established Church said they would not be healed for a long time. How that might be he did not know; but this he knew—that the irritation which Disestablishment would doubtless excite would soon subside, and that if Presbyterians did not see their way to unite, at least, all the bitterness attending the present state of disunion would pass away. He would not detain the House by dwelling on the evils, social, religious, and political, which followed from the unhappy divisions and rivalries which the maintenance of the Church Establishment gave rise to. He would only quote the words of two leading ministers of the Church of Scotland, which described these evils in no exaggerated language. Dr. Milligan, who was Moderator of the Established Church two years ago, said—

“Our present state is so deplorable that almost anything containing in it the promise of peace and stability might be welcomed as a substitute—precious time wasted in bitter controversy that should be given to the peaceful prosecution of our labours; angry passions awakened in breasts where mutual confidence should live and reign; efforts in every great

cause of beneficence, the education of the young, the relief of the poor, the reclamation of the criminal, weakened; the lives of pious and good men saddened by the mutual recriminations of those whom they wished to regard with no feelings but those of reverence and love—the enemies of religion triumphing that our own divisions are destroying what their efforts would never enable them to subvert. Above all, the fair picture of the one Church of the Redeemer, who died, who lives for all its members, soiled and torn, till its strength is wasted and its beauty gone.”

The Rev. Mr. Macdonald, the Moderator of the Aberdeen Synod, in a sermon delivered before the Synod on the 18th of last month, said—

“None of us is so wedded to his convictions of the advantages of an Established Church, as to deny there are circumstances in which it may be maintained that the injury of national religion, and that Disestablishment, though to us it seems pregnant with disaster, may yet be less evil than a condition of ecclesiastical schism and conflict, for which it is held forth as the only cure. I make bold to say for myself that I hold that, as a Church, we ought not to hesitate to admit that the present position of matters is intolerable, and that if we can discover no remedy, we cannot reasonably refuse to suffer others to try that of Disestablishment.”

Those were the grounds on which he (Mr. Dick-Peddie) thought the time had come to deal with the question, and not legislate in the piecemeal way now proposed. The feeling in Scotland, he believed, was rapidly growing to that result; and in a very few years they would be able to deal very much more satisfactorily with all those matters than they could do in the measure now before the House. When Mr. Duncan M'Laren withdrew his Bill in 1879, he stated that he found many of those who supported him had come to the opinion that the only way to deal with the question was by Disestablishment. He entirely agreed with that opinion, and he would have moved his Resolution if opportunity had offered; but as he could not do that, he would give the Amendment of his hon. Friend his cordial support.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR could not admit that the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was relevant to the Amendment, while it was certainly wholly irrelevant to the Bill before the House. The Bill of his hon. Friend was a modest measure. It dealt with a small grievance. It affected a small area in Scotland, and could not be said in any way to aggravate the evils of the Established Church, or the bur-

dens which the Established Church inflicted upon Dissenters, if any such burdens could be said to exist. The hon. Member opposite had appended a Resolution which raised the whole question of Disestablishment, on which the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie) had found it possible to deliver the speech which he was precluded from delivering upon a Motion directly aiming at Disestablishment. The incongruity between the gigantic Amendment and the very small measure to which it was appended must have struck everybody who heard the speech just delivered. He recollected, in the time of the late Government, that at a meeting of farmers in an English county a resolution was proposed that some action should be taken to prevent injury to crops by hares and rabbits. Some ardent politician who was present moved to leave out all the words after the word “That,” in order to insert—

“The act of Lord Beaconsfield in bringing troops from India to Malta was dangerous to the peace of Europe, subversive of the Constitution, and threatened the liberties of the country.”

He really thought the relation between the Amendment and the Bill was not a bit less incongruous than the relation between the Amendment and the Motion he had just described. There was nothing, however, in all that to surprise them. It was not the first time a Motion, having for its object the remedy of a specific grievance in the Church, had been resisted without its opponents urging a single argument against it, except that, as it really did remove an admitted grievance, it would improve the position of the Established Church, which it was their principal object to destroy. The friends of Disestablishment always appealed to justice and equality. Those were big phrases; but in this connection they meant very little. If the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs relied on justice and equality, why did he not bring forward a Motion dealing directly with the question of Establishment? Why did he resist a measure brought forward solely to decrease the friction which obtained in some parts of the Establishment machinery, unless it were that he knew the chief allies on which he had to rely in his Disestablishment agitation were not

the eternal principles of justice and equality so much as the vulgar desire that money should be taken from the Church and applied to the relief of rates, or some object of the kind? The hon. Member had come before the House as the advocate of Voluntaryism; but he must know that on the question of Voluntaryism the people of Scotland were decidedly opposed to him. The Free Church was not fit to advocate the principle of Voluntaryism. ["Oh!"] Any hon. Gentleman who dissented from that view was unacquainted with the position of ecclesiastical controversy on the other side of the Border. The United Presbyterian Church had always, it is true, gone in for Voluntaryism; but the Free Church did not. Therefore, when his hon. Friend came forward as the advocate of Voluntaryism, let it be understood that he represented in this matter a very small fraction of his countrymen. He only represented the United Presbyterians; he did not represent the Free Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Episcopalian Church, or the Established Church. Let him conclude by giving a warning to his hon. Friends opposite. If they had at heart the Disestablishment of the Church—if they wished to attain that object, let them go about it fairly and directly. Let them bring in a Bill, or get the Government to do it; but let them abstain from wounding the Established Church in the back. Let them meet it face to face; and let them openly debate whether the interests of religious equality were best promoted by a policy of Disestablishment or not. But if hon. Gentlemen opposite wished the House to believe that they were animated by the lofty motives they professed, and not by a feeling of jealousy towards the Established Church, let them abstain from the policy of opposing by every means in their power measures against which they had not a single argument to adduce on their merits, but which they resisted simply because they believed that by making the Established Church more useful they would be making it stronger. If they adopted that course, while he did not hope for their success, he should, at least, feel that they were dealing with opponents who acted fairly. He cordially supported the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. A. J. Balfour

MR. ANDERSON said, the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had complained of the wide scope this discussion had taken. But it occurred to him (Mr. Anderson) that if any fault was to be found the hon. Member must blame his hon. Friend the Member for the University of Glasgow (Mr. J. A. Campbell), who moved the second reading of the Bill, because the hon. Gentleman must have known that it was inevitable that the Bill would lead to a Disestablishment debate. He did not think the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow acted very judiciously in the introduction of the Bill—not even judiciously for the Church of Scotland. The hon. Member would have done much better if he had let it alone. He looked upon the Bill as unworkable, as well as in principle bad. The 4th clause, about the Valuation Roll, was absolutely unworkable. But he would leave the Lord Advocate to deal with that point. When they had a somewhat analogous Bill brought in year after year by Mr. Duncan M'Laren, he invariably opposed the Bill, on the ground that this power of assessment for the building or repairing of churches and mansees was really a burden belonging to the land, and that the effect of the Bill of Mr. M'Laren would simply be to make a present to the landlords of that assessment. He opposed the Bill invariably on that ground. The hon. Member (Mr. Elliot) had mentioned that ground, and deprecated his objection to the Amendment, as that remark did not apply. It appeared to him, however, that the objection did apply; for he failed to see, if the Amendment were carried, that it could have any other effect than making a present of the assessment to the landlords. According to the Bill and the speech of the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow, it was proposed to mitigate the grievances of the feuars; but, so far as the burden was put upon the feuars, it had been taken from the landlords, who had been relieved of the burden to whatever extent the feuars had it imposed upon them. The hon. Member, by his Bill, did not propose to go back to the period before those feuars existed, and restore matters as they were then, because if he were to do that he would reimpose it upon the landlord. Instead of that the hon. Member adopted the

Voluntary principle, and proposed that as to any sum of which the feuars were to be relieved, the Church should raise it by voluntary means. The hon. Member, he thought, fairly laid himself open to the taunt of the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie), who said that, to a certain extent, the hon. Gentleman was really adopting the Voluntary principle. Looking upon the assessment as national property—which, in the event of the disendowment of the Church of Scotland, would be the national property, and in the power of the nation to devote to whatever purpose it pleased—he objected to the reduction which would be made in the value by the relief of the feuars from burdens without re-imposing them upon the landlord, who had, in the first place, been relieved. But, as regarded the wider question, it was not unnatural that the debate should have lapsed into a Disestablishment debate. He was quite ready to discuss that fully on a suitable occasion; but he would not like to say much about it now. But there were a few words he felt tempted to say after the speech of the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs. He had always voted for Church Disestablishment as a matter of justice. He thought it was not right that the national funds should go entirely to keep up one particular sect in the country, especially since that sect had ceased to be the majority of the country. He looked on the question from that point of view, and yet he was bound to say that in Scotland the question of Disestablishment was less ripe for solution now than it was 10 years ago. It was, he believed, a riper question in England, and certainly in Wales, than in Scotland. For one thing, Dissent had been under no social ban in Scotland. It might be for the reason that a large part of the aristocracy belonged to an alien Church—the Church of England; and they were, therefore, in Scotland nothing but Dissenters. They did not, he believed, like the term; but when they went to Scotland they were Dissenters, and nothing else. The fact of their being so perhaps helped to prevent that social ban, which did exist, he believed, to a large extent, in England. There were other reasons which his hon. Friend very fairly pointed out—grievances in England and Wales—which did not apply to Scotland. A proof that the question

was less ripe now than 10 years ago he gathered from his own constituency. His constituency was, to a large extent, for Disestablishment, and had always been so. Ten years ago he or his Colleague, or any Member of Parliament, could have got a bumper meeting in the largest hall in Glasgow in support of a Disestablishment Resolution. But about two years ago several prominent Liberatorist M.P.'s went down to Glasgow and convened a meeting, and though they had the assistance of his hon. Friend and Colleague (Dr. Cameron) they could get nothing more than a half-filled hall. That was a very significant fact indeed. He thought he could tell the reason of it, and it was well the Dissenters should know the reason. The reason of it, he thought, lay in two particular cases of Church discipline which had come up in the United Presbyterian and Free Churches. The one was the well-known case of Mr. Macrae, and the other that of Professor Robertson Smith. The Macrae case was one in which a clergyman in the United Presbyterian Church was, according to his Church dogmas, not quite sound on the matter of eternal punishment. Mr. Macrae was immediately driven from the United Presbyterian Church for holding those views. Professor Robertson Smith, on the other hand, expressed some opinions not quite orthodox, according to the Free Church, on the matter of the authenticity of some books of the Bible. Professor Smith was immediately driven from the Free Church. There had been a sort of idea in Scotland previously that the Established Church was the most bigoted and intolerant of all the Churches. The Free Church had got free, at least, on the question of lay patronage; but he believed that was the only question on which there was any freedom about it. The Robertson Smith case proved that. Then the United Presbyterian Church was looked upon as the home of freedom; but the Macrae case proved that it was not so. Because these two cases happened in the two great Dissenting Churches the opinion had gained ground in Scotland that for any kind of freedom of thought there was no home left now but the Established Church. [*Opposition cheers.*] Hon. Members cheered that; but he was going to say that he did not believe that was a correct opinion. It had, however, been gaining ground. He believed that if any unfortunate erring

brother of the Established Church happened to utter any expression that was equally heterodox, the Church of Scotland would be just as ready to take up the cudgels and pulverize that unfortunate and erring brother as either of the other two Churches were, so that he did not think there was much to choose among any of the Churches. It was this absolute and intolerant bigotry which the whole of the Churches had shown on so many occasions which had driven thinking people to a large extent away from the Churches—a very unfortunate thing; but it was a fact. What he had said was with great regret, because he had always voted for Disestablishment. He was ready to do so again, because he believed that justice called for it; but he had endeavoured to explain why the question had not gained in the way he could have wished it to gain. The two Churches which he had, perhaps, rather stigmatized, would, he hoped, take a lesson from the past, and be a little more liberal towards people who differed from them in matters of what they called orthodoxy, and enable the Disestablishment Question thereby to grow on its own proper basis; for he felt sure that if it were considered on its own merits alone, eventually Disestablishment would be attained.

MR. DALRYMPLE said, he was quite sure the friends of the Church of Scotland had no cause to complain of the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down. Nothing could be more interesting to some of them than the account the hon. Member had given of the retrograde movement on the Disestablishment Question, because they had heard a short time before that the movement had made such rapid progress that the question was now ripe for treatment, whereas the hon. Member now told them that in the last 10 years the movement had distinctly gone back. He accepted the hon. Member as an authority. While the hon. Member for Glasgow treated them to some facts with regard to the illiberality of the United Presbyterian Church, he gave the House an impression that there would be probably illiberality on the part of the Established Church in reference to similar matters; but it happened that there was a case before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland within the last two

years which raised exactly the sort of question to which his hon. Friend referred, and if anyone cared to recall the circumstances of it, they would recollect the different spirit in which the subject was dealt with there; while, at the same time, the Church was in no way open to the charge of undervaluing anything like disloyalty to its standards. There were three other speeches delivered against the Bill. The remarkable thing about the two first speeches was that while they entered very fully into the subject of the Bill itself, both speakers were at pains to repudiate by anticipation the action taken by the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie). That was another illustration with which they were familiar of the kind of agreement which prevailed on the other side of the House. That showed that they fully understood the motive with which the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs was placed upon the Paper. When the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs rose, he said, of course, the Bill was of a character to prevent his going into the larger question; but he immediately proceeded to go into the larger question, and that at very considerable length. The remarks of the hon. Member made it necessary to reply to some of his facts. But, before doing so, he congratulated the hon. Member on the arrival of the day on which at last he had been able to deliver a speech in favour of Disestablishment in Scotland. That speech he believed had been in process of manufacture for years. It was not too much to say that the subject of Disestablishment in Scotland had figured on the Journals of the House for years past in the name of the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs, who had been endeavouring all that time to bring it on, although he had never succeeded in delivering his speech until that day. Some hon. Members were, no doubt, very familiar with the expression “now or never” in reference to the Disestablishment movement in Scotland; and he supposed that the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs felt that it was “now or never” for his speech. He had failed this Session to bring on the question of Disestablishment generally, and in connection with the measure now before the House he had taken the opportunity of explaining

his views on that question. The Bill now before the House was a very modest proposal. Whatever its fate might be, he should be glad that the discussion had taken place, because the promoters of the Bill had endeavoured to deal, however inadequately, with a known and recognized grievance in Scotland. The hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs said their first object was to strengthen the Church; but the fact was that their first object was to remove an admitted grievance, and if in doing so they were to strengthen the Church, they should rejoice. The hon. Member would not like to have the grievance removed, because he had a vested interest in every grievance from which the Church suffered. It was no part of his business to comment upon the appropriateness or convenience of the discussion upon which the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs entered; but he would say distinctly that the Church of Scotland had no fear of discussion. What the Church of Scotland had cause to object to was the amount of mis-statement so freely put forward in regard to her position. The hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs referred to more than one document that had been put forward on behalf of the Established Church, one of which was put forward two years ago, and the other within the last three days; but he (Mr. Dalrymple) wished to refer to another document that had been very liberally furnished, and which was entitled "The Disestablishment of the Scotch Church;" and as the first words that occurred in that document were the name of the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs, he supposed that hon. Gentleman knew something about it. That document contained an extraordinary amount of mis-statement on the subject of the Church of Scotland, and it was surprising to him to see at the bottom of it the name of a well-known and highly respected layman, who, he thought, would have taken pains to verify the facts to which he appended his name before he held himself responsible for them. That document had caused great astonishment to many people in Scotland. What was to be thought of the statement that less than one-third of the church-going people attended the Established Church? What was to be thought of the statement that many of the supporters of

the Established Church now admitted the injustice of maintaining it? Where was the foundation for such a statement? The remarks of the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs tended to show that there was a feeling in favour of Disestablishment even among members of the Church of Scotland. One other thing he would notice in that document. It was the statement as to the failure of the parochial system. Now, had it not been for that document, he should have been ignorant of the failure of the parochial system; and he should like to know what would happen to the poor of Scotland if it were not for the parochial system? Something had been said by the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs about numbers. He (Mr. Dalrymple) was bound to say that there was no argument he cared less for than that of numbers. At the same time, when the question of numbers was brought up and a good deal was founded upon it, then it became necessary to say a word or two about the matter. He observed that the hon. Member referred to a want of accurate information upon this subject. Why was there a want of accurate information on the subject? Because the hon. Member and those who thought with him objected to a religious Census being taken. Though they were not allowed to have a religious Census in Scotland, it was not at all impossible to have an amateur Census. He had read an amusing account of the particular Sunday on which the amateur Census was taken. He was told that in Glasgow the amount of traffic in the streets on that day was greater than had been known for years before. People who were bedridden were brought at the peril of their lives to be counted; and he had heard of cases where persons were actually dragged out of bed to be counted. They had two Returns of the number of communicants of the Established Church—the Return moved for by the late Mr. Edward Ellice, in 1874, and the Return moved for by Mr. Duncan M'Laren in 1878. There had been little said about those Returns since they were laid before the House, because they were not in favour of the cause which the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs advocated. There was just one set of figures with which he would trouble the House. It appeared that during the last 10

years the communicants of the Church of Scotland had increased by '83,000 odd; whereas the increase of the two other large Presbyterian Bodies in Scotland had only been 31,000 odd, showing a majority of 52,000 in favour of the Established Church. The population of Scotland had increased in 10 years by 11 per cent. In the same period the increase of the United Presbyterian Church had been $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent; the increase of the Free Church 3·8 per cent; whereas the increase of the Church of Scotland had been 18 per cent. He should like to refer to the Glasgow Presbytery, which was regarded as the stronghold of the United Presbyterian Body. In 10 years the Church of Scotland within the bounds of Glasgow Presbytery had increased 32 per cent; the Free Church had increased 15 per cent; and the United Presbyterian Church had increased 13 per cent; while the population in the district had increased 18 per cent. The hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs made some remarks as to the increase of membership of the Church of Scotland, and threw some ridicule upon it, as if it were incredible. What the Church of Scotland deplored was the number of people who were still connected with no religious denomination. While desiring to do justice to the Church of Scotland in connection with the increase of its membership, he heartily wished to see the increase in the membership of other religious Bodies keep pace with it, because he believed in that way there would be a chance of overtaking the whole population of the country. The hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs had referred with ridicule to the Return of the Registrar General for 1880. That Return showed that marriages were celebrated in the churches of the different Presbyterian denominations to the number of almost 80 per cent, and out of that number the Church of Scotland was responsible for 46 per cent. The hon. Member, in his desire to prove a changed condition of the Presbyterian Bodies in Scotland from the year 1690, attempted to show that all the other Bodies that did not belong to the Established Church were in favour of Disestablishment. A contention of that kind was totally destitute of foundation, because it was well known that outside Presbyterian Bodies altogether there was

no desire on the part of the other large Bodies of the country for Disestablishment. The Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches were not in favour of Disestablishment; and a large section of the laity of the Free Church were also quite opposed to Disestablishment. He hesitated to enter on the subject of teinds, except to say this—that he thought every statement by the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs with regard to teinds came very badly from him, because when the present Government, at the beginning of this Parliament, endeavoured to deal with the question, they were stoutly opposed by the hon. Member, for fear it would benefit the Established Church. He contended that there never was a Church which did more good for less payment. It was hard to say why this particular moment was chosen for an attack on the Church of Scotland. Sometimes it was said because the Church was weak, therefore its maintenance could not be defended. At other times it was said the Church was getting so strong that if they did not disestablish it now, it never would be disestablished at all. The hon. Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. Elliot) alluded to the case of the Church in the Highland districts. He thought it was only fair to say that, whatever might be the condition of the Church of Scotland in the Highlands, there was no feeling in favour of Disestablishment in the Highlands. This was not the time either to attack the Church of Scotland or enter into a defence of it. The real defence of the Church of Scotland was to be found, not in any enumeration of membership, or in any enumeration of her acts of liberality and munificence in the past and at the present time, but in her quiet work throughout the country; in the creation of many new parishes; in the provision she made for the poor in large cities and in new districts of the country; in the ministrations of religion carried to the remotest corners of the land; in her increased tolerance and comprehensiveness, and in her abundant adaptation to the circumstances of the time. He believed that if the Church was only found in pursuit of these things, and not engaging needlessly in controversy, when her time of trial really came the motley company of her opponents would need all their artillery if they would dislodge her from the position she

now enjoyed in the confidence of the people of the country.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he objected to be led into a discussion of Disestablishment. The Bill now before the House was limited in its scope, and was confined simply to the exemption of certain persons who were now subject to assessment. Not a single Member who had addressed the House from the other side had said a word in favour of the Bill, and no argument had been used to meet the objections that had been taken to the Bill by the hon. Member for Roxburghshire. He (Sir Edward Colebrooke) was not opposing this Bill as an enemy of the Church of Scotland. He was friendly to that Church; but having said that much, he must say that he thought there were good and valid grounds of objection to the manner in which these ecclesiastical assessments were made on the property of Scotland, and there was a grievance which demanded the attention of the House. He had great doubts, however, whether the Bill now before the House would be accepted by those on whose behalf it was framed—namely, the heritors of Scotland. No one could say that the present arrangement was satisfactory. He believed if the Government would bring in a measure for the purpose of commuting the existing burdens, giving adequate payment for a certain number of years, and limiting the payment of the Church of Scotland to the amount, it might obviate many of the objections now raised. The Bill of the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow made such an advance towards the Voluntary system that it really amounted to a concession almost of the whole principle of church rates advocated by the hon. Member for Kilmarnock Burghs. He listened with great attention to the statement of the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow to know whether he proposed his scheme on the ground of right and law, or on the ground of expediency; but he was not quite clear on what ground he rested his case. The statement was put forward on behalf of the Church of Scotland to the effect that this was a renewal of the state of the law which existed up to 80 years ago; but he should like to know from the Lord Advocate how far his legal knowledge confirmed the statement. He denied *in toto* the statement that this was

originally a direct charge on the heritors, on the land of the country. The charge was on the parishioners; and it was not a direct charge on the property of the country. In reality, this charge had been established by a self-made law, and it had been interpreted as a charge upon the property which bears all other local burdens. He did not think the Mover of this Bill was so well qualified to speak on behalf of the heritors as of the Church of Scotland; and he did not think the Bill would be received as an equitable adjustment by the heritors. In any case, it was one fraught with injustice. It gave exemption on no valid principle, and therefore it ought to be rejected by the House. He had only one difficulty, and that was that the only counter proposition before the House was that of the hon. Member for Roxburghshire, which did not oppose assessments at all, but only objected to levying them for one religious community. That would mean that assessments were to be upheld, provided they were applied to the purposes of the other Churches. He regretted that the hon. Member had not moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, and he should make that Motion himself if he had the opportunity.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, that he was unable to support the Bill. It was complicated and very difficult to work, and the Valuation Roll which would have to be prepared in accordance with this Bill would be intricate and misleading. The hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie) had brought into this discussion what was wholly irrelevant—that was to say, the great question of Disestablishment. The hon. Member had alluded to the great wish of the people of Scotland for Disestablishment, as shown by the fact that the hon. Member for St. Andrew's (Mr. Williamson) had beaten a candidate who was against Disestablishment in 1880. He would point out how it was that the hon. Member for St. Andrew's obtained the votes of Churchmen. The hon. Member made no allusion to the question of Disestablishment or Establishment in his address.

MR. WILLIAMSON: I must correct that; it is an error.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, he accepted the correction. When the hon. Member for Kilmarnock Burghs

himself was before his electors, he said—

“Knowing that he was supported warmly by many Churchmen in the burghs, as warmly as by any Voluntary, he would not seek to push forward the Church question, though, when the time came, he would certainly vote for Disestablishment.”

MR. DICK-PEDDIE: I wish to say that there is no accuracy whatever in that quotation. I never said these words.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, he referred to the speech of the hon. Member as given in *The Scotsman* newspaper, and he certainly found there the same words.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE: A contradiction appeared in *The Scotsman* newspaper two years ago.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, that if he wanted any accurate information with regard to Scottish measures and the speeches of hon. Members he always looked to *The Scotsman*, and he generally found it correct. The hon. Member for St. Andrew's stated that he adhered to the views of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) on the subject of Disestablishment; but the right hon. Gentleman had disavowed altogether any intention of allowing the question of Disestablishment or alteration of the Scottish Church to be brought forward in this Parliament. He should like to refer to what the hon. Member for Kilmarnock Burghs said as to the great preponderance of the people of Scotland in favour of Disestablishment. He had a few statistics with regard to the different Churches in Kilmarnock itself. The Church to which the hon. Gentleman belonged had a great many congregations—the congregations had very few members. There were four United Presbyterian Churches in Kilmarnock with an average membership of 461 each, or 1,844 altogether. In the same town there were four Established Churches with an average of 680 members. In Kilmarnock Presbytery there were 30 congregations of the United Presbyterian Church with an average of 266 Members, and 22 Established Churches with an average of 645 members. Therefore, although the number of churches of the United Presbyterian denomination might be greater in a certain place, the number of the people attending these churches was far smaller

as compared with the Established Church. The cause of this was that the United Presbyterian Church, to which the hon. Member belonged, dealt only with the wealthy well-to-do people, having no poor, or, rather, few poor among their congregations. They had none of the rural population. They dealt only in towns; and, therefore, they could afford to pay their ministers better than any of the other Churches except some of the Established Churches in towns. The United Presbyterians in Edinburgh had 69 congregations, with an average of 401 members; the Established Church had 50 congregations, with an average of 754 communicants. In Glasgow the United Presbyterian Church had 87 congregations, with an average of 523 members; and the Established Church had 91 congregations, with an average of 642 members. In the Highlands the United Presbyterian Church had only 24 congregations. In the Lowlands there were 514 congregations with 168,649 members, or an average of 328. The Established Church had 1,060 congregations, with 482,000 members, which gave an average number of 455 members. That showed that throughout the whole of Scotland the congregations of the United Presbyterian Church were very much smaller than the congregations of the Established Church. The Kilmarnock United Presbyterian Church appeared to be in difficulties with regard to their contributions to the Church. In 1880 the Kilmarnock United Presbyterian Presbytery contributed £2,434; in 1881, £1,667; in 1882, £2,681; last year, £1,820; and this year only £870. That fluctuation showed rather against the Voluntary system. The hon. Member spoke as the advocate of Scotland; but he quite forgot that two or three years ago he got a vote of censure from his constituents because he put forward this question. It was very important to notice that the support of the Disestablishment movement was chiefly confined to the towns; but he might say that there were no people in the country so strong in favour of the principle of an Established Church as the Highlanders who attended the Free Church. They knew that at present they were dependent on the surplus funds in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and they wished to be independent of that aid. A short time

ago the Free Church issued a Commission to inquire into the condition of the agricultural labourers; and they reported that throughout the country generally, excluding the Highlands, the large proportion of the agricultural class professed to belong to the Established Church, and yet their Report recommended the Disestablishment of the Church. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) referred to the case of the Rev. Mr. Macrae. That gentleman was turned out of the United Presbyterian Church in a very harsh and high-handed way indeed. He believed there was more freedom and far less bigotry and intolerance in a Church which was regulated by the people through the State. The hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie) had defended the case of the 600,000 persons who, he said, attended no church at all. He was sure they would be very grateful to the hon. Member for having encouraged them in their irreligious views. There was one thing to be noticed about the Dissenting Churches, and that was the enormous amount of money they collected and spent without any audit on behalf of the public. They appointed their own auditors. He had proposed more than once a Royal Commission to inquire into the condition of the Scottish Churches, and he regretted very much that that had not been adopted by the General Assembly. If the Government were to appoint such a Commission to go into the whole question of the disagreements of the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, it might do a great deal to remove the disastrous state of things which now existed.

LORD COLIN CAMPBELL said, that the description of the state of discipline in the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland given by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had put him in mind of the story of his countryman who was reproached by his minister for not believing in the doctrine of eternal punishment, and who gave it as his explanation that he did not believe any human constitution could stand it. It was a question whether they were not wasting their time in trying to reform and renovate institutions which, according to the hon. Member for Glasgow, would ever be places of intolerable torment. He did not think the debate was one

of small importance, or that the responsibility of those who brought it on could very easily be exaggerated. He was interested to observe that the Mover of the Bill, with some precipitancy, took care to throw that responsibility upon the shoulders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. As anybody might have foreseen, it had resulted in a debate which had raised the whole question of the position of the Church of Scotland and her relations to the Scottish people. He could not think that the time which had been chosen for the introduction of this Bill was favourable, or that it would do much to promote the end in view. He had shared, and still shared, the opinion that it was possible, by introducing certain reforms into the laws regulating the maintenance of the Church of Scotland, to mitigate, in some degree, the intense hostility and bitterness with which it had been, and was still, regarded by a great portion of the people of Scotland. But he could not conceive a greater mistake on the part of Parliament than to legislate on this subject on its own motion, and without a distinct mandate from the people of Scotland. He could not forget that the Motion of which Notice had been repeatedly given by the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie) still stood upon the Paper; and he thought it was impossible to dispute that if the House were disposed to give this Bill a second reading, it would virtually affirm, at least tacitly, the principle of Establishment; and he could well understand the objection which the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs had to having his flank turned, and the Resolution of which he had given Notice negatived by a side wind. It seemed to him that the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow (Mr. J. A. Campbell), and those who acted with him, had made a sortie from the fort before it had been actually besieged, and he should not be surprised if that should be the signal for an engagement along the whole line. It had been said that the Act for the abolition of patronage was likely to be the first step towards Disestablishment; and he thought it was very likely that if this Bill, or any Bill of the kind, were to pass, it would be a second step in the direction of Disestablishment; and he doubted very much whether the people of Scot-

land might, in that case, be inclined to give time for a third step to be taken, or whether the edifice which they now thought to put upon a sure and renovated foundation would not be overwhelmed by the tide of public opinion. It seemed to him to be a tactical error to invite Parliament to reform an institution which a great body of the Scottish people believed could only be effectually reformed by Disestablishment. He thought they must be blind to every sign if they could longer entertain any hope that they could stave off the settlement of this question by touching the mere fringe of it. Parliament was bound to take warning by the reception which the Act for the abolition of patronage had received, and to recognize the fact that behind this Bill, as well as behind the abolition of the Patronage Act, there was lurking the great question of Establishment or no Establishment, and the cardinal point whether they were to have State recognition of religion or not. That question had been asked in Scotland, and a great agitation had arisen since the General Election of 1880. It was true that, owing to circumstances, that agitation had somewhat subsided; but it was impossible to say that the people of Scotland had given any definite answer upon it; and it appeared to him to be folly to attempt to legislate on that question on the very eve of passing, as they hoped to pass, that Reform Bill which might serve as the trumpet through which the people of Scotland would speak on this question. He did not think they should be led away by any vaunted prosperity of the Church of Scotland. There was no man in that House who believed more in the great and increasing prosperity of the Church of Scotland than he did; but if he held upon the affections of the Scottish people was greater than some of them could remember, if her efforts had been greater, if she sent her missionaries to every quarter of the globe, and to parts where some of them could remember, a few years ago, that none went—even if everything that was set forth in the paper which had been sent to Members of the House by the General Assembly—if every fact and every argument was strictly accurate and true, still he thought they were bound to remember that that increasing prosperity of the Church of Scotland,

and those increasing efforts which she had shown, had been, to a very large extent, due to the beneficent competition of the Voluntary Churches. He did not know, and it would be left to the student of ecclesiastical history to say, what would have been the condition of the Church of Scotland if that sort of competition had not existed. With regard to the question of this Bill, and the grievances it was intended to remove, he knew well what those grievances were. He had had an opportunity among his own constituents to judge of the great bitterness and virulence which those grievances had aroused; and he, for his own part, had longed to do anything to remove their grievances. It was not with them a mere paltry question of money. It was not the amount of the assessments of which they complained. He was convinced that their grievances centred in something far higher, and that it was to many of them the pain and degradation of feeling that when they complied with the law they were yielding to a principle which they believed to be wrong and irreligious, which meant to them the usurpation and the domination of "Cæsar." He knew there might be some who would term that kind of feeling fanaticism. Well, if it were fanaticism—and he was inclined to think that the opinion of the great body of the Nonconformist people of Scotland was becoming so intense on this question of Disestablishment that a great many of them might be tempted to think it was fanaticism—they were, at the same time, bound to admit that it was a kind of fanaticism that had been the backbone of Scotland, and without which her history would be barren indeed. Being of this opinion, and desirable though it might be to remove those grievances connected with the Established Church, he could not think that it would be right to do what otherwise he would have considered an obligation on his part—namely, to support this Bill, defective though it might be in its machinery; because he thought the time was inopportune, and that the far larger question of Disestablishment must be first decided before Parliament undertook to settle this question; and he felt confident that when he did not support the second reading of this Bill his motives would not be misinterpreted.

Lord Colin Campbell

MR. WILLIAMSON said, he had not intended to take any part in the debate, but simply to vote for the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliot); but since his name had been mentioned in connection with the Election of 1880, he wished to make an explanation. He thought the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie) was not justified in the conclusions he had drawn in stating the result of the figures embodied in the Electoral Returns, because a considerable number of the members of the Established Church in the St. Andrew's Burghs had given him their hearty support. And he was also bound to correct the statement of the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon), that in his election address he had not referred to the question of Disestablishment. He had referred to that question; and, so far as his memory served him, he had said that he did not think the religious interests of the country would suffer if all the Churches were placed upon an equality. He recommended that sentiment to the House and to the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire. Both the statements to which he referred were, therefore, to a certain extent, erroneous and irrelevant to the discussion. While he was on his feet, he would just offer a criticism which had not yet been brought to the notice of the House. He referred to Clause 6 of the Bill, in regard to which he did not see why burghal parishes should be exempted from the operation of the Bill. There were a considerable number of burghal parishes, and in some of them the hardship would be quite as great as in the rural parishes. He might cite the parish of Anstruther, where the church and manse of the Reformer James Melville were both built after the Reformation by the voluntary contributions of the people. But if anything happened to that old manse, which was now tottering, the whole of the inhabitants would be assessed for its repair; and he did not see the justice of that. Then, again, Clause 10 seemed to be a clumsy attempt to form a coalition between the voluntary support of religion or religious edifices and compulsory assessments for that purpose. He was sure that attempt would fail. For these and other reasons, he had no hesitation in supporting the Amendment.

MR. RAMSAY said, the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had referred to the discipline exercised by the various denominations. It was a reasonable inference that those gentlemen who were expelled—the one from the ministry and the other from the professorship—were so expelled on the sole ground that they were teaching doctrines subversive of the belief of the majority of the ministers of their Church; and he did not think his hon. Friend was justified in speaking of these Churches as actuated by either intolerance or bigotry in acting as they did. The hon. Gentleman who had introduced this Bill had not been quite accurate in the description he had given of it. He stated in the Memorandum accompanying the Bill that the duty of supporting the Church was originally imposed on the heritors; but the terms of the Act were not that the burden should be laid upon the heritors, but on the whole of the parishioners. He had been asked this morning by the right hon. Gentleman then occupying the seat from which he was now speaking what was the reason of their having church rates in Scotland since they had none in England, the law on that subject having been changed in 1868 on the Motion of the present Prime Minister. He expected that the hon. Gentleman who brought in this Bill would have given some explanation of the grounds on which it was proposed to perpetuate a burden upon land in Scotland when they had done away with all similar burdens in England. He could conceive no other reason for it but that the Parliament of England did not do that justice to Scotland which it secured for the people of England. He had a large acquaintance among landowners in Scotland, and he was not aware of one who desired that these church rates should be perpetuated in Scotland. He believed the wealth of the members of the Established Church in Scotland was quite sufficient to meet the deficiency that would arise from the abolition of those rates, and he demurred altogether to their perpetuation. He did not think it would be injurious to the Church of Scotland. On the contrary, it would increase the voluntary action of that Church, and lead to an improvement in the feeling of the people towards the Church greater than they could imagine. On these grounds he cordially supported the

Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): On the part of the Government I have to say that we cannot accept this Bill; but that, on the contrary, we shall give our support to the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. Elliot). In the course of the debate several references have been made to the law applicable to the assessments with which this Bill is concerned, and I have been more than once invited to make some statement in regard to that law. I shall not go into that in any detail; but I shall very shortly make such a statement relative to the law, as I understand it, as may seem to be material for the purpose of understanding this Bill, and the criticisms which I shall offer upon it. It has been stated, and stated quite correctly, that some time in the 16th century it was enacted that assessments should be imposed for the purpose of building and maintaining ecclesiastical structures. I need not cite the Acts. They have been referred to already; but what I have stated is the substance of them. It has also been correctly stated by my hon. Friend the Member for Falkirk (Mr. Ramsay) that the word used in the enactment is not "heritors," but "parishioners;" but by judicial interpretation the word "parishioners" has been held to mean "heritors," so that, in the result, the enactment has been interpreted as imposing these assessments upon heritors. But, Sir, while the Act was thus held to lay the burden upon heritors, there was not in it, nor in any subsequent enactment, any provision fixing the standard or basis of assessment; and, accordingly, it was left open to practice and to decisions to settle what that standard or basis should be. I do not find any evidence that that question came before the Courts for a considerable time; but undoubtedly in the latter part of the 18th century it was raised in the Courts, and it appeared that there had grown up a use or custom in landward parishes of laying the assessment upon the heritors according to what is known as the "valued rent," whereas in burghs it was generally laid on according to the "real rent;" and the question in the Peterhead case was how you should deal with what is called a landward burghal parish—that is, a parish par-

taking partly of the one character and partly of the other. It has been correctly stated that in such parishes there had frequently been a custom of levying the assessment according to the valued rent in the landward part, and on the real rent in the burghal part; but in the Peterhead case the common standard of liability in both cases was held to be the real rent. I think it is necessary further to offer a word of explanation in regard to how the real rent came to be taken, because it seems to me that, in this discussion and in other discussions relating to this matter, the valued rent has been spoken of as if there were some mystery or sanctity attaching to it different from the real rent. What was the valued rent? It simply was the rent which was ascertained to be the true or real rent upon a valuation made before the Restoration. Inasmuch as there was no annual valuation made of the lands and heritages in Scotland at that time, or until 1854, this old valued rent was taken as a convenient basis. But it began to be, and I have not the slightest doubt continued through the greater part of the 18th century to be, taken as the basis because it still represented substantially the real value of the land. Of course, the real value of the land was every day drifting away from the valued rent; and, certainly, it had done so greatly by the end of the last century, and then, if the assessment was to be made a just one, the necessity of imposing it according to the actually existing value of the land more clearly appeared. When that is kept in view, I think it will be seen that the proposal contained in this Bill, of reverting to the valued rent, notwithstanding the contrary practice of somewhere over 80 years, would be utterly indefensible in principle. I venture to say that, historically, no greater change in the value or mode of occupation of land has taken place in any country than in Scotland during those 80 years; and to revert now to the valued rent, which was originally adopted as being a fair index of the real value, after more than 200 years have elapsed since the valuation represented by the "valued rent" was made, would be to adopt a rule of assessment having no relation to the present actual value of the property possessed by the several heritors. That is one fundamental objection to the whole principle of the Bill. I have

Mr. Ramsay

thought it necessary to make that explanation, because the Memorandum attached to the Bill, and also the very clear speech of my hon. Friend in introducing the Bill, might have left an impression that there was something in the valued rent which had a statutory authority, or an authority arising otherwise than from custom in this matter which should be preserved. But when it is kept in view that this was an assessment laid on a class of persons interpreted to mean "heritors," I think the House will be satisfied that *primâ facie* that assessment should be laid upon all heritors according to the value of their land at the time when the assessment is imposed. That is plain, and the decisions of the Courts and the practice have drifted in that direction. The rule of the real rent has been applied to landward parishes where there are railways which bring in a great deal of value, yet have no valued rents. I will explain how small holders of land are seldom valued rent heritors. The old valuation was, of course, taken in the names of the persons who then held the land, and was made merely for the purpose of allocating the cess or land tax, a burden of insignificant amount. Accordingly, it was scarcely worth anybody's while, when selling land, to use the statutory powers which existed for getting the valued rent divided. It thus often happens now that the roll or list of the valued rent heritor is totally different from the roll or list of the real holders of land, because, when men have parted with land, they have not divided the valued rent. I think the House will see that the notion of doing at this time anything not only to perpetuate, but to revert to a system of that kind, would be retrograde and entirely unjust—even taking the basis of this assessment, assuming it to be a good assessment—apart from all other objections which I shall immediately state. This is an assessment upon heritors, and in respect of land, which, when rightly assessed, should be *primâ facie* on all land, and upon all holding the status of heritors. It has been stated, and quite truly, that when the real rent came to be taken as the measure, it brought in certain persons, small holders, commonly called feuars. That is rather a popular designation, because all holders of land outside burghs in

Scotland are feuars of one kind or another; and, accordingly, in discussions of this kind, while Scotchmen quite understand what is meant by feuars, it is only right to say that the term is popularly used to designate owners of small pieces of land on which they have usually built a dwelling-house. This being so, it is quite plain that if the assessment is a right and just assessment, there is nothing in its nature which would lead to feuars being exempted. The circumstance of the real rent being resorted to made feuars and the smaller holders aware, for the first time, of the liability which had hitherto been hanging in the air, but had never come down upon them, because of another method of assessment being adopted. It is quite true that when these small holders came to be assessed they felt it to be a great hardship and a great grievance. I agree that it is so. But they were not the only people who felt it to be a grievance; and I think, from the explanation I have given, it is very difficult to say that there is any sound legal principle for assessing the large heritor and exempting the small heritor. But the grievance has been keenly felt by small holders; and if the assessment is not to be laid upon small holders, the question comes to be—is it a kind of tax that should be put upon the land at all?—because, if it is to be put upon land at all, large and small holders should bear it alike. What does this Bill propose to do? I am not sure that on a first reading its precise scope will be seen. This Bill admits in the largest way that it is not a just principle to assess these rates upon land, and it makes the rates voluntary up to a certain point. Then it stops short, and while it proposes, by way of exemption, to make the rates voluntary as regards some persons, it leaves the rates compulsory in regard to others. Now, where is the principle for that? I should like to point out how it is that under this Bill the principle of compulsory rating land for ecclesiastical buildings is practically given up. There are two exemptions contained in the Bill. One is the exemption of all lands and heritages occupied solely as a church or burial-ground attached to a religious body, or a dwelling-house and garden provided for the minister of such church; and the second exemption is of all lands, with

or without houses or buildings, under £4. If these were regarded by the framers of the Bill as exemptions in the ordinary sense—if there was some ground consistent with the principle of the assessment for making these exemptions—then the natural result would have been to throw the burden of what was lost by these exemptions on the other lands in the parish. But they felt they could not do that. When you exempt a man from poor rates on the ground of poverty, you do not call upon someone to come forward with a bond, undertaking to make good the rates of which he is relieved. The framers of this Bill felt they could not throw the loss on the other lands, because that would be making one bit of land pay for another bit of land—an untenable position. What, then, do they do? They provide that where any proceeding is inaugurated for the building or repairing of an ecclesiastical structure, two or more persons shall come forward practically to give a guarantee for a sum equal to that, which, but for the passing of the Act, would have been leviable on the lands and heritages thereby exempted from assessment—that is to say, it makes voluntary this perfectly arbitrary amount, which will depend on the number of churches and manse belonging to other persuasions, and the number of holdings under £4. And who are the people who are thus to come forward? As far as I see, they need to have no connection with the parish at all. It is anybody, and, accordingly, this extraordinary state of matters is brought about. Suppose nobody comes forward with the requisite guarantee, the ecclesiastical buildings can never be touched. But suppose you do get somebody to come forward with this bond, see what the result will be. Suppose there is an intention to repair a church in Ross-shire or Sutherlandshire, and nobody belonging to these counties comes forward. Is it intended that volunteers from the great towns should be allowed to tender the bond, and to what effect? To the effect not only of inaugurating the building or the repairing of the ecclesiastical structures, but also of causing the people in the parish to be assessed. Under this proposal, you would leave it at the will and option of any of Her Majesty's subjects, by coming forward with this bond, or not coming forward, to say whether the

land in a particular parish is to be assessed. I put it to the House whether anything like that has ever been proposed to the Legislature? I say it has not; therefore this Bill is subject to that criticism. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said that no one had denied the suitability of the remedy, and that no one had criticized this Bill on its merits. I am venturing to do both. I say the remedy is altogether unsuitable and altogether unworkable. But that is only one thing. It results from admitting these exemptions, and making this requirement, for some volunteer to come forward and guarantee the amount lost by these exemptions, that the whole principle of compulsory assessment is given up, and when that principle is given up, its surrender should have been carried out to its logical conclusion. That is what my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire proposes to do. That objection strikes very deeply at the root of what is done in this Bill, and will be found to go much further than, perhaps, its promoters contemplated. But I would ask, if there is to be exemption, why should the exemption be limited to these particular cases? If this is a proper burden on land, as it must be assumed to be by those who propose to keep it up as to the rest, why should the use of land for a religious building or a manse lead to its being exempted, or why should holdings under £4 be exempted? I suppose the reason is that anyone connected with another religious communion whose building was assessed would have his feelings offended; but, if that is so, it would equally offend his feelings to be assessed in respect of his house and land. The principle admitted by the Bill would thus go much further than its promoters are prepared to go. Then the £4 exemption is a very singular one. The Bill says there is to be this exemption only if a man does not happen to have other land in a parish bringing it over £4. That is also a principle which would go much further than is intended. It is further to be observed that, while in the first instance the guarantee is, apparently, a voluntary one, there are some very singular provisions contained in the Bill, which, as I read it, are intended to recoup the people who have undertaken the guarantee, and these

are provisions which do not seem to be consistent with the idea of a National Church. Hitherto, in a landward parish, every parishioner has had a right to a seat in the parish church. That is an article which lies at the foundation of the whole thing. From this it follows that nobody in a landward parish has a right to let seats—certainly not to let seats until everybody in the parish is accommodated. It is doubtful whether the rule goes further; but this Bill proposes, amongst other things, to provide, that in allocating the area of a church there may be a certain number of seats given to the kirk-session; and one of the most singular features of the Bill is that it proposes, that when persons do not use some of the voluntary powers contained in the Bill—that is to say, do not choose to renounce its benefits, as far as they are benefits—they are not to get seats allocated to them, though they are heritors and parishioners, while the parts of the area of the church which they do not take are to be given to the kirk-session, and one of the things the kirk-session can do is to let those seats. But there is no limitation as to the persons to whom the seats may be let. No parishioner will pay rent as he is entitled to sit free; and, therefore, I presume it is intended that those seats are to be let to persons who are not parishioners. That is a novel proposal, to take away a part of the area of a parish church, and let it to people who probably will not be parishioners, without any safeguard that the parishioners shall be satisfied. There is no such provision or safeguard in this Bill, and I say that is a very grave defect, and an indefensible innovation on the whole principle upon which ecclesiastical affairs have hitherto been regulated. It has been pointed out during this discussion that the measure or standard of valuation proposed to be adopted by this Bill is altogether novel; and, as far as I can see, it is not sustained by any sound principle whatever. It has been pointed out, also, that the value is to be taken, speaking generally, exclusive of buildings—that is to say, you are not to take land as you find it, but you are to take land as you do not find it. One would suppose that everything that was a proper burden on land would, naturally, be on the land as it is now; but the hon. Member for the

University of Glasgow proposes to strip buildings off the land, but he does not propose to do that consistently, because he does not propose to strip off the farm-houses—in other words, he proposes the artificial and differential valuation of the land. He proposes, I suppose, prairie value for the sites of dwelling houses; but he proposes that agricultural buildings should be paid for as they are. Is the notion this, that you are to take the land as it was in the 16th century? Can that be carried out consistently? There are very few farm-houses now that were then in existence. They have been erected since; and there is nothing in which greater improvements have been made than in farm-houses. Why should that sort of improvement be treated differently from other improvements? And it is not only in farm buildings that improvements have been made in the last two centuries. A very large part of the face of the country, previously waste and wild, has by drainage and culture been brought into a state of high cultivation. All that is to be valued as it stands. That kind of improvement is not to be discounted—in fact, this Bill proposes to go into endless inconsistencies, in support of which I have not heard one word of argument adduced. It would lead to immense difficulty and immense complication. There is to be a new column in the Valuation Roll made up once in 10 years, not on existing value, but on a hypothetical value, or, I suppose, prairie value, of the site of every house. By one of the clauses of the Bill it is positively proposed that the assessor who makes up this Roll is to ask the owners of land for a return of the value of the land as if there was no house upon it. How can he answer such a question? And yet, if the man does not answer it, he is to be under a statutory penalty. This would throw our whole system into confusion. I point out these things for the sake of showing that while hon. Members who are promoting this Bill have taken means for pacifying those who feel the grievance most acutely, they are increasing the grievance upon others, and they are introducing principles altogether novel in respect to assessment for which I have not heard one single argument advanced. What does my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire say? Whether he was staggered by the strangeness of the

proposals of the Bill or not I cannot say. But he says, in substance—"You have got hold of a sound principle—a measure for making charges for ecclesiastical buildings voluntary; carry out that principle to its logical conclusion." If the words suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke) were omitted from the Amendment—namely, "belonging to one religious denomination"—I think my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire would say in substance to the promoters of the Bill—"You yourselves have admitted it is not a sound principle to make a general compulsory assessment applicable to ecclesiastical buildings." It seems very difficult to resist that—at all events, when we have to deal with a Bill which virtually admits the principle of leaving the matter voluntary and dependent upon guarantors coming forward having no connection with the parish. If that is sound, then the logical result is—"Do not have any compulsory assessment at all." Without delaying the House further, I think I have said enough to show that the admissions involved in this Bill are sufficient to carry us that length, and that the Bill itself is impracticable and unworkable.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: It is not my intention to follow the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate into the discussion of the legal matters into which he has entered. What I wish to point out is, that if the course to be taken by those who oppose the Bill is not merely to reject the Bill on its second reading, but to substitute in its place the Resolution of the hon. Member for Roxburghshire, that is a very serious step, because they are laying down a principle which admits of very wide application. It may be perfectly true that the objections of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate may be found on examination to render a reconstruction of the Bill necessary; but if the right hon. and learned Gentleman and the Government are prepared not only to say that this Bill does not satisfy them, and that they cannot accept the principle laid down in it, but that we must go on, and lay down the principle that no measure is satisfactory which proposes to continue provision for the maintenance of ecclesiastical buildings belonging to one religious denomination, we are committing ourselves to

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the principle, and we are going directly in the direction of Disestablishment. That may not be the intention of hon. Members in voting for the Bill; but the vote will remain on record, establishing a principle adopted by the House in this year 1884, and it will be used as a starting point for further inroads upon the principle of Establishment. For that reason I cannot help thinking that the position taken up is one that is much more formidable than would be expected from the speech of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate. That speech seemed to me to be very much in favour of the Establishment, and to find fault with the Bill for departing from that principle; but the Amendment seems to go in an opposite direction, and if accepted the consequences may be of a serious character.

MR. LEWIS said, that the Amendment represented the attitude of the former opponents of church rates in this country, who said—"If you will not go the whole length with us, we will not allow you to apply remedies for the redress of acknowledged grievances." The opponents of the Bill did not wish it to pass, because it would enable the Church of Scotland to do its work better than it could at present.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, that after the speech of the Lord Advocate he would ask permission to withdraw the Amendment, in order that, on the suggestion of the Lord Advocate, the words "belonging to one religious denomination" might be omitted.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 103; Noes 160: Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 116.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MAJOR GENERAL ALEXANDER moved that the debate be adjourned.

MR. SPEAKER: The debate is adjourned by the clock.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—
RUMOURED FALL OF BERBER.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked, Whether the Under Secretary of State

for Foreign Affairs could now give the House any information as to the reported massacre of the Berber garrison?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The following telegram has been received at the Foreign Office:—

“On June 9 Mr. Egerton telegraphed that Major Kitchener telegraphed from Korosko a Berber report, unconfirmed to him from other sources, that Berber had fallen. On the 9th a messenger arrived at Suakin who had left Berber on the 3rd and had seen Hussein Pasha Khalifa. The messenger reported to Major Chermide that steamers were working below Berber and barges up to Khartoum; that the road west of the Nile was fairly safe; that provisions at Berber were cheap; and that there was no particular danger there. On June 10 Mr. Egerton telegraphed that Major Kitchener telegraphed that Berber was surprised and nearly the whole garrison massacred nine days ago. ‘This news,’ Mr. Egerton says, ‘is difficult to believe, being sent by pass from Mahdi’s Emir to Kalifa’s sons, and news brought by Chermide’s messengers being of later date.’”

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked if the noble Lord could state whether there was any truth in the reported attack on the outposts at Wady Halfa?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No information to that effect had reached the Foreign Office when I left.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (REPEAL, &c.)

BILL.

Select Committee on Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) Bill, *nominated* of,—Mr. MELLOR, Mr. COMPTON LAWRENCE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. WHITLEY, Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Mr. WARTON, and Mr. HIBBERT, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

House adjourned at five minutes
before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 12th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—Second Reading
—Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*; Settled Land* [247].

Select Committee—Yorkshire Land Registry and Yorkshire Registry [Nos. 24-80], Mr. Edward Leatham *added*.

Committee—Representation of the People [119] (*New Clauses*) [Eighth Night]—R.P.; National Debt (Conversion of Stock) [186]—R.P.; Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment* [228]—R.P.

Considered as amended—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Walsall and District Tramways, &c.)* [193]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4) (Colchester, &c.)* [196]; Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Alperton and Sudbury Water, &c.)* [182].

Third Reading—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) (Saint James, Westminster, &c.)* [195]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (Unions of North Dublin, &c.)* [189]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Bandon Waterworks)* [188]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9) (Parishes of Ashen, &c.)* [191]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10) (Parishes of Charley, &c.)* [192], and *passed*.
Withdrawn—Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order* [221].

QUESTIONS.

ARMY—STAFF PAYMASTERS.

MR. WHITLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact, as stated in *The Times* of the 8th May, that the rank of Lieutenant Colonel will be bestowed upon Staff Paymasters in the Army Pay Department after five years' service in that position; and, whether he can hold out any hope that the number of Chief Paymasters will be increased, so as to allow of all General Officers commanding at Home and Abroad having on their staff, as financial adviser, an Officer holding corresponding rank to that of the other heads of departments?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: The honorary rank of major has already been conferred upon all Staff Paymasters; and it is not considered desirable to confer the higher honorary rank of lieutenant colonel upon them after five years' service. In reply to the second part of the Question I have to say that the number of Chief Paymasters has only recently been increased from 12 to 15—a number which, in our opinion, is adequate. There are several districts, both at home and abroad, commanded by General Officers, in which the financial duties are not sufficiently important to justify the employment of a Chief Paymaster. Both my answers must, therefore, be in the negative.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—ELECTORAL DIVISION AND UNION OF EDENDERRY, KING'S COUNTY.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieu-

tenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, at the election of Poor Law Guardians held last March for the Division of Edenderry; in the Union of Edenderry, King's County, the returning officer allowed the trustees of the estate of the Marquess of Downshire to record twenty-four proxy votes, and also allowed Lord Arthur Hill (guardian of the minor) to record six votes, making thirty proxy votes from the same property, although the late Marquess of Downshire while living could only claim twelve votes; whether the returning officer rejected a large number of votes given for the popular candidates on the ground that seed rate was due to the Union by the voters, while, at the same time, he allowed the trustees and guardians of the estate to vote from property very largely indebted to the Union for seed rate; and, if he will state what decision the Local Government Board has arrived at in the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: The returning officer erroneously allowed the trustees of the estate of the Marquess of Downshire 24 instead of 14 proxy votes. The 10 votes in excess have been disallowed; but the result of the election is not affected thereby. Lord Arthur Hill did not vote as guardian of the minor, but in respect of property unconnected with the trustees. The votes of persons holding land on which seed rate was due were disallowed. Lord Downshire had no land under such circumstances. The Local Government Board, having carefully considered the objections raised, do not think that there are grounds for disturbing the election.

IRISH AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS— ANNUAL MIGRATION INTO ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay before the House the result of his inquiries into the employment of migratory Irish agricultural labourers in the north of England and south of Scotland, and the causes of the diminished inflow of those labourers in recent years?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Registrar General of Ireland was good enough, at my request, to examine the Reports received by him on this subject, and to prepare a Memorandum showing the results of

those inquiries. I have no objection to a copy of that Memorandum being laid upon the Table, if my hon. Friend wishes to move for it. The original Reports themselves are, I think, too bulky and voluminous to be presented with advantage.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked that a copy of the Memorandum might be laid upon the Table.

MR. TREVELYAN: I will do so.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH CLERKS AT THE POST OFFICE, BELFAST.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Postmaster General, If he has yet completed the inquiries which he promised to institute into the specific cases of hardship which were brought under his notice over six months ago, of certain telegraph clerks attached to the Belfast Post Office, who are now allowed only a fortnight's leave of absence in the year, whilst other members of the same staff, performing precisely the same duties, and with considerably less service, are allowed three weeks' annual leave; and, if so, will he be good enough to state the result of his inquiries?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that the inquiries were complete. All the clerks appointed to the Belfast Post Office since the new rule as to leave were in the same position. Those who enjoyed three weeks' leave of absence were appointed previous to the rule; and if there were any senior to them who had only a fortnight, that was owing to their being transferred at their own request to Belfast since the new rule was made.

NATIONAL DEBT ACT, 1883—TERMINABLE ANNUITIES (CONVERSION).

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What amount of perpetual Three per Cent Annuities standing to the Account of the Paymaster General of the Supreme Court of Judicature have been converted into Terminable Annuities under section three of "The National Debt Act, 1883;" and, whether he will lay upon the Table the certificate showing the bases on which such Terminable Annuities are calculated, as provided for by sub-sections (a), (b), and (c) of section four of "The National Debt Act, 1883?"

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, in reply to the first part of my hon. Friend's Question, I have to say that £40,000,000 Three per Cents were cancelled as from the 27th of August, 1883, in exchange for an Annuity for 20 years of £2,665,835, as he will see on referring to the Treasury Warrant of the 1st of September, 1883, which was laid upon the Table on the 12th of February last. In the second part of his Question my hon. Friend is pointing, I presume, to a statement showing the Stock to be replaced by the application of the instalments of the Annuity. Such a table, certified by the Comptroller General and Actuary of the National Debt Office, has been prepared and furnished to the Treasury; and if my hon. Friend wishes to move for it, there is no objection to its being laid upon the Table.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—
ROYAL EDINBURGH OBSERVATORY.

MR. BUCHANAN (for Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in the proposed transfer of the Royal Edinburgh Observatory to the University of Edinburgh, (sec. 17, Universities (Scotland) Bill), it is intended to pass it over in its present inefficient state, or after being duly equipped and furnished with instruments as recommended by Lord Lindsay's Commission?

MR. COURTNEY: My best reply to this Question would be to tell my hon. Friend how the recommendations of Lord Lindsay's Commission have been dealt with. As regards the instruments, Lord Lindsay made some detailed recommendations in 1879, and it was decided to carry them out. There has been much delay in doing this, owing to the great care required, and to the many calls on the time of the representative of the Office of Works in Scotland; but some progress has been made, and the Government are prepared to complete the work, or to pay over the cost of it to the University. Arrangements have been made for relieving the Staff, on its transfer to the University, of the meteorological work it now performs. A proposal has been made to the Royal Society of Edinburgh as to the printing of the Star Catalogue, which, it is hoped, will lead to a settlement of this very

difficult question. Provision has been made for a residence for the second assistant. The Government are prepared to ask Parliament to make a further grant of £400 to the University on the transfer, to enable it to settle any outstanding claims of the Professor or others. There remains only the suggested increase of salaries; and as to that it would be most improper if we were to raise salaries at the very time when we are proposing the transfer of the staff to another Body.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—PURCHASE
OF THE FRIENDLY BROTHERS'
CLUB, DUBLIN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Government have agreed to purchase the Friendly Brothers' Club, Upper Sackville Street, Dublin; and, if so, whether he will kindly state the price, and the amount of the different valuations of the premises received by the Government, with the names of the valuers?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, the Government had agreed to purchase the premises of the Friendly Brothers' Club, Upper Sackville Street, Dublin, for Post Office purposes, at the price of £7,000. That was the value put upon them by the officers of the Board of Works, and he knew of no other valuation.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE
(IRELAND)—THE BARROW
RIVER.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, When the result of the late survey of the Barrow River will be made known; and, what steps the Government propose to take next to mitigate the autumn floods?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, the Surveyor had promised his Report as to the Barrow River on the 15th instant. As to the second part of the Question, it was proposed, on receipt of the Report from the Board of Works, to appoint a Committee to suggest some scheme of local co-operation. The Government had no original power of action in the matter. He was aware of the damage resulting from these floods, and if anything could be done to mitigate the effect, the Government would do it,

PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1877—CON-
VEYANCE OF PRISONERS ON
COMMITTAL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he proposes to introduce his promised measure for assimilating the Law relating to the expenses of conveying prisoners in Ireland to that in force in England?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Bill is in type, and I am corresponding with the Departments concerned. It will be sent for Treasury approval next week, and I hope to introduce it at a very early date.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—A
BRITISH COMMISSIONER.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any steps to appoint a British Commissioner to reside on the frontiers of the Transvaal and Zululand; and, whether, if these steps are being deferred until the ratification of the new Convention with the Boers, he would consider the advisability of appointing the Commissioner without delay?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, When the further Papers upon Zululand will be presented to the House? He also asked what is the present position of affairs in the so-called Republics of Stellaland and Goshen; whether the authority of the British Government has been recognised there; and, whether the Resident has succeeded in putting an end to the quarrels between the Native Chiefs?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Her Majesty's Government have no later information than that contained in the Papers which have been distributed to-day. They are, however, in communication with Sir Henry Bulwer and others as to the recent proceedings of the Boers on the Zululand and Swazi Frontier, but have not as yet sufficient information to enable them to decide whether the circumstances are such as to render the appointment of a British Commissioner on the Eastern Frontier of the Transvaal expedient at the present moment or not. The matter, however, is still under consideration; and while I hope a conclusion will shortly be come to, we shall not wait

for any action of the Transvaal Government before settling the point. The head of the Stellaland Republic has accepted the position of an Assistant Commissioner with regard to that territory.

FIJI—LABOUR ORDINANCE.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the fact that the last labour ordinance passed in Fiji prevents any Native Fijian from hiring himself for employment in the "home" districts for more than one month, and even then under conditions so troublesome as practically almost to shut out the Native population from employment by the Colonists; whether this Law was passed in the supposed interest of the Native race; whether, in considering the Native race, only the Native chiefs were consulted; whether it be the fact that these chiefs are interested in keeping their people working only for them, and that the effect of the Law is to prevent their people from getting that price for their labour which they would get in an open market, and to keep them in closer bondage to their chiefs; whether the Native race being now British subjects, each man individually is not entitled to sell his labour where he pleases; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have in contemplation any scheme for securing to them that right?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The hon. Member is not quite accurate in the first part of the Question; but I must apologize to him, because I think the error has been caused by a letter written at the Colonial Office, in which it is not quite accurately stated. What is accurate is, that the new ordinance does not forbid hiring for more than a month, but only insists, as a condition previous, that the labourer should be placed on a labour register. The Native can apply to have his name placed on the register, in which are entered the names of all those who may be engaged for service outside their home districts, or for periods exceeding one month. Generally, I may say, in answer to my hon. Friend's Question, which is rather more argumentative than is usual, or than I can deal with, that that the law was passed in consequence of three consecutive representations made by the Chiefs in annual Council assembled, to the Fiji

Government, to the effect that whole districts were occasionally swept of all the able-bodied men, and nothing left but women and children, who suffered starvation. Restrictions, therefore, have been imposed in the interests of the whole community. The Government have certainly tried to rule in harmony with the ancient tribal system of village communities; but we have no reason to believe that the Chiefs exercise the powers they possess in the manner suggested by the Question, and there have been no complaints of that character. The Native can sell his labour as he likes; he is only restrained from binding himself in certain circumstances for any very lengthened period or in distant parts.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—THE
NATIONALIST MEETING AT
NEWRY.

MR. HENRY THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Thomson, M.P. for Newry, at the request of the Orangemen, apprised the resident magistrate in charge of Newry on Sunday the 8th inst., that they, the Orangemen, apprehended that, in the excitement of returning from the Nationalist meeting, there might be some attack on, or disturbance in the neighbourhood of, the Orange Hall, and requested a force of police to be sent for its protection; whether the resident magistrates then undertook to Mr. Thomson that he might depend upon the Hall being protected; whether the police remained for some time at the Hall, but withdrew immediately before the return of the procession; whether there were any police protecting the Hall at the time the procession passed; whether several stones were thrown into the Hall; and, whether the police removed them? He would add, in explanation of the Question, that it was at the request of the resident magistrate he went to the Orangemen. He returned from the Orangemen, and told the resident magistrate that the Orangemen would do all in their power to support the law.

MR. TREVELYAN: I was going to state to the House what the hon. Member himself has stated. The Resident Magistrate telegraphs to me that what occurred was as follows:—Mr. Thomson

gave him distinctly to understand that there would be no disturbance on the part of the Orangemen; and, on his opinion being asked, in the presence of three Resident Magistrates and some Constabulary officers, he stated that the contingents from that side of the country, coming to and returning from the meeting, should be allowed to pass the Orange Hall, that being the shortest route. He was informed that a force would be placed for its protection when these contingents were returning from the meeting. That was done. Two hundred and fifty Infantry were stationed in the Court House adjoining, and were not removed throughout the day. Fifty Constabulary were also placed there, and remained until after the processionists had passed the Hall quietly on their way home. They were accompanied out of the town by some bands belonging to Newry, who subsequently returned by the same route. On their way out they had to pass the ends of two Protestant streets, where stone throwing began; and the police, who had been at the Hall, were brought up at once to the scene of this disturbance, which they quelled. Afterwards, they returned with the Newry bands to the Hall. It was then that the most serious disturbance appears to have occurred; and the police proved their presence on the spot by their behaviour, for some of them forced open the door of the Hall, and stopped the firing, while others compelled the processionists to remove from the scene. No doubt, life was thus saved, and much serious rioting prevented. I cannot make out that anyone was seriously hurt. Stones were thrown into the Hall, which were removed by the police. [*Laughter, and "Oh, oh!"*] I suppose they took the stones out of the Hall, having ascertained that they were there. I do not at this moment understand the meaning of the Question.

MR. GIBSON: It was in evidence that they attacked the Hall.

MR. TREVELYAN: I presume the police who removed the stones would be willing to come forward and swear to it, as the matter is within the knowledge of the Resident Magistrate. The case of firing will be before the Bench, I believe, on the 18th of this month; and the evidence relating to what occurred will, no doubt, on that occasion be fully gone into.

MR. PARNELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether he has any information that two further arrests have been made of Orangemen who were in the Hall, on the charge of deliberately firing at the procession?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman, at the same time, explain how it is that, whereas, on Monday, he informed the House that

"On the procession approaching the Orange Hall several shots were fired out of the windows, and that this exasperated the National party, who retaliated by throwing stones,"

The Freeman's Journal of the same day states that stones were thrown by the Nationalist party at the Hall, and that the Orangemen retaliated by firing shots?

MR. TREVELYAN: In answer to the hon. Member for the City of Cork, I have not had the information of two fresh arrests. In answer to the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin, I may say the part I have taken in the matter has been to read to the House the Report from the County Inspector, and the telegraphic Report of the Resident Magistrate, in answer to a Question, and at the request of the hon. Member for Newry (Mr. Thomson). I am not responsible for any newspaper reports, though I am always very glad to refer those reports for observations to Dublin, as I have done in the case of the reports in *The Times*, on the request of an hon. Member, and as I have done on my own volition in regard to the report in *The Daily Express*. I shall be very glad to answer any Question put to me in the House after referring it to Dublin. I am inclined to think that the evidence that will be before the Bench on the 18th will bring this matter to light by persons who will give testimony on oath.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman make particular inquiry as to whether the report of the District Inspector is correct that the Orangemen made the first attack; or is *The Freeman's Journal* report the correct one?

MR. TREVELYAN: It will all come out.

MR. HENRY THOMSON gave Notice that, on the earliest possible day, he would call attention to the conduct of the Government in reference to the proceedings at Newry, and also to the action of the police.

SWITZERLAND—THE SALVATIONISTS.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to a Despatch of Mr. Adams to Lord Granville, dated Berne, 5th February, in Correspondence Switzerland, No. 1, recently presented to Parliament, wherein it is stated—

"I then despatched a telegram to M. Auldjo in the following words:—'Mr. Clibborn has come from Geneva to-day to appeal to me, on behalf of himself and other British subjects, for protection and redress, with reference to certain riotous proceedings there, which, he says, have involved injury to property and persons.' and adding, 'Lose no time in bringing matter before Cantonal Government and report to me officially;'"

Why the Report of M. Auldjo is omitted from the Papers; and, whether he will lay this Report upon the Table of the House for presentation to Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: All the Reports which have been received from Consul Auldjo on this subject have been laid upon the Table, in Switzerland (No. 1), see pages 6, 7, and 25, 26, 27.

STATE OF IRELAND — POLICE BARRACK AT NEW GARDEN, TUAM.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the district about New Garden, Tuam, is perfectly quiet; and, if he will now relieve the cesspayers by removing the temporary police barrack established there?

MR. TREVELYAN: Although the district about New Garden is peaceable, the Constabulary authorities do not think that the police barrack there could be safely removed at present. It was erected for the protection of a landlord, who is believed still to require such protection. The district is not charged with the cost of the extra men, as it is not proclaimed under the Prevention of Crime Act.

In reply to a further Question from Colonel NOLAN,

MR. TREVELYAN said: The probability is, that it involves the county in the cost of the extra police. But a very vigorous inquisition is being made throughout the recently disturbed districts in Ireland to see where the number of extra police can be diminished as much as possible; and I have had, only to-day, a Report from the divisional ma-

gistrate of a district where most of these police are stationed, in which he informs me that, in the course of the month, he has diminished the number of extra police enormously. It follows from that, that the burdens upon the counties will be very much less indeed in three months than they were nine months ago. They are already much less than they were 12 months ago.

POST OFFICE—HEAD OFFICE AT
BRISTOL.

MR. LEWIS FRY asked the First Commissioner of Works, What steps have been taken with the view of affording increased accommodation at the Head Post Office at Bristol; and, whether he can hold out any prospect of the speedy removal of the great inconvenience now existing?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: We are now negotiating for the purchase of property for the extension of the Bristol Post Office; but there is a difficulty arising, from a great difference of opinion as to the value of the property we desire to acquire; and, until that is settled, no buildings can be commenced.

POST OFFICE—TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.

MR. WHITLEY asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that the Post Office has refused to allow the same advantages of telephonic intercommunication to Liverpool and Birkenhead, which are divided by the River Mersey, as are allowed to Manchester and Salford, which are divided by the River Irwell; and, whether he is prepared to reconsider the application of the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephonic Company to establish communication between the two licensed areas, so as to give to the people of Liverpool and Birkenhead the facilities which are enjoyed by Manchester and Salford?

MR. FAWCETT: The town of Salford is really, for postal and telegraphic purposes, a part of Manchester. Liverpool and Birkenhead are not thus connected, as each of these towns has a distinct postal and telegraphic system. I regret that I am unable to accede to the request contained in the Question of the hon. Member, as I do not think there is any reason to alter the decision already ar-

rived at—that the arrangement with respect to trunk wires should apply between Liverpool and Birkenhead as between Liverpool and other towns in Lancashire with which Liverpool is in very intimate relations.

MR. WHITLEY asked, whether that would not be very expensive?

MR. FAWCETT said, it would, no doubt, be more expensive.

POST OFFICE—TELEPHONE CALL OFFICES — THE LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE TELEPHONE COMPANY.

MR. BRIGGS asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company are desirous to open call offices in the various towns in their district, whereby for a small payment the public may converse with subscribers to the Telephone Exchange; whether he is aware of the existence of such accommodation in cities on the Continents of Europe and America, where the telephone is in use; whether the Postmaster General insists upon the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company charging one shilling each time such facility is afforded; and, whether he can see his way to so relax these terms as to enable the Company to afford the public the great convenience referred to?

MR. FAWCETT: The subject referred to in the Question of my hon. Friend has been for some time under careful consideration, and I regret that I am unable to sanction any smaller charge being made to the public for speaking in the manner proposed by the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephonic Exchange Company than 1s., the minimum amount now charged for an inland telegraph message.

POST OFFICE—TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION — RATE OF MAINTENANCE — THE LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE TELEPHONE COMPANY.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT asked the Postmaster General, Whether, by Letter dated 18th April 1883, addressed to the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company, the Post Office consented to erect and maintain wires for telephonic communication between town and town for a guaranteed payment of £10 per mile per annum, and if in such Letter the Company were to be allowed to obtain as many

subscribers as they can for each wire, and to charge whatever annual rate they choose, so long as no favour or preference is shown—that is to say, so long as precisely the same rate is charged to every subscriber for the same use of a wire; whether, when the Company accepted the conditions and announced their intention of bearing the entire cost themselves and giving the advantages to the subscribers free of charge, the Department refused its assent to such an arrangement, and ultimately insisted upon the Company charging a minimum annual rental of 10s. per mile of distance between town and town, or, if the subscription was monthly, a minimum charge of 18s. per mile per annum; whether he is aware that, in the opinion of the Company, these rates are practically prohibitive; and, whether he will consider the advisability of so modifying them as to give to the people of Lancashire and Cheshire the advantages, which the Company are ready and willing to offer them, of being able to converse between town and town of the district on reasonable terms?

MR. FAWCETT: I could not, without unduly encroaching on the time of the House, explain all the details of the Correspondence which has taken place between the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company and the Post Office. I shall, however, be very glad to show the Correspondence to my hon. Friend, or any other Member who may be interested in the subject, if they will call at the Post Office. Although, as I said in a recent debate on the subject, I am most desirous that every facility should be afforded for telephonic communication, I do not think I am justified, with due regard to the interests of the public and of the Revenue, in making any modification in the terms to which the Department has recently agreed with regard to trunk wires.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE —THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER— THE RUSSIAN STAFF MAP.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Ministers recognize the absorption by the Russian Government of the country up to Old Sarakhs; whether they have accepted Pul-i-Khatun, which is 50 miles

south of Sarakhs, and 150 miles south of Merv, as the starting point of the new Russo-Afghan frontier; and, when the Papers promised in February last will be presented to the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, in view of the communication with Russia, it is not advisable that I should make any statement in this House in regard to Old Sarakhs or Pul-i-Khatun. The Papers promised in February have been laid on the Table as No. 1 Central Asia.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When the proposed Boundary Commission will commence its work, and what steps are being taken meanwhile to check the constant advance of the Ozar's troops towards Herat; and, whether Her Majesty's Ministers have clearly intimated to the Russian Government that they do not recognize the assumption of the Russian Staff Map, which carries the Afghan frontier back to within 50 miles of Herat?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot, under present circumstances, give any information in regard to the communications which are passing between Her Majesty's Government and the Russian Government respecting the Afghan Frontier Question?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he wished to ask the noble Lord a further Question—namely, Whether the Russian Government has given any undertaking not to proceed with those constant advances, while Her Majesty's Ministers are making up their minds?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had already stated that he could not, while negotiations were pending, give partial information to the House.

MADAGASCAR—THE CONSULAR REPORTS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will communicate to the House the Reports of Her Majesty's Chief Consul at Madagascar as to the recent demands made by the French commanders upon the Malagasy Government, and the negotiations thereupon, and also his Reports as to the losses inflicted upon British subjects by the French operations; and, whether the

blockade of the island has lately been made more stringent?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; it is not desirable at this moment to lay further Papers on the Table. I have already informed the hon. Member that the claims for losses cannot be determined until the conclusion of hostilities. In regard to the blockade, the French Admiral has recently intimated to the captain of the *Tourmaline* his intention to extend it to Mahanoro and Fenerivo; but no formal notification of a further blockade of the coast, beyond that already established, has been received.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT gave Notice that he would, on an early occasion, call attention to the ignorance and inactivity of Her Majesty's Ministers in regard to that important subject.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE
(EIGHTH RULE)—“BLOCKING”—
THE COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISE-
MENT BILL.

MR. WAUGH asked the honourable Member for Hertfordshire (Mr. Halsey), Whether, considering that the Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill has been read a second time twice in this Parliament, and has been referred to and passed a Select Committee of this House, with the general approval of the Members of that Committee, he means to persevere in blocking the Bill, and preventing any discussion upon it as amended?

MR. HALSEY, in reply, said, he regretted exceedingly that he was unable to withdraw his opposition to the Bill, which he considered was a measure far too important to be proceeded with without fuller and more careful discussion than it could possibly receive after half-past 12 o'clock.

MR. WAUGH gave Notice that he would move an Amendment in the half-past 12 o'clock Rule, with a view to except from its operation Bills which had passed a Select Committee.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-
PRESSURE IN BOARD SCHOOLS—
SHOREDITCH BOARD OF
GUARDIANS.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he is yet in a position to state to the House the result of his in-

quiries into the case of the boy Wiles, which came before the Shoreditch Board of Guardians on the 19th of March, when two doctors reported the boy to be insane, and the child's mother attributed his insanity to over-pressure at school, and stated that the boy had complained that a pupil teacher had beaten him on the head with a ruler?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, the Committee of Inquiry appointed by the London School Board have made a Report in this case, which is so complete an answer to the Question of the noble Lord that I cannot do better than read it—

“With reference to the medical aspects of the case, the Committee find as follows:—The boy was first ill on Wednesday when he came home to dinner; the mother kept him at home from school, and gave him some domestic medical treatment, and the following morning asked a friend to go to see him, and found him in convulsions. She then sent for a doctor, and on the following (*i.e.*, Friday) morning, the rash of scarlet fever was out. The fever appears to have progressed favourably, and in the course of the succeeding week the boy was allowed by his mother to get up. On the Monday week after the rash appeared, he went out to play in the garden—much earlier than any medical man would allow a patient with the scarlet fever to be exposed in the open air, the great danger of the disease being from catching cold. In this case the child caught cold, and dropsy appeared the next day. Dropsy in such a case is a token of the suppression of the secretions of the kidneys, and common results of such suppression are delirium and convulsions, a great disturbance of the action of the nerve-centres. These results appear to have followed in this case, and to have culminated into insanity at last. All the dates being taken into consideration, with the obvious mismanagement of permitting the lad to go out while actually in the midst of the fever, it appears to the deputation that there can be no reasonable doubt that the insanity which succeeded was the result of the fever and the blood poisoning which followed upon it. The lad is now so far better as to be home again. The deputation also come to the conclusion that there was no evidence that the boy had been struck on the head.”

The pupil teacher who inflicted corporal punishment, in contravention of the rules of the Board, was dismissed the service.

INLAND REVENUE (EXCISE)—ADUL-
TERATION OF TOBACCO.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he is aware that tobacco, as usually sold to the working classes, is weighted and adulterated with from thirty to fifty per cent. of water; and,

whether such an addition is an offence under the Adulteration Acts; and, if it is, if he will order the prosecution of the offenders?

MR. HIBBERT: The Secretary of State has no knowledge of the facts stated in this Question; but if the matter is authentically brought to his notice, he will have it carefully considered, and will take such steps as may be necessary.

"REGINA v. BRADLAUGH"—THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the Report of the Judgment of the Lord Chief Justice of England in the case of Bradlaugh versus Newdegate, as contained in vol. xi. of the Law Reports of the Queen's Bench Division of 1883; whether Her Majesty's Government are aware that the Lord Chief Justice delivered himself in the course of that Judgment of the following remarks:—

"Mr. Bradlaugh's admission to the House of Commons, however, is a question in which a large number of persons have persuaded themselves that religion is involved; no one, the least acquainted with human affairs, but must have seen again and again the strange obliquities of which men, absolutely honourable in all other matters, will be guilty in what they think defence of what they think religion." (p. 5) "It is an ill fortune perhaps that to many men, though not to all, the cause of true religion seems to be concerned with the legal success or legal defeat of a particular person, whose legal success or legal defeat is really to the cause of true religion a matter of supreme indifference, yet in regard to whom (I speak only of what has been proved before me) recourse has been had to proceedings which, with regard to any other accused person, would have been sternly and universally condemned; and of which, unhappily, in the minds of many men, the cause of true religion is burdened with the discredit." (pp. 14, 15);

whether the Lord Chief Justice of England is about to preside at the Trial at Bar in the case of Regina v. Bradlaugh; and, whether, having regard to the opinions above quoted, Her Majesty's Government are enabled to take steps to procure the trial of the case in question before a tribunal in which the Lord Chief Justice will not take part?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES): My hon. Friend opposite, I presume, in the absence of any reference to the report itself, has, most

unintentionally I have no doubt, so separated the extracts he has placed upon the Notice Paper, that he probably has produced an entirely wrong impression as to the real expressions of Lord Coleridge. I hope, therefore, the House will allow me to read the portions of the context not quoted by my hon. Friend. The Lord Chief Justice said—

"It is my fortune to have to support this view in an action in which the defendant is a man whose character is entitled to great and true respect (he was then referring to the hon. Member for North Warwickshire, Mr. Newdegate), and in favour of a plaintiff (Mr. Bradlaugh) with whose opinions, openly enough avowed, I have no kind of sympathy. Yet I will not call it an ill fortune, for many of the most precious judgments which these Courts have ever heard pronounced have been pronounced in favour of persons who, if English justice could ever be swayed by personal feeling, or could for a moment 'hedge aside from the direct forth-right,' would assuredly have failed to command success."

And then, in reference to the proceedings in the particular trial, such as the investigation of the plaintiff's private banking book, the Lord Chief Justice employed the words of the second paragraph of my hon. Friend's Question. In answer to the second portion of my hon. Friend's Question, I reply that the Lord Chief Justice, in accordance with his duty, will preside at the Trial at Bar. Then my hon. Friend asks me whether Her Majesty's Government can take steps to prevent Lord Coleridge forming part of the tribunal which is to try the case? I wish to say, as emphatically and distinctly as I can, that Her Majesty's Government can take, and certainly will take, no steps whatever to interfere in any way with the selection of Judges who are to try any case. It would be bad enough, and a great evil, if any suitor, at any time, could take any part in selecting the Judges who are to try his cause; but I can conceive nothing worse, as regards the administration of justice, than that the Government, when the Crown is engaged in a suit against a subject, should select any Judge to sit, or prevent any Judge from sitting, unless, indeed, it be that such action of the Government should be prompted by any political action either by Question or debate in this House.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish to ask my hon. and learned Friend, Whether it is not the case that the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, in consequence

of some words which he had previously let drop, refused to take part in the trial of Mr. Parnell and others; and, whether the example of the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, who is not an ex-Liberal Attorney General, might not be followed by the Lord Chief Justice of England?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): The hon. Gentleman will forgive me if I take no notice of the personal reference in his Question. In answer to the Question, I have to say that the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland thought right to take action on his own motion; but in this case the Question of the hon. Gentleman is, whether the Government is to interfere and control the action of the Lord Chief Justice of England? We have no control over the action of the Judges.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Will either the defendant or plaintiff in this action be able to carry it before another and a higher Court; and, will the Judges who are to take part in the trial include any more ex-Liberal Attorney Generals?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I do not know if the House will approve of the tone in which the noble Lord has put this Question. I know nothing really, officially, of the Judges who are to try this case; but, personally, I believe I am correct in stating that the Judges who will sit with the Lord Chief Justice will be Mr. Justice Grove and Baron Huddleston. As to the case going to another Court, I am unable to answer the noble Lord as distinctly as I could wish. There is a doubt whether these are in the nature of criminal proceedings; but if they are in the nature of criminal proceedings, there is no appeal, and it will not be possible to take the case to another Court except by a motion in arrest of judgment on the ground of error in the record.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked when the hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to solve the point?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I shall be able to solve that point when I get a judicial opinion of the Judges upon the subject. If Judges of equal learning differ upon the subject, it would be great presumption for me to give an opinion upon it.

MR. BIGGAR: Perhaps I may be allowed to ask Mr. Attorney General whether or not he is aware that it is the habitual practice to select particular Judges in Ireland to try particular cases; and, whether he and the Prime Minister will pledge themselves that that practice will not be continued in future?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I am not aware, so far as I can say, that it has ever been done; and, beyond that, I do not think it ever will.

JAMAICA—THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Order in Council and the instructions to the Governor of Jamaica, and other Papers relating to the new form of Government, and the Report of the Royal Commissioners on the new Franchise in that Island, will be laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that Papers referred to in the Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman would be laid on the Table of the House when completed.

HOUSE OF LORDS—ALLOWANCES TO RETIRED OFFICERS—THE INVESTED FEE FUND.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will furnish a Return showing, in detail, the allowances now paid to Retired Officers of the House of Lords, and how much is paid out of the interest of the Invested Fee Fund, and how much out of current fees; and, the amount of the Invested Fee Fund and the sum realised by current fees during the last financial year?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the Account giving these details is annually laid before this House. The Account for 1882-3 was so laid on the 14th of August last.

LAW AND POLICE—THE DYNAMITE OUTRAGES—THE NELSON COLUMN.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether there is any foundation for the report of a recent attempt to remove or destroy the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square; and, if so, what information he can give on the subject; and, whether any reward has been offered with a view to discover

the perpetrators of this wanton outrage upon the National Monument erected in the Metropolis in honour to the memory of the illustrious hero?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir, I have no information to give to the House on the subject of this attempt beyond that contained in the newspapers at the time, which was substantially accurate. The question of offering a reward for the detection of the perpetrators is one for the consideration of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS— WATERLOO PLACE.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he has in contemplation to carry into execution the long postponed Metropolitan improvement of opening a roadway from Waterloo Place into the Park, thereby greatly to relieve the traffic which now encumbers Pall Mall East, and to afford facilities so much required by Members of Parliament and others whose business takes them to Westminster, particularly during the Parliamentary Session?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I have no proposal to make to the House on this subject. The gradients would not, I believe, permit of such an access being made without the removal of the column and statue of the Duke of York; and, even then, the road would be inconveniently lowered with reference to the level of the road of Carlton Terrace.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)— RUMOURED FALL OF BERBER.

MR. BOURKE asked, Whether the Government had received any additional information with regard to Berber?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir. Beyond the information which I gave to the House yesterday, at the close of the proceedings, no fuller information had been received by the Foreign Office, up to the time I left with regard to Berber. I may state, however, that a telegram has been received to-day from Admiral Hewett from Adowah, in which he states that his Mission has been successful; that he would leave for the coast on the 4th; that a Treaty had been signed securing free transit through Massowah from Abyssinia, and also that a Slave Trade Treaty had been signed.

Sir Robert Peel

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Is there anything said in the Treaty about the territorial cession of Massowah?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have given the House all the information in the possession of the Government; but, as I have already stated in debate, it was hoped that the negotiations would be successful without the territorial cession of Massowah, the King of Abyssinia being satisfied with the right of free commercial access to the town and port; and, in this hope, I gather Her Majesty's Government have not been mistaken.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Can the noble Lord inform the House where Admiral Hewett is now?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, I cannot; but the telegram gives the date at which he expected to leave Adowah and reach the coast.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Is the noble Lord unaware that a telegram appears in all the evening papers, that he has arrived on the coast?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I said nothing to the contrary. I merely gave such information as had been received at the Admiralty and Foreign Office.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 10th June.*]

[EIGHTH NIGHT.]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

New Clauses.

New Clause:—

(Extension of suffrage to women.)

"For all purposes connected with, and having reference to, the right to vote at Parliamentary elections, words in the Representation of the People Acts importing the masculine gender include women."—(*Mr. Woodall.*)

Question again proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

LORD JOHN MANNERS: In the course of the somewhat comminatory observations addressed to the Committee by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, there was one statement made in

which I heartily concur. The right hon. Gentleman expressed a decided opinion that this question of female enfranchisement should be discussed totally apart from all political and Party considerations. When I heard the right hon. Gentleman say that, it occurred to me that it might not be inappropriate or improper that I, who have for a long number of years taken a strong interest in the success of this proposal, should rise immediately after the right hon. Gentleman, and add my voice to the suggestion that it should be removed from all Party considerations. At the same time, I must remind the Committee, in reference to the condition on which the right hon. Gentleman laid such great stress, that the proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) never has been considered as being of a Party character; and if it had not been for the speech of the right hon. Gentleman himself, I venture to think that it would have been discussed and decided without the slightest reference to Party topics or political considerations. But I contend that the right hon. Gentleman, in that speech, did contrive to throw a good deal of Party colouring over the whole question. At the same time, in the remarks I propose to offer to the Committee in support of the proposition of the hon. Member for Stoke, I shall endeavour, as far as I can, to avoid everything that may savour of Party politics. But, apart from the desire which has been expressed to keep this question clear from Party politics, I confess I entertain considerable doubt whether any question which relates to the franchise—any question relating to the enfranchisement of any portion of Her Majesty's subjects—must not be regarded more or less as a political question. My contention, then, is, that whether the question of the enfranchisement of the female ratepayers of the Kingdom be considered as part of a proposition for the general enlargement of the franchise as now proposed, or whether it be considered a separate measure, introduced on its own merits, the political questions which surround it should partake in no sense whatever of a Party character. Beyond that I find considerable difficulty in following the right hon. Gentleman; and for this reason—that the right hon. Gentleman expressed no opinion what-

ever upon the principle of the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Stoke. He is, apparently, neither against it, nor is he for it. His attitude in respect of this question, which has now been under discussion for a great number of years, may be described as a purely Laodicean attitude—he will neither support it, nor will he oppose it in principle. To hear the right hon. Gentleman one would fancy that it was a totally new question suddenly sprung on the attention of the Committee by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke. Is it a new question? Why, Sir, if there is any question connected with the franchise which has been more thoroughly discussed, sifted, and threshed out during the last 17 years, it is this very question we are discussing now. But the right hon. Gentleman went a step further, and he suggested that the hon. Member for Stoke was endeavouring to entrap the Committee into a hasty and precipitate decision upon the question. As to haste and precipitancy attaching to a proposal for the enfranchisement of the female ratepayers of this Kingdom, I should like to know how many debates have taken place within these walls upon it; how many Divisions have occurred in the House of Commons; how many public meetings have been held; and how many writings have been given to the world by eminent patriots and illustrious statesmen, who have sifted this matter to the very bottom? When I heard the charge of haste and precipitancy, I could not help reflecting how the proposals of Her Majesty's Government themselves would stand in comparison, so far as haste and precipitancy are concerned, with the proposal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke. Let us take this question of the enfranchisement of the female ratepayers, and contrast it with the proposal of the Bill for the enfranchisement of the Irish cottiers, or the enfranchisement of that novel class of citizens who are, under the Bill, to come into the enjoyment of the franchise, under what is called the Service Clause of the right hon. Gentleman's Bill. For how many years has the question of giving the vote to the Irish cottiers been discussed, either within or without the walls of Parliament? How many years have been devoted to the consideration of whether that class of persons who

occupy what may be called without offence a servile position is fit and capable of exercising the franchise or not? No, Sir; in considering this fragmentary Reform Bill, the charge of haste and precipitancy cannot justly be levelled against the clause now under discussion. Well, then, Sir, passing away from that question, I think there were only two other considerations brought under the attention of the Committee by the right hon. Gentleman. The first was, what I think he called the social magnitude and complexity of this question. Well, I am bound to say that for my part I cannot soar to those heights of speculation to which the right hon. Gentleman invites us. I confess that I have never been able to look at the question from that transcendental aspect from which some hon. and right hon. Gentlemen have been disposed to regard it. To me it is a very simple, a very plain, and almost a humdrum question. It is simply this—Will you grant the Parliamentary franchise to a class of Her Majesty's subjects who, for many years past, have blamelessly, and with great advantage to the State, exercised the franchise with respect to Municipal, with respect to Poor Law, and with respect to School Board elections? I cannot make the question either greater or smaller than that. It is a simple, practical, and plain question, which really requires no speculative skill to discuss or decide upon. Well, Sir, if that be so, can anyone allege that the female ratepayers of this country have shown themselves unworthy of the trust which it is proposed to repose in them, from the manner in which they have discharged the functions which have already been entrusted to them? I ventured, in some observations which I made upon the second reading of the Bill, to allude to one class of these female ratepayers—the female farmers of this country. By way of illustration, I will again refer to that class, because as a county Member I naturally have more knowledge of that class, and possibly more interest in them. But, I ask, can anyone allege that during the period of time, now ranging over a great number of years, the female farmers have exercised the franchises with which they have been entrusted, and have discharged the duties which have devolved on them, many and important as those duties are,

there is the slightest ground for asserting that they are likely to prove themselves unworthy, unfit, or incapable of exercising the Parliamentary franchise. I should like to quote the opinion delivered only the other day in a town with which I am acquainted—the borough of Grantham, by a gentleman well known in the agricultural world of Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, on this very subject. I refer to Mr. Wilders, who said—

“To my mind the greatest injustice is, that the female ratepayer and owner should not be allowed to vote. Fancy a woman farming 500 acres of land, and paying the usual contributions to the taxes of the country, having no voice in the representation of the country while her own labourers have. If any man disputes the business capabilities of women, let him begin and finish an important business transaction with her, and I will answer for it he will come off second best.”

Well, then, Sir, I contend that there has been no valid reason assigned by anyone why the Parliamentary franchise should not be conferred upon these fit and capable female ratepayers. The right hon. Gentleman has drawn somewhat upon his imagination, and has suggested that there might be some occult reason—I do not think he said it occurred to his own mind—but that there might be some occult reason why these female ratepayers, who might be perfectly fit to vote at Municipal, School Board, and Poor Law elections—nay, even why they should be capable, under the new measure which the Government have introduced, of managing the whole of the local affairs of the 4,000,000 of inhabitants of this great City, but why they still might be incapable, every four, five, or six years of deciding at the ballot box who should be a fit and proper person to represent them in this House of Parliament. Was there ever a more puerile reason offered to the Committee than that suggested by the right hon. Gentleman? Is he prepared himself to maintain it in argument? Will he tell the Committee that he agrees with those who draw this distinction, and that he draws this line of demarcation between the fitness of the female ratepayer to manage the educational and all the local concerns of the 4,000,000 of people who inhabit the Metropolis, and the privilege of exercising every five or six years the right of voting for a Parliamentary Representative? No, Sir; I think the

right hon. Gentleman will not tell the Committee either now, or upon any other occasion, that he entertains that view, or draws that distinction. Then the right hon. Gentleman has stated, as a sort of appeal to the fears of hon. Gentlemen behind me, what the number of female ratepayers is who might come in under the operation of this clause. Again, as a county Member, having tested the fitness in the way I have indicated of the female ratepayer to exercise the franchise, I am not in the least concerned at any difficulty which might arise from their admission under the operation of the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Stoke. It appears to me that, in the great majority of cases, the female ratepayers have proved their capacity during a long series of years. I take it that the great majority of those who are to be enfranchised by the measure of the right hon. Gentlemen occupy a precisely opposite position. They have not—I do not say from any fault of their own, but by the circumstances in which they have lived—had the opportunity of proving their fitness to exercise the franchise which so ungrudgingly the right hon. Gentleman is about to confer on them. Well then, Sir, on all these grounds, and I think they were the main points of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, I venture to think that not a shadow of a case has been made out against the proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke. I come now to consider the last argument, if I may so call it, of the right hon. Gentleman—an argument indeed which partook of the nature of a threat, and which might be passed by almost as laughable, if it did not constitute the substance, and almost the whole meaning, of the speech of the right hon. Gentlemen—I mean the threat with which the right hon. Gentleman began and concluded his observations. Well, I confess that when the right hon. Gentleman asked the hon. Member for Stoke if he had not received an important letter which had been transmitted to him that morning, and, on being informed that he had not, proceeded to give the substance of that letter, I expected, and I have no doubt the whole Committee expected, some startling announcement of the deadly peril that might ensue to the fortunes of this Bill, if the clause proposed by the hon.

Gentleman were inserted in it. I thought it possible that from some unexpected quarter communications of a public character might have been sent to the right hon. Gentleman, pointing out that, however friendly the writers were to the Bill as it stood, if the clause of the hon. Gentleman were inserted, deadly peril would ensue. I wondered myself from what quarter the danger was likely to come. Was it from the Bench of Bishops? Had they signed a “round robin,” and sent it to the right hon. Gentleman, containing this alarming communication? Or was it communicated direct from the 300 “Gentlemen”—I think that was what the right hon. Gentleman called them in the speech which he made before Whitsuntide—who in “another place” were to interpose their authority and influence. Such was the fear expressed by the right hon. Gentleman when the proposal of my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) was made. Did the right hon. Gentleman announce that great additional hostility must be expected by the Government in “another place,” if the clause of the hon. Member for Stoke was inserted in the Bill? No, Sir; nothing of the kind occurred. There was nothing from any quarter from which danger to the Bill might be expected, or from any section of hon. Members; nothing, except in the mind and disposition of the right hon. Gentleman himself. There was the peril and the danger to the Bill if the Amendment of the hon. Member was carried. It was created by, existed in, and was to be applied only by, the right hon. Gentleman himself. It exists nowhere else. It is not, of course, for me to offer advice, and it is for the hon. Gentleman to say what course he intends to pursue, after having heard that statement of the right hon. Gentleman. There is nothing before him except that bald statement on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, *hoc volo, sic jubeo*. The exertions, the struggles, the hopes, and the anxieties of 17 years are to count as nothing compared with the *ipse dixit* of the right hon. Gentleman himself. It is no part of the position I now occupy here to presume to offer advice to the hon. Member for Stoke; but I may give a few words of encouragement or consolation to him, if he decides upon pressing his Amendment, even from

this Bench. It is not many weeks ago since in this House we had a somewhat similar threat on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. There was a very important measure which came down to this House from the other House of Parliament dealing with a question that excited a very great amount of interest from one end of the country to the other. Her Majesty's Government announced that if a certain Amendment to that measure then proposed was not accepted, and inserted in the Bill, they would not bind themselves to proceed further with the measure. The House of Commons resisted that threat. They defeated the Amendment of Her Majesty's Government, and then the Minister in charge of the measure, supported by the right hon. Gentleman himself, rose and said that under the very serious circumstances of the case, he must ask for an adjournment in order that the Government might consider the course they would adopt in such an alarming condition of affairs. So solemn were the tones of the Prime Minister, that even my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) became alarmed, and suggested that no time should be given to the Minister to reconsider the position, but that the House should go on with the Bill immediately, and without delay. Fortunately, wiser and more moderate counsels prevailed. The time for consideration which Her Majesty's Ministers asked for was granted. What happened? Was the Bill withdrawn? Did the country suffer the loss of a measure on which they had set their hearts? Not a bit of it. A few words to save the honour of the Government were inserted, with the assent of every hon. Member in the House, and that measure, which was threatened by the Government, was accepted by them and by the House, and is now upon the Statute Book of the country as part of the law of the land. So it will be, I hope, with this proposal. Well, Sir, I would extend my survey further back than the middle or the beginning of this Session. The right hon. Gentleman has, I notice, repeated several times certain words which may be described as the doctrine of opportunism. Now, I should like to consider whether this doctrine of opportunism has ever been followed successfully by the Leaders of great public movements in this country

during the past 60 or 70 years? I do not deny that if a man is advocating his own personal objects, or a case which he has temporarily taken up, in order to gratify his ambition—such, for instance, as a desire to become the President of a Republic, or a Secretary of State, or a Prime Minister—the desire to achieve the great object of his personal ambition might induce him to follow the doctrine of opportunism. But if, on the other hand, a man takes charge of a great public question in England, and wishes to carry that question to a successful issue, then I venture to say, what all history shows, that he must turn resolutely a deaf ear to every suggestion of opportunism that may be made to him. Did O'Connell and Sheil carry Roman Catholic Emancipation by attending to the suggestions of opportunism? Did Cobden and Bright bring about the repeal of the Corn Laws by consulting the convenience of Prime Ministers and Cabinets? Did Lord Ashley, in this House, or when he was removed from this House? Did honest John Feilden induce Parliament to pass the Factory Acts by attending to the doctrine of opportunism? No; if a man undertakes to champion a great public cause in this country, he must, in season and out of season, press forward the question he has at heart. He must inscribe upon his banner and upon his conduct the motto, "Thorough;" and he must persevere against all solicitations and suggestions, whether of fear or of favour. But is it true that this clause is inopportune? I think I heard you, Sir, say that the clause of the hon. Gentleman is perfectly in harmony with the proposals of this measure, and that it is germane to the subject of Reform. In fact, it is only inopportune in the eyes and in the judgment of the Prime Minister and his Colleagues. Therefore, although I have said that I will not presume to give advice, I venture to hope—for the sake of the success of this clause, which, apart from all partizan considerations, I have had at heart for a great number of years—that the hon. Gentleman and his Friends on the other side of the House will not be deterred by the violent language they have heard from the Prime Minister, but will proceed, undisturbed, to submit this question to the arbitrament of the House of Commons. But, be that as it may, for

myself, my course is clear and plain. Guided by every consideration of justice and fairness, of equity, of analogy, and of experience, I shall give a cordial and unhesitating support to the second reading of the clause which has been proposed by the hon. Member for Stoke.

MR. E. A. LEATHAM: Mr. Speaker, I certainly do not rise for the purpose of defending the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government from the attacks of the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners); but I could not help being amused when I heard from the seat which used to be occupied by the greatest Opportunist who ever lived, charges of opportunism flung across the House. And let the House bear in mind that the opportunism of the great statesman to whom I refer had special reference to the question of Reform. The noble Lord began by saying that this was a "humdrum question—a very plain, a very practical, and a very simple question." Now, I think, if one thing has come out more than another in the course of this debate, it is the recognition by the Committee that the question is one of the very greatest magnitude. I do not think it possible to exaggerate the importance of the revolution which my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) proposed as calmly as if he were proposing that the House should adjourn for the Derby. And do not let hon. Members think that, in voting for this clause, they are only voting for the enfranchisement of a few widows and spinsters. Those who are at the bottom of this movement know better. Once pass a clause which shall remove the disability of sex, and all the rest will follow. Once pass an Act which shall give the franchise to women irrespective of marriage, and I should like to know how long the Common Law is to step in and bar the votes which you will have given by statute? It is this which constitutes the charm of his Motion in the eyes of those who support the movement. What is the object of the movement? I would ask hon. Members, who think that the object of the movement is the enfranchisement of spinsters and widows, to read what has been said by Miss Becker in a very recent number of *The Woman Suffrage Journal*. She says—

"The generation which has witnessed the abolition of one wrong, old as the everlasting

hills (meaning slavery), is determined to witness the greatest emancipation the world has yet seen—the removal of the brand of political incapacity from half the human race."

Now, the greatest emancipation the world has yet seen cannot mean the emancipation of widows and spinsters. Widows and spinsters do not yet constitute, thank goodness, half the human race. And, indeed, anything short of the emancipation of married women is so intolerable to the movement itself, that Mrs. Jacob Bright, in the instructive circular which she published the other day, expressly informed us that when my hon. Friend the Member for Ashton (Mr. Mason) last year told the House that if his Motion meant the enfranchisement of married women, he should wash his hands of the question then and for ever, "a cold dismay"—that is the phrase—"fell upon his lady supporters in the Gallery," and Mrs. Peter Taylor, whom she describes as the "mother of the movement," resigned on the spot; an example which I am informed was followed by many of the grandmothers of the movement as well. Mrs. Bright asks, "Whether Mr. Gladstone will accept this mutilated measure?"—i.e., with my Friend's clause inserted—"which, while granting the right of voting to women of the lowest class"—of whom I am told there are 40,000 in London alone—"will, nevertheless, withhold it from the cultured wives and mothers of the nation?" Now, from Mrs. Bright's point of view, it is impossible not to share in her indignation; for if it be not right to give the vote to women who are discharging the highest responsibilities of their sex, how can it be right to give it to women who are discharging none of them? My hon. Friend, when he moved this clause, touched upon what he called the expediency of giving votes to women. I differ entirely from my hon. Friend. There is no more unwelcome fact to Liberals than that popular institutions have not always and everywhere been a success. The experiment which has been tried with beneficent results in England and America, has also been tried in France and Spain; and it has failed so frequently, or succeeded so partially, that but for the triumphant example of England and America, it might still, I think, be contended that representative institutions are upon their

trial. Now, why has the experiment succeeded so well here, and failed so often in Spain and France? It is simply because the Anglo-Saxon race is less impulsive, less emotional, less capricious and crotchety—I had almost said less feminine—than the Latin races. Depend upon it, that just so far as the feminine element penetrates into your electorate, a feminine alloy will penetrate into your policy. You will have feminine inconsequence at the very moment when you desire to be most calmly logical, and a feminine flutter in your courage at the moment when you require to be the most manly and robust. But why is it that we are asked to admit this very doubtful class of electors? The noble Lord opposite tells us that it is because they possess what is vulgarly called “the qualification,” but which by itself is no qualification at all. It is not because men pay rates or taxes, or own or occupy property, that they have votes, but because they are men. What is called the qualification is simply a restriction on this primary qualification, and has been imposed in order to insure that the voter, being a man, shall be a man, politically speaking, of the highest type—that is, a man who is independent and free. But my hon. Friend (Mr. Woodall) proposes to read backwards all the qualifications for political life—he proposes to enfranchise a sex which, in the nature of things, can never be independent, and to give votes to individuals who are not even men. My hon. Friend says that we have already broken through the principle of sex and given votes to women in the Municipalities and School Boards. I deny the truth of the analogy. It is quite true that we gave votes to women in the Municipalities, and we gave them carelessly. We slipped the female franchise into a Bill introduced for another purpose, just as we are seeking to slip it into this Bill. It was contended that since women had always voted, as shareholders, for those who managed their commercial affairs, so they ought to vote for those who had the disposal of the funds which they contributed through the rates. But there is no real analogy between this kind of voting and voting for Members of Parliament, any more than there is any real analogy between the questions which agitate this House and the questions which puzzle Aldermen. As re-

gards the School Boards, we had decided that women should sit upon them, in order that they might superintend the education of girls, just as they sit upon any other benevolent committee. Having decided that they should have the right of being voted for, we logically decided that they should have the right of voting; for the right of voting implies the right of being voted for, or *vice versa*. But we see at once that there is no true analogy between the two cases, because no one proposes that women should be returned to this House. The noble Lord opposite has referred to the case of women who are farmers. He speaks of it as a great anomaly that women who are farmers should not possess votes, while their labourers will have them. The man who thinks he has invented a franchise which presents no anomalies is a fool; well, at all events, he is a person the reverse of wise. But in this instance the anomaly has been greatly exaggerated. We are all familiar with the names of women in farm agreements. In nine cases out of ten they are put there as a mere matter of convenience. It is the sons or brothers who carry on the farms; they join the labourers in the toils of the field; they are regarded by them as masters, and they will be enfranchised by this Bill. But if it were possible to give the vote to women who are farmers, is that a thing to be desired? What has been the history of the independence of the tenant farmer in this country? Is it true, or is it not, that in nine cases out of ten the vote has belonged to the landlord rather than to the tenant? Whenever women are to be subjected to peculiar pressure we have passed special legislation for their protection. Are we asked, then, to commit this enormity? Without passing any such special legislation, are we asked to subject women, in all the weakness of their sex, to an amount of pressure which men, in all the robustness of theirs, have been found wholly unable to resist? But, putting consequences on one side, I revert to our original position, which was, that to seek to invest women with the duties and responsibilities of men is to misunderstand the whole economy of mankind. A very long experience has proved that there are certain responsibilities and duties which attach to men, and certain responsibilities and duties which attach to

women, and that those duties are best performed when one sex does not invade the province of the other. This has been so long understood that I do not think we are likely to make any great discoveries in elementary matters of that kind. I should like to read to the Committee a few words from a distinguished French writer, of Liberal opinions—the late Comte de Gasparin. He says—

“This is a question of the rights and duties of one sex claimed by the other, and of an absolute change of vocation, ideas, occupations, and individuality, and it will be difficult to persuade us that while men find it so hard to act as men that women can act as men and yet remain women; playing a double part, fulfilling a two-fold mission, and assuming the two-fold character of humanity. This is what will happen. We shall lose the woman without getting the man. What we shall get is that monstrous and repulsive creature, already looming above the horizon—*la femme-homme*.”

Now, I think that that view commends itself to our common sense, and it is confirmed in many ways. It is confirmed by the almost total abstention of women from those public offices which are loyally open to them, but which they feel themselves compelled to decline, because they are unsuitable to their sex. It is still more strongly confirmed by the coldness with which women have received the proposition of my hon. Friend. That innate sense of what is womanly, which is more to some women than reason or law, more, perhaps, than religion itself, rebels against this proposal. What I would say to my hon. Friend is this. Let him first convince his clients; let him get the women of England upon his side; let him prove to them that the franchise is a trust which they will prize and gladly undertake, and faithfully discharge; and then let him come here and make a proposition which will have acquired some substance from this support, but which, discredited by their apathy and condemned by their silence, is little less than a burlesque upon our theories of political equity, and an impertinent satire upon them.

MR. STANSFELD: I am not about to follow my hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham), step by step, into the able speech which he has just delivered. I trust that he will not accuse me of want of courtesy in not following him, when I say that I decline to discuss the subject upon the large lines upon which he has discussed

it to-night, under the conditions created for those in favour of admitting women to the franchise by the action of the Prime Minister the other day. Those of the Liberal Party who take an interest in the subject were told that we may not vote in favour of this proposal, unless we choose to place ourselves under the imputation of risking the passing of the Franchise Bill, or, it may be, of imperilling the existence of the Government itself. My object, in the remarks I shall address to the Committee to-night, is mainly to endeavour to make some reply to the speech of the Prime Minister on the part of those who feel most deeply and keenly and who have fought and spoken most earnestly upon our side of the question for years. I will only say, before I pass to that part of the subject, that my hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) would, I think, have been fairer to my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) if he had replied to his speech—if he had confined his arguments to answering the propositions which my hon. Friend has placed before the Committee—instead of quoting the individual opinion of ladies, estimable and talented, but not necessarily and not actually representing the movement, or the Motion of my hon. Friend. Well, then, Sir, I will begin by making this acknowledgment fully and frankly, that Her Majesty's Government, as the Prime Minister said, are the sole judges of their own responsibility in the conduct of this measure for the extension of the franchise, and that they alone must decide for themselves the amount of cargo it will carry, and how much might endanger its safety. I make that admission; I acknowledge the absolute and unanswerable justice of that statement and argument of the right hon. Gentleman. No one can divide or diminish their responsibility. The Prime Minister spoke the other day, in no hasty terms—I might almost say in tones of warning, if not of absolute menace—and I regard the clause of my hon. Friend, in consequence, as being upon this occasion doomed and lost. But, Sir, I cannot conceal from myself that it is a serious blow that the right hon. Gentleman has felt it is duty to deal to some of us, and to a cause which we have dearly at heart. It is, in my view, the most serious and damaging blow which

this cause has ever yet received during the 17 years that it has been before the country, and in the course of the 10 occasions on which it has been discussed and voted upon by the House of Commons. The action of the right hon. Gentleman appears to me to put upon some one or more of us, who, as I have said, have been most intimately associated with this subject, the absolute duty of giving some explanation of the views which we take of the action of my hon. Friend (Mr. Woodall), and some protest against the position in which we find ourselves placed by the action of the right hon. Gentleman himself. Sir, I failed to be enlightened by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman—however powerful, and immensely powerful it was—I failed to be enlightened by that speech as to the specific nature of the danger to his measure from the course taken by my hon. Friend. I failed even to gather exactly the direction in which we were to look for the danger, although the right hon. Gentleman triumphantly asked my hon. Friend—“Is it not clear now to your mind whence the danger is likely to arise.” Well, Sir, we who have taken the greatest interest in this subject have thought it our duty, and did think it our duty before this Motion was put upon the Paper, to consider that question of danger for ourselves. I wish, with the permission of the Committee, to be allowed to state what our views have been upon the question of danger, and I wish to do so for this reason. I feel that there was an unfairness in the position in which, if it could have been avoided, the right hon. Gentleman has placed us. We are, and have been, amongst the most earnest Members of his Party and of his supporters. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] I can certainly speak for myself, and I think I may be permitted to say upon this occasion that I have given to the Government ungrudging support—[Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!]¹—although I place no value upon that fact.

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope I may not be misunderstood. I did not intend to apply that cheer to the last remark of my right hon. Friend, or to imply that I attach no value to his support.

MR. STANSFELD: I quite understood the kind intention of the right hon. Gentleman; but I have said all

that I wished to say upon that head, and I hardly like to pursue the matter further. I will merely add, that acting in that spirit, I have frequently refrained from addressing the House, because I have felt that silence would help the Government more than speech. Indeed, in the course of my public career, I cannot recall a single occasion when I attempted to obtain possession of the ear of the House, except there was some special duty before me. When I have differed from the Government I have either been silent, or I have spoken in moderation. I have been delighted, when I could agree with them, to express heartily and frankly my concurrence. Well, then, addressing myself personally to the right hon. Gentleman himself, I do feel keenly that he has felt compelled to put me, as well as others, in the position in which we find ourselves to-night. I declare that we are as deeply interested in this Franchise Bill as he is himself, and as the Cabinet by which he is surrounded, and yet what is the position in which he has, perhaps unconsciously, placed us before this House, our Party and the country? It is this. He has told us that we must either vote for this clause, and then lie under the imputation of being willing to risk this great measure of enfranchisement, and even the Government we have so long and cordially supported; or else, by abandoning or withdrawing this clause, or receding from it, and voting against it, declare that we are false to our principles, false to our views, false to our professions and pledges, and, I will add, false to those women whose cause we advocate. [*Laughter.*] It is useless to laugh. I am impervious to laughter; and I say that we should be false to those whose great exertions we are bound to consider, and who have sacrificed years and years of life, labour, and of strength in a cause which they hold to be sacred. We venture, in the first place, to think that there could be no danger in the discussion of this clause, even if it did not proceed to a Division; and that there could be no danger in this discussion, or in the Division, if the clause were rejected. I suppose, at least, that may be allowed us on this occasion. But then there was the alternative of the acceptance of the clause; and, in that case, it seemed to us even still more clear, that, so far from there

being any possible danger to the Bill, the acceptance of the clause would inevitably strengthen the Bill, and improve the chance of the Government in regard to it. And why? For this simple reason—that the clause, if accepted, would be the act of the House, and of both sides of the House, and not the proposal of Her Majesty's Government; and I say that we know—the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners) has almost told us so much, and no one has ventured to deny it—that the insertion of that clause would not have made the Bill less palatable to the House of Lords. Well, then, Sir, we come to the conclusion that there was no possible danger to the Bill from the discussion or the acceptance of the clause of my hon. Friend (Mr. Woodall) from without, and that the only possible danger must lie within the walls, so to say, of the Cabinet; and I must say that that impression of ours was confirmed to my mind by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The relations of Parties and of individual political men to this question have been curious and interesting. The question has received genuine support from both sides of the House. On our side of the House that support has been found rather in the rank and file. On the Conservative side of the House it has been found amongst the accredited Leaders of the Party who sit on the Front Opposition Bench. I do not now know exactly—I did not at all understand at the time the meaning of some very sphinx-like words uttered by the right hon. Gentleman when he spoke, I think, of the indirect opposition to the Bill, and the motives for that indirect opposition, which I assumed he meant might operate on the minds of some Members in dealing with this particular clause; but I say distinctly that this clause has met with genuine support on both sides of the Committee, and that the support it has met with from the Front Opposition Bench has been genuine support. I heard my hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) with regret express his opinion that the support given to women's suffrage by Lord Beaconsfield was opportunistic, and not sincere.

MR. E. A. LEATHAM: I wish to correct a misapprehension under which my right hon. Friend is labouring. I simply said that Lord Beaconsfield's

position with regard to the question of Reform was opportunistic.

MR. STANSFELD: I beg my hon. Friend's pardon; but I thought he was addressing himself, at the time, to the question before the Committee. What I wish to say is, that there is no more sincere supporter of the clause than the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners), without the slightest drawback of particular Party motives with regard to the subject. Who will doubt the sincerity of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote)? It is well known that he has, from the first, taken this view, and that he has taken a kindly, personal, and somewhat active interest in the question. With regard to the late Lord Beaconsfield, I wish to express the opinions I have always entertained, and which I hold as strongly as I ever did—that there was no political subject—and I call this a political subject—upon which Lord Beaconsfield's convictions or predilections were more sincere or more heartfelt than upon the subject of women's suffrage. No doubt, the Prime Minister was perfectly right in saying that there are, on both sides, profound and keen differences of opinion—a kind of difference which sets men against each other in keen and deep antagonism of thought. That I entirely admit, and I find no fault with the existence of such differences, because all this keen opinion is, *ex necessitate*, genuine opinion. But what I regret, if it could have been avoided, is that, by the action of the Prime Minister, these genuine opinions should not be allowed to have their natural and accurate expression. All this, however, is past. What we, who are most completely and actively in favour of the question, are still left to do, is to state conscientiously how we have been affected by the arguments, and invitations, and appeals of the right hon. Gentleman, and what course it is which we shall pursue. Now, Sir, one statement of the right hon. Gentleman, upon which his opinion was largely founded, has been already referred to by the noble Lord opposite. It was this—the right hon. Gentleman dealt with this as a completely new subject. Well, Sir, we cannot make that admission. We cannot make the admission in words, nor can we make it in deed. We say, on

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the contrary, that this question has been before the House and the country for some 17 years; that we have divided upon it in this House 10 times without any enormous majorities against us, and, on the whole, with an improving record. Further, I would say, for the information of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, that very nearly half the Members of the Liberal Party, who have at one time or another expressed opinions on this subject, have declared more or less their accordance with the principle of the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke. But there is another reason why we cannot accept or give an affirmative reply to the invitation of the Prime Minister. This, Sir, is a Bill of principle. It is a Bill, the principle of which is household suffrage. Now, the principle of household suffrage is one of two things—it is either put as a rough test of capable citizenship, or else it means what I will call the family vote. Now, who are the women it is proposed to enfranchise? The women to be enfranchised under the clause would be, first of all, women of property, intelligence, and education having a *status* in the country; secondly, a large class of women of exceptional competency, because, having lost the services and support of men who should be the bread winners and the heads of families, they have been obliged to step into their shoes, and to take upon themselves the burdens and responsibilities which had previously devolved upon men. And because they have done this with success, I decline, either by word or deed, to make the admission that these women are less capable citizens than the 2,000,000 whom the right hon. Gentleman proposes to enfranchise by this Bill. Well, then, let it be the family vote—that is to say, exceptions apart, let the basis of our Constitution be that the family, represented by its head, should be the unit of the State. Now, that is the idea which recommends and has always recommended itself to my mind. But on what principle, or with what regard to the permanence and stability of that principle, can you exclude the head of the family, and give that family no voice, because the head happens to be a woman? If this clause be excluded, as it will be excluded, from the measure, this Bill will not be

a Bill of one principle but of two principles, if they are worthy of being called principles. It will not be a Bill containing only the principle of household suffrage, interpreted as the family vote, but a Bill founded on these two principles—first, the principle of a male householding vote; and, secondly, the principle of the exclusion of the head of the household, when and because the head of the household is a woman. That principle of exclusion is a permanent principle of exclusion; and, therefore, the Bill, with this clause left out, is a declaration in principle and for ever against the political emancipation of women. I will put it still more plainly, if I can. My hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) dealt with this as an unnatural and revolutionary proposal. My right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), who, although it is rather rash to say so, I hope may possibly follow me in this debate, regards, as I happen to know, the proposal as a revolutionary proposal, and, therefore, objects to it. Now, the argument which I am about to put to the Committee I desire to address pointedly to the mind of my right hon. Friend and to those who think with him on the question of revolutionary policy, and I will say this—that the Bill without the inclusion of this clause opens and leads the way to manhood suffrage—manhood suffrage, as the desideratum and ultimatum of politicians, with the definite and permanent and absolute exclusion of women. On the other hand, with the clause included, what I say is this—that it would in a large and true and in a noble and in no Party sense be a Conservative clause; because it would mean, as far as we can see or provide, that the future basis of our commonwealth should be a family represented by its head—man or woman—rather than the male citizens of 21 years of age. I address that argument to my right hon. Friend, and I hope, at least, that it may have some influence upon his mind. Sir, I say that it is impossible for us not to make some protest upon this occasion by voice and by act. The Prime Minister has given us no choice whatever. What did he say with regard to the voting of the Members of the Government? I took his words down, and they were these—

"When the subject is taken out of the vortex of political contention and strife the Members of my Government will be free to vote according to their convictions." [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] No; the last words were not those which the right hon. Gentleman used. To make it quite clear, the actual words of the right hon. Gentleman were these—"When the subject is taken out of the vortex of political contention and strife." He was replying to a hypothetical question of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) as to how far the Members of the Government would be free in the future to vote according to their own convictions. Well, I was not fascinated by that statement. I confess that it exercised no fascination upon my mind. What does it mean? It means simply that the Members of the Government will be free to support the clause in a private Member's Bill. There can be no other meaning to these words than that; and, even if the subject were brought forward in a private Member's Bill, the Prime Minister would still be able to say that the question had entered into the vortex of political contention and strife. I was a Member of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman in 1871, and in that year this question was left an open question, and I voted upon it. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman is making no concession or advance to-day. Speaking as a Member of the Liberal Party, and as an advanced Liberal, I must say that it is with considerable pain and with no inconsiderable shame that I have to recall to myself and to this Committee that we must look across the House for a better example than that. In 1867, when the Conservative Government had their own Reform Bill before the House, they treated the Motion of Mr. John Stuart Mill as an open question, and their Tellers did not tell in the Division. Again, the Prime Minister said—and the right hon. Gentleman will correct me if I quote him inaccurately—"It is intolerable that this question should be mixed up with Party and political debate." Sir, I say that these words of the Prime Minister drive and compel us to a Division; for what do they mean but this—that this question is never to go beyond the stage of a private Member's Bill. But private Members' Bills do but prepare the way.

Legislation upon a subject like this is not possible by a private Member's Bill. It is only by making it part of a Government measure that it can succeed. Our purpose is so to deal with this question in the House and outside the House as to make it more and more a question of practical, and even, if necessary, of Party politics. We cannot, therefore, do otherwise than protest by our votes to-night against the opposition to the clause; for if we were to yield to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, we should be guilty of the dishonesty of deserting, or the dishonour of concealing, our intentions and our views. Speaking for myself, there is no subject on which I am more convinced, or on which I feel more deeply. I desire, and I intend to do what I can, to bring the question within the realm of practical and even of Party politics; and, as an earnest of that intention, I shall insist on recording my vote in favour of the clause of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke.

MR. NEWDEGATE: The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stansfeld), as a Democratic Reformer, does not shrink from the attempt to enforce the despotism of Democracy. The right hon. Gentleman insists that the Prime Minister shall adopt the policy of a section of his followers—namely, the principle of women suffrage, which the Prime Minister himself has invariably opposed. Is not that an example of the despotism of a Democracy?

MR. STANSFELD: Will the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Newdegate) allow me to interrupt him? I think that he has misunderstood my argument, which was that it ought to be left an open question.

MR. NEWDEGATE: But the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax said that he wished it to be left an open question. Yes, for the present, in order that he might force it into the position of becoming a strictly Party question. He cannot deny that; and I say this—that deprecating the despotism of a Democracy, as every true Reformer must, and as every true Constitutionalist must, I have never known an instance of the attempt to enforce the despotism of a Democracy more distinctly than in this case; for it is an attempt to force this House, and the Leader of this House, to reverse the rejection of this measure, which has for 17 years been the true ex-

pression of the opinion of the House of Commons. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman quoted the assent given to this proposal by the late Lord Beaconsfield. After having, for one year, served as whipper-in under the late Lord Beaconsfield, I had an uncomfortable consciousness, that there was no valid distinction between his opinions and those of the late Emperor of the French, and I repeatedly, in consequence, refused to accept office under him. I have reason for thinking that; I have, in point of fact, reasons for knowing what was the issue of his attempt to apply the principle of this clause in the guidance of the Conservative Party. Why, it was that that noble Lord—and for many reasons I lamented it—concluded his political career in this country by such a fall as no Conservative Leader ever had before, so far as I have known. I say, Sir, that with respect to this question, I participate fully in the feeling of both the men and the women of the United States. I need not remind hon. Members that this question has been agitated in the United States, and the agitation eventuated in this—that the women of the United States, by a vast majority, rejected it, and that every genuine Republican in the United States has opposed it. And why? Because they knew that such a Democracy would found a despotism. I could adduce various instances; but it is sufficient that I should mention the fact, that the majority of the English people coincide with the Representatives of the people in the United States, in having always rejected this proposal as an unnatural measure. One of the most intelligent supporters of this franchise, Mr. Goldwin Smith, went to the United States; and, from the United States, he addressed his fellow-Democrats in this country, warning them against the adoption of this measure. Now, it has been repeatedly pleaded, that the women of England suffer all kinds of hardships—hardships removable by Parliament. Has Parliament done nothing to alleviate the hardships under which the mothers and the wives and sisters of the English people have suffered? I have reason to remember—for I took an active part in the agitation—that we passed the Ten Hours Bill specially for the benefit of women and children; and since that time we have passed a Nine

Hours Bill. I must declare that the present House has submitted to more indignities than any other House of Commons that I ever knew. I will cite one instance—the present House suffered itself to be impeded by the action of a small faction of its Members, until it was only liberated from positive thralldom by its Speaker transgressing all Rules of Order, so that this House might be freed from the intolerable position into which it had fallen. And if it were now to consent to pass this measure for the establishment of female suffrage, it would forfeit the small remnant of the title to represent the manhood and the manly feeling of England, which still pertains to it. There is one Book which is not only pre-eminently historical, but which is undoubtedly prophetic. Let even those who doubt its inspiration take the Bible into their hands, and they will find that, from the Book of Genesis to the last chapter of the Epistles, the position of woman is clearly defined. She is to be dependent on man; but she has every claim upon his manhood, every claim upon his best feelings, every claim upon his support and strength. I remember the hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham), who has addressed the House so ably to-night, stating upon this subject, in a thin House, that the career of man and woman, although parallel, is never identical until they become united by marriage. No statement more true, according to the doctrine of the Bible, was ever made. I might cite text after text to prove that assertion; but I feel that I should insult hon. Members by quoting that which they must know so well. It would be insulting to the House to suppose that hon. Members are not familiar with the passages on which I found this argument. Sir, there is no part of the known world in which women are treated with more indulgent deference than in the United States; and, with the permission of the House, I will quote the description of their treatment which has been given by Mr. Goldwin Smith. Mr. Goldwin Smith, in the able publication he issued from the United States, announced his conversion; announced that, from being a supporter of, he had become an opponent of this proposal; and, after a warning to the friends of freedom in this country, shows that Mr.

John Stuart Mill, in his advocacy of women suffrage, distinctly attacks the ordinance of marriage and the marriage state. Mr. Smith is a gentleman to whose general opinions on other questions I am entirely opposed. He is an ultra-Liberal; and he was an advocate of this Bill until he visited that great sphere of experiments—the United States of America. He condemns the view which was taken by the late Mr. John Stuart Mill with regard to the relations of women to their husbands in this country, and throughout the world. He writes—

“Mr. Mill and his disciples represent the lot of the woman as having always been determined by the will of the man, who, according to them, has willed that she should be the slave, and that he should be her master and her tyrant. Society”—and here he quotes Mr. Mill—“both in this (the case of marriage) and other cases, has preferred to attain its object by foul rather than by fair means; but this is the only case in which it has substantially persisted in them even to the present day.”

This is Mr. Mill's fundamental assumption, and from it, as every rational student of history is now aware, conclusions, utterly erroneous as well as injurious to humanity, must flow. That is the view of marriage upon which this proposal was advocated by its most powerful representative, Mr. John Stuart Mill. Elsewhere Mr. Goldwin Smith refutes Mr. Mill's assertions, and with one further extract from his pamphlet I will trouble the House. He wrote—

“That the present relation of women to their husbands literally has its origin in slavery, and is a hideous relic of that system, is a theory which Mr. Mill sets forth in language such as, if it could sink into the hearts of those to whom it is addressed, would turn all affection to bitterness, and divide every household against itself. Yet this theory is without historical foundation. It seems, indeed, like a figure of invective, heedlessly converted into history. Even in the most primitive times, and in which the subjection of women was most complete, the wife was clearly distinguished from the slave. The lot of Sarah is different from that of Hagar; the authority of Hector over Andromache is absolute, yet no one can confound her position with that of her handmaids. The Roman matron, who sent her slave to be crucified, the Southern matron who was the fierce supporter of slavery, were not themselves slaves. Whatever may now be obsolete in the relations of husband and wife is not a relic of slavery, but of primitive marriage, and may be regarded as, at worst, an arrangement once indispensable, which has survived its hour. Where real slavery has existed it has extended to both sexes, and it has ceased for both at the

same time. Even the Oriental seclusion of women, perhaps the worst condition in which the sex has ever been, has its root, not in the slave-owning propensity so much as in jealousy or passion, which, though extravagant and detestable in its excessive manifestations, is not without an element of affection. The most beautiful building in the East is that in which Shah-Jehan rests by the side of Nourmahal.”

Mr. Goldwin Smith thus condemns the view of the marriage state which was held by the leading mind that advocated the principle of this clause, who wrote that the married woman is a slave; but what does this Bill do? The former Bills, to which Mr. Goldwin Smith referred, proposed to enfranchise her unmarried sisters, but to leave the wife in the position Mr. Mill described as that of a slave! Will the House permit me to take one further description of what Mr. Goldwin Smith found in the United States, where this movement for the enfranchisement of women originated, though still unsuccessful there? He says—

“In the United States the privileges of women may be said to extend to impunity, not only for ordinary outrage, but for murder. A prisoner, whose guilt has been proved by overwhelming evidence, is let off because she is a woman. There is a sentimental scene between her and her advocate in Court, and afterwards she appears at a public lecture. The whisky crusade shows that women are practically above the law. Rioting and injury to the property of tradesmen, when committed by the privileged sex, are hailed as a new and beneficent agency in public life; and because the German population being less sentimental, asserts the privilege of legality and decency, the women are said to have suffered martyrdom. So far from the American family being the despotism which Mr. Mill describes, the want of domestic authority lies at the root of all that is worst in the politics of the United States. If the women ask for the suffrage, say some American publicists, they must have it, and in the same way everything that a child cries for is apt to be given it without reflection as to the consequences of the indulgence.”

Are we in this House actuated by a more cruel spirit towards our fellow-countrywomen than the Americans? I do not believe that we are; and yet, Sir, we have heard in this House the advocates of this measure assert that the House itself is totally insensible to the claims of woman, and that this House has so little manhood, that until it consents to permit woman to have the suffrage no justice will be done to her. This assertion is monstrous, and yet it is upon this assertion that this dangerous proposal is based. This question

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has now been for 17 years debated. For 17 years it has been proposed to extend the franchise to women; but except upon one occasion in 1871, when the second reading to enact the principle was passed in a thin House, no affirmative response has been made. The passing of the second reading of the Bill in 1871 was an error which the House hastened to correct upon a subsequent occasion by a majority of 90. As a matter of fact, this dangerous proposal has invariably been rejected by the House; and now the Democratic Member for Halifax (Mr Stansfeld) insists that, because the Caucus of Leeds passed a resolution in its favour, the Prime Minister shall change his course and bow his head to the will of that usurping Body. The noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) did everything he could to minimize the question. The Prime Minister was right when he said the clause raises one of the widest social issues that it is possible to conceive. It has failed to become popularized in the United States. There is but one country in Europe in which women are armed with the vote—namely, in Italy. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax knows that that is the case. But do the Italians trust a woman to vote by herself? The Italian women are compelled by law to vote by means of male delegates. And are not the women of England indirectly represented in this House? I will answer for it that if any candidate has the support of the women of the constituency he seeks to represent, he is certain of his return. And I thank God that it is so. It is because I know that it is so, and because I am certain that women would forfeit their natural influence by entering openly into political contests, that I deprecate the passing of this clause, which would convert what purports to be a Reform Bill into a revolutionary measure. I think the Bill now before the House goes very much too far; but I, as a genuine Constitutionalist, will not attempt to obtain the defeat of the Bill in "another place" by committing myself to a proposal which involves the abnegation of our most sacred duties as men. I sincerely trust that this House, which has manifested less self-respect than its Predecessors, will have sufficient self-respect to persevere in its

unvaried course by again rejecting this most dangerous proposal.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE: Sir, I shall certainly not go into the general question involved in the Amendment before the Committee. As far as I have followed the course of this debate, I may say that the only new argument for or against the proposal to confer the franchise upon women, was one from a military point of view—namely, that of the hon. Member who moved the new clause (Mr. Woodall), when he referred to Boadicea and Joan of Arc. On former occasions, and ever since I have had the honour of being a Member of this House, I have been a most strenuous opponent of the possession of the franchise by women. Very soon after I was returned to Parliament, I had the honour of being chosen by a body of Gentlemen opposed to conferring this privilege on ladies, to lead the opposition to a measure for that purpose then about to be laid before Parliament by the late Mr. Forsyth; and I look back with pleasure to the fact that I was able to conduct that opposition to a satisfactory conclusion—namely, the defeat of the measure referred to. But circumstances alter cases; and I wish, with the permission of the Committee, to say a few words in explanation of the course I propose to take on the present occasion. I intend to vote for the Motion of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent. ["Oh!" and cheers.] Now, Sir, suppose I had been going to vote against my conviction—which I am not going to do, for reasons which I shall explain—I think that hon. and right hon. Members opposite ought to be the last to jeer at any Member on this side of the House, even if he should vote contrary to his convictions, for they should bear in mind that there is an old saying, that "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." Lord Sherbrooke, speaking, in 1878, on the Motion for the Extension of the Borough Franchise, brought forward by my right hon. Friend the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan), made use of these words. He said—

"It is not a question of what people want, nor is it a question of equality; but it is a question of the public good. What you have to show is, not that people want this thing or that, or that the people are fit or unfit to exercise it, but that the safety and welfare of the

Empire will be promoted by your proposal."—
(3 *Hansard*, [238] 180.)

Now, Sir, that is my idea of what ought to guide us in the present instance. I am, and I have always been, of opinion that the conferring of the franchise is not a question of individual right, but that it is a question of Imperial necessity and Constitutional advantage; and I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) laid some stress upon that idea in the speech to which we have just listened. But, Sir, the Bill before the Committee has virtually passed this House; all its clauses, which have been divided against, have been carried by large majorities; and we, who have been opposed to it, have had no chance of upsetting any of its provisions. But the provisions of the Bill have been based on the assumption of individual right, not upon Imperial or Constitutional necessity; and, therefore, although I have opposed the Bill—not *quod* lowering the franchise, because I do not think that that would do any harm, if it were combined with some other measure of a Constitutional character—I, for one, do not see that there is any reason now why we should not support the admission of women to the franchise. An attempt has been made to prevent some of the very lowest of the class to be enfranchised by this Bill from getting the suffrage; but that has been defeated, and it has been decided in this House that no person who possesses the qualification proposed in the Bill shall be deprived of the vote. Therefore it is that on this occasion I intend to support the clause proposed by the hon. Member opposite. My hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, speaking the day before yesterday, on the question as to whether the inhabitants of one-roomed houses, or hovels as they have been called, should be admitted to the franchise, asked if it was the wish of the Committee to place those people in a position of greater degradation by refusing them the vote? Well, it has been decided, by a large majority, that those people shall be admitted to the franchise, although a great number of them are illiterate, and are, in consequence, certainly not so well qualified as many women are to exercise the franchise. Why, then, impose such a degradation on women possessing the qualification? And that is

another reason why I intend to support the Motion before the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, in that most eloquent and impassioned speech which he made against this proposal, on the last occasion when it was before us, said that the Government had already upon its shoulders as much as they could very well bear, and he alluded to the proposal as the last straw that would break the camel's back. ["No, no!"] That, at any rate, was the effect of his remarks. As I understand it, this is a Bill to render perfect the representation of the people; and, that being so, I think that every point in connection with it ought to be fully discussed and thoroughly sifted; and, therefore, I say that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, that the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent is putting too great a burden on the Government, went not so much against the Amendment as against the Bill itself. It appears to me that, unless every point in connection with this subject is fully discussed on this occasion, instead of ending the matter, we shall have it cropping up over and over again as it has done for the last 17 years. Now, although I am about to vote for this Motion, I do not intend by so doing to render myself liable to vote for it, or for any analogous Motion that may be put forward on a future occasion. I have given what appears to me to be very good reasons for the vote I intend to give; but if, happily, this Bill does not pass, and another Bill, at no distant day, is brought in, which, keeping the Constitutional advantage in the eye of Parliament, takes care that no large section of the electorate shall have a preponderating influence over the rest, I shall reserve to myself full liberty of opposing the extension of the franchise to women. The House has decided that it is the abstract right of the individual to have the franchise, and on that hypothesis, I cannot understand why, if the Bill became law, the women to whom the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister at Dalkeith, in 1879, so pathetically appealed to exercise their influence for the purpose of returning him and his Party and ousting the late Government from power, should not be allowed to exercise the franchise.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: Sir, the noble Viscount who has just sat down

[*Eighth Night.*]

(Viscount Folkestone) has announced his intention of voting, on this occasion, for the Motion of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) for conferring the franchise upon women; and he has also told us that it is his intention, if the proposal should come before him on a future occasion, to reverse that vote. Whatever may be the merit of consistency, I believe I have always consistently opposed the conferring of the franchise upon women, and I have done so upon principle. I was early taught that Parliament could do anything but bring a dead person to life; make a man into a woman, or a woman into a man. But it would seem that hon. Gentlemen who support this Motion are doing their best to achieve the latter transformation; and I cannot help thinking that they will find this clause, simple as it may appear, will carry them a great deal further than they wish to go. The argument we had last Tuesday in the excellent speech of the hon. Member for Stoke seemed to me to fall very far short of a conclusive reason for conferring the suffrage upon women. He told us of Boadicea and of Joan of Arc, and he described them as great military geniuses. I do not know whether they were great geniuses, or not; but I cannot forget that they both came to an untimely end. And then he told us of Miss Octavia Hill, and other ladies. Well, no one doubts that there are excellent women, who discharge the duties of life in a manner which earns for them the gratitude of mankind. But, surely, that is no reason why such a clause as is now proposed should be inserted in this Bill. Again, there may be women ratepayers; but I have still to learn that, because they have to pay rates, they are entitled to discharge the function of voting. The right hon. Gentleman on my right (Mr. Stansfeld) and the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners) who have to-day spoken on this clause, have, in my humble opinion, misinterpreted it. It must be admitted that, under this Bill, married women holding the necessary property qualification in counties will have a vote in counties. How long will you keep married women from voting as occupiers in towns? You bring to the front the whole question, both of married and single women voting; and I say you cannot possibly go on without raising the question of single women only voting. Can

you, for instance, deprive a woman, when married, of the vote which you say she is to enjoy when single? You cannot possibly do it. A woman is, undoubtedly, a much better citizen when she is married than when she is single. Why, then, is she to be deprived of the advantages and privileges she was entitled to before marriage the moment she ceases to be single? If it were possible to make such an enactment, you would be driven to amend it by another Act of Parliament, and you would land yourselves in universal woman suffrage. Then, I ask, where is that to end? According to the last Census, the number of the women of England exceeded that of the male population by 700,000, or 60 in the 1,000; and if the door be once opened in the manner proposed by this clause, the weight which would turn the electoral balance will be in the hands of women—in other words, you will have petticoat government. Again, if you once give married women the right of voting, you will have a dual voting power in almost every home, a power which, so far from adding to domestic happiness in this country, will, I believe, tend much to destroy the unity which exists in our homes. But, Sir, there is another difficulty which occurs to me, and it is this—I do not see that the matter could rest even here. If we give to women a political vote, they must have also political representation. Beyond all question, they would claim, in time, the right of sitting in this House; and as they are the majority in the country, they may become the majority here. Thus we might have both married and single women Members of Parliament, with great attendant inconveniences. However, Sir, I take altogether a higher view of this matter. I believe it to be far better for the prosperity and strength of the country that the franchise should not be given to women. If there be any injustice, in the circumstance that some women pay rates, while they have no votes, it is, in my opinion, but an injustice of the very smallest kind, especially when it is compared with the adoption of a proposal, the practical effect of which would be to alter the feelings and customs of the country with regard to the position of women. Whether it be by the result of the development of species, or whether it be the dispensation of an All Wise Creator, there is no doubt that woman is

endowed with a most delicate organization which sways the whole course of her life; it influences her actions, and her mode of thought, and its effect is to make mankind afford her protection rather than turn her adrift in the vortex of political life. These considerations, I think, ought to weigh with the hon. Member for Stoke. And now with regard to one portion of the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). My right hon. Friend says he wonders where the danger to the Bill lies, in the event of his Motion being carried. If this Motion were carried to-night, by even a small majority—it cannot be carried by a large one—the Franchise Bill would be placed in danger by the hon. Gentleman who moved the clause, because, I believe, that there are many hon. Gentlemen on these Benches who would prefer no Bill at all to one containing such a provision and embodying such a principle as that under consideration. My right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax was eloquent on the power and aptitude of women for work. I am one who thinks very highly of those to whom we owe so much; but I am unable to concede all that my right hon. Friend claims for them in that respect. We have, I think, an illustration of the administrative capabilities of women in the case of School Boards. It is generally admitted that, in the country districts, their presence on the School Board is of great advantage; and, in those districts, I believe that women have had, and ought to have, their effect upon the education of the country; but, when we come to the education of the children in this great Metropolis, we find that they fail, and that their presence on the School Board only impedes the action of those who administer the Acts. Finally, having carefully thought out this matter, I cannot help coming to the conclusion that there would be a great deal more loss than gain occasioned by a change in our social and political life, such as is indicated by the proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke, and that it will, moreover, be attended with positive disadvantage to the State. The Committee should bear in mind the fact that this demand does not come from the women themselves. It is, apparently, the proposition of a few agitators who go about the country demanding what they call the rights of their sex; and

that being so, apart from other considerations, I do not think it would be for the advantage of the country that the clause of the hon. Member for Stoke should be incorporated with the Bill.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Sir, I have listened with great attention to the speeches of hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, and I am bound to say, without criticizing too strongly, that I failed to find any special argument against the case made out by the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall). I think it well to recall to the Committee the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister introduced this great measure of Reform to the House, not with the view of criticizing its details—were I to do so I should be out of Order—but merely with the object of contrasting it with the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman on Tuesday last in opposition to this Motion. It will be in the recollection of the Committee that the Prime Minister urged for their consideration, when he introduced the Bill, that 2,000,000 of people were waiting to receive that which he assumes to be a right, but which some others consider to be a privilege, and that all other legislation was to be set aside in order that Parliament might confer upon them that right. Now, supposing that argument to be a correct one, I ask him whether, by a parity of reasoning, those women who, at all events, possess the property qualification have not as good a claim to enfranchisement as the 2,000,000 of men whom he proposes to enfranchise? Certainly, most of the women in question are the equals, if not the superiors, of the men in intelligence. They are human beings, and they are citizens in the eye of the law; and, therefore, I say that, logically, they have at least an equal claim with the 2,000,000 of men who are not to have their right any longer delayed. Well, Sir, the Prime Minister passed over that argument very lightly—in fact, he astonished the Committee by informing them that Her Majesty's Government, at all events as far as he represented it, had not exactly made up their minds with regard to the question of woman suffrage. It is a singular fact that this proposal, which has been before the House for 17 years; which originated, I believe, on the Liberal side of the House; and

which has always found conscientious support with many Members of the Conservative Party, should suddenly appear to the Prime Minister as an essentially open question. It is true that the right hon. Gentleman said he did not entertain any particular dislike to the proposal, and that he admitted that several Members of his Cabinet were in favour of it; but I question whether the hon. Member for Stoke and those who think with him will derive much comfort from that assurance, and I think he might almost say to the Prime Minister—

“ When first I attempted your pity to move,
You turned a deaf ear to my prayers;
’Twas all very well to dissemble your love,
But why did you kick me down stairs?”

I think, Sir, those lines are very applicable to the position which the right hon. Gentleman has taken up with regard to the question of woman suffrage, although, if the adoption of the present proposal had appeared likely in any way to assist the passing of the Reform Bill, I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman's love would have been of a more decided and active character. But as he thinks that this clause may, in some degree, affect or interfere with the passing of the Bill, he concluded that the best policy was to issue his fiat against it, and to threaten with the horrors of political excommunication all those of his supporters who ventured to express an opinion in its favour. There are two paragraphs to which I should like to allude, as they show, to a very considerable extent, how anxious the Prime Minister is to depart from the views of his political Friends, as well as to impugn the utterances of his political opponents, whenever the opportunity seems fitting for that purpose. The resolution passed at the meeting yesterday, presided over by the hon. Member for Stoke, was to the effect that the meeting heard with astonishment that the Prime Minister refused to allow this Amendment to be discussed on its merits, and decided by the free exercise of the judgment of the Members of the House of Commons, on the ground that its adoption would endanger the Bill; and it went on to say that such an exercise of pressure appeared to the meeting to be an infringement of the privileges of a free Parliament and of the rights of a free

people. I venture to think that that verdict will be endorsed by the country at large. It is all very well for the Prime Minister, who wishes to add to his many triumphs, a measure which shall go down to posterity as a great Act of Reform, to say that he is extremely anxious to emancipate 2,000,000 of men; but I ask him how he can logically say that those of his supporters who are anxious to give effect to this Motion are impeding that measure of Reform? They are not impeding it; they are seeking to extend it; and if the proposal had originated with the right hon. Gentleman or his Colleagues, we should have heard from him not one word of condemnation with regard to it. Two million voters are to be added to the electoral roll by this Bill; and if the clause of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke becomes law, we shall add, at the outside, about 400,000 women to the electorate. It is perfectly true that, from the other side, very long and interesting speeches have been made as to the merits and demerits of female suffrage, and as to the position which hon. Members think women should occupy in the social scale. No doubt, as philosophical disquisitions, those speeches are valuable; but I am bound to say they have not touched, in the slightest degree, the great question before the Committee. Hon. Members on that side of the House have urged that the vote is a right; some hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House agree with them; others are inclined to think that the vote is a privilege. Let us assume that the vote is a right. I want to know, if it be a right of citizenship, on what possible ground can you take it away from women? Is it simply because they are women? We have heard, and it has never been disputed, that there are 20,000 tenant farmers who are women in this country, and that one-seventh of the real estate of this country is in the hands of women. The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) said that the argument with regard to the tenant farmers, which I venture to think was a very strong one, was not a strong one, inasmuch as their farms are administered by their sons or other near relatives. If the hon. Member thinks that the advice of the sons or other near relatives with regard to the

administration of estates was good, why should not sons or other near relatives advise those who have a vote as to the proper way in which they should exercise it? On the other hand, I would point out to the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) that his argument cannot be taken in connection with this Reform Bill, because, if the Bill passes, sons and others employed on an estate will have a vote themselves. There lies the absurdity of the whole position. The woman who is the owner and occupier and the employer of the men will have no vote; whereas the yokels she employs will have a vote. I do not think that a weaker argument against the case could be found. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), whose speech by-the-byé was a most refreshing one, spoke with an earnestness and conviction which made it clear to the mind of everybody that his heart and soul were thoroughly in the subject on which he addressed the Committee. Well, the right hon. Gentleman told us that he did not for a moment believe the assertions that had been made that Lord Beaconsfield was not sincere in the support which he accorded to woman suffrage. Now, I remember that Lord Beaconsfield, speaking a long time ago upon the privileges of citizenship which are now to be refused by a Liberal Government, said—

“The privilege of citizenship is to give to everyone who is worthy of it a fair share in the government of the country by means of the elective franchise.”

I am at a loss to understand by what ingenuity of logic right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite can possibly get out of the position that the right of citizenship means a fair share in the government of the country by means of the elective franchise. I have observed that in the discussion upon the question of woman suffrage, hon. Gentlemen always endeavour to introduce extraneous matter. The only question at issue is, whether unmarried women, possessing the necessary qualifications, should be entitled to vote in the same manner as men would be holding the same qualifications. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) said that hon. Members on this side of the House are not in favour of giving married women the

vote. The spinster or the widow of to-day may be the married woman of to-morrow; to-day she has a vote, to-morrow she has not. Therefore, I cannot, for the life of me, understand the cogency of the argument of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham. I recollect that, in the debate last year, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) used these words—

“The hon. Member for Wolverhampton said—‘Why not give the franchise to woman, when she is willing to discharge all the obligations to the State? But is she able to do so? Ought not a person who claims the rights of citizenship to be able to fulfil all its burdens? What is the first duty of a citizen? It is to defend the country in time of war. . . . Will she do that?’”—(3 *Hansard*, [281] 719.)

But what is the answer to that? You might just as well say, because a man is lame or blind, and, therefore, cannot be a soldier, he is not entitled to vote. A woman does not become a soldier, because it is not her vocation; a man who is blind cannot enter the Army, because he is not fit for the service. Such was the argument used by the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Henry James) last year; and as his speech, unfortunately, was delivered at the end of the debate, no one had an opportunity of replying to it. Such are the sort of arguments which are consistently put forward by the opponents of this measure. I do not see any danger whatever in according the franchise to women, and I cannot understand the objection to it. If women are properly qualified as regards property, if they fulfil all the conditions of citizenship and are *compos mentis*, and fit to exercise the right of voting, why, because they are women, should they be excluded from the exercise of that right? The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) said there was no sort of parallel between the case of women voting in municipal and school board elections and their voting for Members of Parliament. I think, on the contrary, that there is every analogy between the two cases. To vote for municipal councillors, or for members of a school board, is a function of citizenship. To vote for a Member of Parliament is also a function of citizenship, though it may be a function of citizenship of a higher degree. Two

years ago women were not eligible to take degrees at Universities; and we recollect the great outcry against women being made eligible to take them; indeed, it was said that if they were, the old characters of the Universities would cease to exist. Why, even lately, there was a great discussion on this subject at Oxford, and by a large majority women were admitted to the examinations for degrees. Is it a fact that the Universities have deteriorated in character, because of the admission of women? Statistics show that this is not the case, and that the intelligence of women is on a par with the intelligence of men. The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) also said that, if women were granted the franchise, an hysterical and cowardly element would be introduced into politics. Bearing in mind what the policy of the Government has been, I can understand that that might reasonably occur to the mind of the hon. Gentleman; but if we take the average of English Governments of late years, I do not think we need be at all afraid that the influence of women would exercise a cowardly or hysterical effect upon State policy. Such arguments may be dismissed for what they are worth; the question remains the same—namely, whether you are prepared to come before the country and say that 2,000,000 of men, who are not enfranchised, are entitled to the franchise; and, at the same time, withhold the vote from 400,000 women, who are better qualified to have votes than the 2,000,000 of agricultural labourers to whom you propose to give the franchise. Luckily, in England we have no Salic Law; and if there be a country in the world in which women should not suffer from electoral disabilities, it is England. Surely our history proves this. Where can you find in the pages of the history of any country so brilliant a record as that in the Reign of Elizabeth, or Anne, or our good Queen, Victoria? The defeat of the Spanish Armada, the Wars of Marlborough, and our victories in the Crimea and India, are the results of a policy which certainly cannot be described as hysterical or cowardly. I think that with these examples of women before us—women who have governed over this nation of warriors with a hand of iron, though in a glove of silk—we should be trifling with the subject were we

to accept the argument of the hon. Member for Huddersfield and others, that by granting to women the privilege of voting for Members of Parliament, we should introduce an hysterical and cowardly element into the Legislature of the country. It is because I hold these views very strongly, that I shall, as on previous occasions I have voted for similar Motions, vote for the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE: I am sure my hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) would not like to get any man's vote on the strength of an argument he could no prove; so I assure him that women cannot graduate in either of the two old English Universities. They can, no doubt, take part in the examinations, and be reported by the examiners; but they cannot take degrees. I can also assure my hon. Friend that if the question of the graduation of women in these Universities were to be raised, it would not be regarded as so light and airy a question as he seems to think it. When my noble Friend the Member for South Wiltshire (Viscount Folkestone) got up and declared he meant to change his vote on this matter, I own I listened with great attention. The arguments he adduced were a great deal marred, in my opinion, by the promise he gave to perform the part of the returning prodigal when the right time comes. And that leads me to another question; but it is one which no one will answer. It is, that if this Amendment or clause were separated from the present Bill, how many on this side of the House would vote for it? I think many would follow the reserved provision of my noble Friend the Member for South Wiltshire. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) has been reproached by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), and by my hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich, and by other hon. Members, for hectoring, or bullying, or lecturing the Committee. My objection to the course taken by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) is of a very different nature; it is that I think the bribe he has displayed brings him actually under the penalties of the Corrupt Practices Act. If ever there were a bribe given with a jubilant contempt for dis-

guise, it was the right hon. Gentleman's statement that if the clause of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) were passed, this Reform Bill would be imperilled. That was really carrying the persuasion of opponents to an illegitimate extent. Little as I have been able to bend my affection to this Reform Bill, I can see that female suffrage is a step so much more objectionable than, if I were certain my single vote would carry the clause of the hon. Member for Stoke, and that that single vote would destroy this Bill, I should vote against the clause. Very gravely I declare that I cannot consider this is a question to be played with as a mere card in the political game, and I reproach both sides of the House for the way in which it has been brought forward and dealt with. It has been truly said that this question goes to the very root of the providential constitution of the human race; and it is all very well for the hon. Gentleman the Member for Greenwich to try to throw the onus on us, as if we were opposing something self-evident. If the thing is self-evident, why has it not been regarded as such in any place in the world, except in two Backwood States of America—which, I believe, have already done their best to annul the ill-judged arrangement—and, in an anomalous way, in modern Italy? The Prime Minister made a great mistake when he talked of this as a question new to the House of Commons. It is an old question, for it has been 10 times rejected. Years ago, a Bill for the enfranchisement of women slipped through a second reading; but the House was so alarmed and startled at what it had done, that, Sir, on the Motion to go into Committee, an honoured Member of this House and your Predecessor in the Chair, Mr. Bouverie, led the opposition, and by a magnificent majority the proposal was defeated. The whole *onus probandi* lies with the originators of this proposal. In no country in Europe, with the single exception of the anomalous case of Italy, has the principle of this clause been accepted. I will not follow the example of those who argue the question from the beginning. I have done so several times in this House; and, as I do not want to be reckoned amongst those hon. Members who are always playing on one string of one fiddle, I reserve my arguments for some

future day, in this or some other Parliament, when the question comes up as a substantive Motion. I wish to deal with it now in connection with the Franchise Bill; and I contend that to make this proposal in connection with the Franchise Bill is merely to play with our credulity; it is like children in the dark playing at ghost to pretend that this is to be dealt with as a question of female ratepayers or old women farmeresses of Warwickshire. One of the most influential Members of the Cabinet stated, not many months ago, that the goal for which he was aiming was manhood suffrage. That is an honest position, though a startling one. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) has never recanted, and it is self-evident that this Bill, whether we like it or not, is a very long stride towards manhood suffrage. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] I never implied that it was so in the intention of my right hon. Friend; but bystanders may often see further than the actors. It is my opinion that this Bill is a very long stride in that direction. I do not say my right hon. Friend means it to be so. I earnestly believe he does not; but I believe that a Bill which at once creates a constituency of 2,000,000 in the small area of the United Kingdom is such a concession to numbers that the bulwarks against manhood suffrage are very much weakened. That is my conviction; so I say that, from my point of view, to argue the question of female suffrage as if it were a mere question of female ratepayers is to trifle with the subject. This Bill in itself is, intentionally or unintentionally, a contribution to the cause of manhood suffrage. This female suffrage additionally thrust on it would be a contribution towards that more than manhood franchise, for the title to which the only condition would be that the voter is a member of that which naturalists call the *genus homo*, and is residing in this United Kingdom, or these disunited Republics, as the case may then be. I have always objected to female suffrage, as being contrary to what I believe is the manifest order of Nature, contrary to good policy, and an innovation greater than any that has ever been tried. I cannot accept the change; and the bribe that to pass the clause of the hon. Member for Stoke would endanger this Franchise Bill is, as I have said, though very

tempting, one that it is a duty for me most steadfastly to resist. Never shall I have gone into the Lobby with greater satisfaction than that with which I shall follow my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone), though for diametrically opposite reasons, but with a similar result; and I only hope that, when the question of female suffrage comes on again under different circumstances, and we have to oppose it without any reference to a Reform Bill, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will return the compliment.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: I could not give the vote, which I think it my duty to give on this occasion, without offering some explanation of the causes which have led me to take what undoubtedly is, for the present, a change of front in relation to this question. For many years I have advocated the extension of the franchise to certain women, and I have done it on this ground—that I believe that in any Representative Assemblies unrepresented interests are never attended to. I cannot conceal from myself that, of late years, the public conscience has been considerably stirred as to the legitimate rights of women. A great deal has been done for the education of women; they have been admitted—and most rightly admitted—to studies at the Universities; and I believe, notwithstanding what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Beresford Hope), that there is one University—the London University—which has admitted women to degrees. These habits are catching in other Universities; and I have very little doubt that my right hon. Friend will soon find that, in his own University, to which I belong, women will be admitted to degrees. While favouring the principle of woman suffrage, I strongly object to it being pitchforked into this Bill. In the first place, we do not quite know how women may use this franchise; though I should like to say a word or two about how I have known them use an analogous franchise. In the next place, the question ought to be thoroughly debated, and not raised on a side issue. There are many women whom it would not only be undesirable, but positively odious, to admit to the franchise. I do not want to pursue such a topic far; but there is a body of female householders and lodgers whom

no one desires to enfranchise; and in discussing the clause of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) the Committee should bear in mind that while a good and excellent woman is one of the best things one sees in Nature, and a thing a man is always ready to honour and reverence, a bad woman is the most odious and most hateful thing in Nature. Such questions as this must be considered very broadly; and I say, quite irrespective of what the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has said, that supposing this clause were carried, it would be absolutely necessary to spend a large amount of the time of the House in devising means by which this franchise should be so arranged as to exclude the persons who are, in some respects, not qualified to exercise the suffrage. I said just now I should say a word about the way in which an analogous franchise has been used by women. Last November an election took place for a Town Councillor in the City of Oxford, and one of the candidates was Sir George Rickards, a gentleman well known to Members of this House. Sir George Rickards had gone to reside in Oxford; he had large local knowledge; he had a high personal character; indeed, his general reputation eminently fitted him for the position he sought to fill. I do not know that he stood in any particular interest. I do not know that he has any strong political opinions; but he certainly is a very strong friend of the Church. There was brought against him a person who had been on the Bench for the City of Oxford; but who, on his confession, had been guilty of the grossest and most scandalous personal bribery in a Parliamentary Election held a short time before. Had the Election inquiry at Oxford been conducted as it should have been, the evidence against this man would have been forthcoming, and he ought to have been committed to prison for some months. As it was, it was absolutely necessary he should be turned off the Bench. Now, it is admitted that this disreputable person was returned as Town Councillor by the votes of the women in the North Ward. I cannot help thinking that we must hesitate a little before we believe in the moral sense of women with regard to public questions. In my opinion, it is an open question whether women will give a true deliverance upon

Mr. Beresford Hope

public matters; because I am bound to say what occurred at Oxford created in me very considerable alarm as to what might happen if women were admitted to the franchise. A certain enfranchisement of women may be desirable. I have all along felt that in certain directions it is expedient that the franchise should be given to them; but I want to hear a little more about it before I vote for such a Motion as this. I want, for instance, to have a larger amount of information as to what the judgment of women is with regard to those public functions which they would be called upon to perform. I do not think the advocates of the Amendment have made out so clear a case that I can at once make up my mind on so large a question as the extension of the franchise to women—certainly not to support a Motion couched in such broad terms as the present. I have had the honour of listening to what the hon. Member for Stoke has said in support of his Amendment, and am prepared to admit that the hon. Member has advocated his case with great discretion and force. It is easy to show instances where considerable wrong has been done to women through their not having the franchise—for example, those who are engaged in the occupation of farming frequently lose their holdings in consequence. Very often when their husbands die, and no vote can be given in respect of their holdings, fresh male tenants who can exercise the franchise are sought. There are many women who ought to have, for gaining a living, facilities which have not been given to them in times past; and there are a variety of functions which women can perform with admirable skill and tact and success, that men cannot rival; but it is very questionable whether these disabilities should be removed in a Bill of this kind, which is characterized by a few simple principles—whether, in this measure, so large an addition to the franchise should be introduced. I will only further observe that in the votes I have given on the Bill—and I do not think I have been absent from one Division—I have thought it to be expedient to treat the measure on the lines of “one man one vote.” If the hon. Member for Penrhy (Mr. Brett) should bring forward his proposal for the disfranchisement of the Universities on some

other occasion I should vote with him heartily, because I think nothing can be more disastrous, or more mischievous, than the University franchise. One who has lived in a University 40 years knows something of this—he sees something of the mischief; but if the hon. Member had brought forward his proposal on this Bill I should have opposed it. I should have thought that a thoroughly enfranchising Bill was not an opportunity for introducing any disfranchising principle; and, similarly, I think the Committee should not entertain this Amendment, having so constantly and persistently, and by such large majorities, refused to go beyond the simple purpose of assimilating the county and borough franchises. However expedient in many particulars it may be to enfranchise women, I do not think a clause for the purpose could with propriety or wisdom be introduced into this Bill.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: It was a very pertinent question of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Beresford Hope), how many on this side of the House would have voted for this Amendment if it had been brought in as a measure by itself? There is a curious difference of opinion on this subject between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) who has just sat down, and who is so well known and so highly respected in the Universities. I think, however, I can answer the right hon. Gentleman's question—“How many hon. Members on this side of the House would not have voted for the Amendment if it had been brought forward as a substantive Motion?” Perhaps a large number. A great many who have not made up their minds on the question are now determined to vote for the proposal. In the old state of the franchise, it was not so much a matter of importance to women whether they possessed votes or not; but now that this Bill proposes to create 2,000,000 new voters of a much lower order than those who have been hitherto exercising the franchise, it becomes of importance to secure some countervailing advantage in the shape of 400,000 women voters, who, for the most part, are possessed of education and property. Having answered that question, I, in turn, would now ask the hon. Member for Southwark, how many hon.

Members on the other side of the House would have voted for the Amendment, believing it to be right and just, if it had not been for the speech of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government the day before yesterday? We know that 110 hon. Gentlemen, sitting on the other side of the House, this year signed a Memorial to the right hon. Gentleman expressing the opinion "that no measure"—I am quoting now from a Resolution passed with only two dissentients at a large meeting held at 29 Parliament Street yesterday, the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) in the chair—"for the extension of the franchise could be satisfactory that did not contain provisions for extending the suffrage to women qualified to vote." [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister shakes his head. That Memorial, I say, was signed by 110 Liberal Members.

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. and gallant Member is referring to a Motion passed this year.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I believe I said this year. The mistake rests with me. It was a slip of the tongue—I should have said last year.

MR. WOODALL: It was in May last year.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: It does not matter. The statement is the same. We know perfectly well that 110 Gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House were of opinion that no measure on the subject of the extension of the franchise should be passed without extending it to women; and yet we know perfectly well that nothing like that number from the opposite side will support this Amendment to-night by their votes. The chief argument which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister brings against it is not that the Amendment is wrong in itself, and not that sound arguments can be adduced against the admission to the franchise of women of respectability, and who have a stake in the country; but that it is impossible to add any Amendment, either important or unimportant, and certainly not this very important one, to this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman said the ship is overloaded.

MR. GLADSTONE: The vessel.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Well, the vessel. The vessel, he says, is already loaded down to the load line. It

is loaded down to the load line with these 2,000,000 male voters, a large proportion of whom have no stake in the country; so that it will be swamped and lost by the addition to the franchise of 400,000 women, possessing a stake in the country, and every right as citizens to vote. I say, then, that the ship must be in a very precarious state, indeed; and I pity the crew if they are to be swamped by such an addition to their cargo. The right hon. Gentleman considers that the ship would be swamped by 400,000 extra votes of women; but he does not seem to fear, in the least, the enormous number of extra Irish votes he proposes to take on board—a number far exceeding that which he put before us in his opening speech. Then, we are told, this is a matter which can wait. And what are the women likely to get by waiting? They have waited 17 years, during which the subject has been discussed; and now they are told that they are to wait until 2,000,000 of the common orders have been admitted to a share in the Parliamentary management of the country—2,000,000 of the substratum of society from which the enemies, the oppressors, of women come; from which come the wife-beaters and wife-kickers, whom we see mentioned in our police reports nearly every day. The class the right hon. Gentleman wishes to entrust with a share in the management of the affairs of the country is largely composed of men who consider their wives so many beasts of burden, who live on their wages, ill-use them, and treat them more like animals than human beings. I say the cause of woman suffrage will be thrown back for many years if you do not concede it in this Amendment. For this reason, I shall vote for it, if for no other. I agree with the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), that the question as to Boadicea and Joan of Arc, and so forth, is beyond the point; but I must join issue with the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate), when he introduces the Scriptural argument, and tells us that no instance can be given in which, in Scripture, women did anything to advance the State. The hon. Gentleman relies solely on Scripture; but he seems to have forgotten the people of Israel who were ruled by Deborah and led by Deborah to victory, and that

Solomon did not disdain to receive the Queen of Sheba as the Empress of a great nation. [Mr. NEWDEGATE: She acted under advice.] The hon. Member, *sotto voce*, says to me that Deborah acted under advice; but it is not the way I read Scripture. I read it that it was the weak vessel who decided that the children of Israel should vote against their rulers. The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) used an argument which I think a most unworthy one—namely, that the franchise is not to be extended to women, because, unhappily, in this country, as in all others, there are women of a degraded and debased class. Because there are 40,000 of them in this Metropolis alone, the remaining women who are pure and virtuous are to be deprived of the power of voting. But will the hon. Member guarantee that the 2,000,000 men the Bill proposes to enfranchise, and whom he is perfectly prepared to see enfranchised, shall be pure and perfectly moral men? Will he insure that amongst these 2,000,000 men there are none who are living on the wages of the sin of these unfortunate women? Will he exclude every man who seduces a poor girl and brings her into this miserable class? No; men may sin and be a power in the State; but when a woman sins, not only is she to have no power, but her whole sisterhood are to be excluded from it. I consider the argument used by the hon. Member an unworthy one, and one which will not bear the test of examination. I began by saying that a great many hon. Members on this side of the House would probably not have voted for this Amendment had it come up in the shape of a substantive measure. I believe, also, that a few years ago a great many women would have been against this as a substantive Motion who now welcome it. I know this, for I have had a great many letters on the subject from ladies—so many, in fact, that I am obliged to cease answering them. I know that all over Ireland, among the respectable classes, there has been an enormous change of opinion; but if I were to speak for any length of time on this subject, I should not be able to put the case in clearer, terser, or better language than does a lady who has written to me, and whose letter I hold in my hand. She expresses herself so well

that I will read what she says. She writes—

“By my former marriage, I am possessed of separate property and pay taxes of every kind. I have never, hitherto, wished to step out of the seclusion of private life; but when I learn that this last act of Mr. Gladstone's midsummer madness may place a vote in the hands of my servant in my Gate Lodge, who has free house and coal, and so much a week from me, while I, the mistress, will have none, and he will, of course, follow the guidance of his priest, voting from my house, while I am a useless unit, because, forsooth, I am a woman, I am tempted to recollect that I am also a reasonable human soul, created by Him, who has said that in Him there is neither male nor female.”

This woman is to be denied the franchise and the right of protecting her property, whilst her lodge keeper is to have the right of taking part in the management of public affairs, and, possibly, of voting away her property. Where is the justice of this? I maintain that, however the question of female suffrage stood before, it is immeasurably strengthened now, and is rendered absolutely necessary, and that it should be immediately granted by this Bill. I entirely agree that if this clause is inserted in the Bill it will make it, to a certain extent, a more Conservative measure. I agree with the argument that by placing household suffrage in the hands of the head of the household—whether male or female—you will prevent the extension of the franchise beyond household suffrage—that is to say, prevent its extension to manhood suffrage. I believe that every idea of common sense points to the desirability of supporting the Amendment; and I, therefore, have great pleasure in doing so.

MR. WARTON: I am strongly opposed to female suffrage. I dislike very much the way in which the agitation has been got up; but, as a matter of principle, I am opposed to all agitation. I think there is nothing more reprehensible than for a number of persons to agitate for the purpose of diverting the action of Members of Parliament. When I was a candidate for a seat in Parliament, I had numerous memorials and letters sent me by the opponents of vaccination, temperance advocates, and others; and yet, although I was threatened by them, if I did not promise my support to their movements, I never replied to one of their communications. Nevertheless, I was returned by a majority of more than three to one; and

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that was, I believe, because people always respect those who act according to their principles, and will not listen to agitation got up by any class of people, be they respectable or be they not. There is one thing as to this agitation which is extremely revolting, and that is that a number of ladies—of whom I desire always to speak with respect—are connected with it who have also been associated with another agitation which it is not decent to refer to further. Suffice it to say that it was an agitation against a certain measure which, in the judgment of Ministers—which, in the judgment of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington)—was absolutely necessary for the preservation of the health of our soldiers and sailors. This measure, in spite of its necessity, has now been discarded against the real opinion of the House, against the opinion of all the officials of any importance, because an agitation has been unscrupulously brought to bear on the question by a great number of those very ladies who are associated now with this claim for female suffrage. The thing, I contend, comes before the House in a very unsavoury aspect. I am here to state what I feel, and what I believe about it. Hon. Members have spoken of the number of letters they have received; but, for my own part, I am thankful to say that for some time past I have ceased to be pestered with communications on this subject. I am thankful, because it saves me the discourtesy of refusing to reply to a lady. I used to get letters, but I am glad to say I have had none for some time now. I say this with every respect for the hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down. I am sure we all feel that the sentiments he expressed were those of his heart, and that the voice he gave to those sentiments here was dictated by his sense of right. I felt every respect for him. I felt that he stood on a far higher platform than I did, and that he entertained a far more exalted impression of the sex than myself. But we must look on these questions from a large and broad point of view. I sympathize very deeply with the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate), because I have always thought that the distinction of the sexes is a matter of Divine law. From Genesis to Revelation it is clear

that the law is uniform. In Genesis we see the woman told that the husband shall rule over her; and in the Epistles we are told that woman is made for man. Such is the Divine Will, and no amount of screaming or agitation, or letters, or papers, or journals can alter the relation between the sexes. I have spoken as a man; I am now going to speak as a lawyer, and to call attention to a very singular fact which I have noticed during the discussion. A short time ago, in 1881, an Act was passed called the "Married Women's Property Act." I ventured to show, and I trust with earnestness, what the result would be. I told the House that we should see a woman residing in a house with her husband, and giving him notice to quit. I was laughed at; but what I predicted has actually occurred. I claim, therefore, to be possessed of some knowledge of what we are about. It is curious that no one on the other side has referred to the effect of the Married Women's Property Act; but it is important to consider it in connection with this proposal. This dishonest agitation is denounced for this reason, that there are two opinions—and the agitators try to conceal the fact—one being that the widows and spinsters possessed of property should have the vote; and the other being that all women, so far as they have the same qualification as men, should vote. It is clear there is a division between the two sections of agitators on this question; and I ask, is it honest for those who have really the desire to make all women voters—or practically all—to pretend that they only want to enfranchise widows and spinsters? No, Sir. But it is easy, when an agitation is got up, for two kinds of opinion to coalesce—for Gentlemen who do not wish to see the point ultimately carried to combine with the agitators who do. In a matter like this a great many Gentlemen vote for an abstract Resolution who have not the courage to vote for the principle involved when it comes to something really practical. Such a course is cruel even to the agitators. The ladies who are engaged in the affair say—"Oh, So-and-so and So-and-so are voting with us this time," and the deluded creatures go counting up their imaginary gains; but when the time comes they find these false supporters slip away one by one, until they cannot get any of the promised votes. I

am glad reference has been made to the 110 Members who requested the Prime Minister to include this principle in his Bill; but I was surprised to see the right hon. Gentleman shake his head when the reference was made. No doubt he was right so far that the Memorial was not presented this year; but that shake of the head, at first, meant more than that. It meant a general denial; but the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel King-Harman) was provided with a reference. You should always be provided with a reference when you have the Prime Minister opposite you—always have all the Blue Books and documents you can possibly arm yourself with when you are going to make a speech in his presence. Well, are those 110 Gentlemen opposite going to vote for the admission of women to the franchise? No; because of the embarrassing declaration of the right hon. Gentleman two days ago. All that talk about overloading the ship is sheer nonsense. With his tremendous majority at his back, with his wonderful power of performing business, and more than human power of explanation, the right hon. Gentleman can do what he pleases. He can make the 110 vote with him if he chooses, because the hon. Members who signed the Memorial will certainly vote with the right hon. Gentleman directly he sets his foot down, whatever their own convictions may be. I am afraid there are, at least, two unhappy Members of the Government who have been here watching the debate and who are really devoted advocates of the enfranchisement of women, who are trembling in their shoes to know whether or not they will be allowed to retire without voting. Is that not a pitiable sight? Why could not the right hon. Gentleman have made this an open question? Simply for one reason—nothing more nor less than—well, I am not going to repeat the Latin quotation the House heard from an hon. Member to-day, because it would be painful to do so, seeing that the passage in *Juvenal* refers to the cruel action of the Roman lady who used to scourge her slaves. It would be cruel to the Prime Minister and his followers to quote that. I agree with the admirable speech made by the Attorney General on this subject—I believe there never were but three speeches which have returned Members to Parliament on their merits, and that was one of

them. I very much admire the courage he showed in repressing the agitation that was got up some time ago. He has always been consistent in opposition to these measures, and he must feel much more happy than many Members of the Government. The hon. and learned Gentleman stands far above many of his Colleagues, and is much more far-sighted. He has always been consistent on the question. We find that the present day is a day when people must not vote as they like when the Prime Minister has put his foot down; and I am going to make an appeal to some of those 110 Members who ought now to vote for the proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke. The appeal I make is this. I want to-night to see a free expression of the opinion of the House. I consider the conduct of the Prime Minister has to a certain extent prevented that being possible; but, knowing as I do that a great number of those 110 Members are going to vote for the Government, I am anxious to pair with one of them, and the only way in which I can pair is this. I must select one of them, and I must consider that my vote is a vote for this proposition, although I am really pairing with an hon. Member who is voting against it, but really for it; and the effect of my so voting will be that it will only to a small extent correct the vote of the 110 who will vote with the Government against this proposal.

MR. AGNEW: I am not one of the 110 Members who signed the Memorial to the Prime Minister to which the hon. and learned Member has referred; but I have voted in this House in favour of the inclusion of women in the Parliamentary franchise, and for many years have been, and still am, in favour of their inclusion. But I consider that it is more than doubtful whether, if the Government had introduced a clause into this Bill giving the franchise to women—indeed, I am certain there would not have been on the second reading of the Bill a majority anything like that which supported the second reading. I think that whilst, in my opinion, there would have been a majority, it would have been so small that it would in effect have been an invitation to the House of Lords to reject the Bill. In my view the arguments of the Prime Minister are absolutely unanswerable; and whilst I advocate, and shall continue to advocate, women's suf-

franchise—that is to say, the exercise of the franchise by the spinster and the widow—there I stop, I shall vote against the proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke. In so doing, I believe I interpret the wishes of 9-10ths of my constituents. I may tell the House that there are 60,000 or 70,000 persons in South-East Lancashire duly qualified to exercise the franchise who are anxiously waiting for this Bill to become law to enable them to do so. I am quite certain that in voting against this clause, and in voting for the Government, I retard, but only for a time, the extension of the franchise to women. I am quite satisfied that I interpret the wishes of my constituents, and that I do no harm to the advance of women's suffrage in voting, as on this occasion I shall vote, with the Government.

MAJOR GENERAL ALEXANDER: I desire to say, in a few words, that I have very great pleasure in supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for Stoke, because it does appear to me somewhat anomalous that one-half of the community should be debarred, by the mere accident of sex, from the privilege attaching to all capable citizens, although fulfilling all the conditions which entitle the other half to the satisfactory exercise of electoral functions. Why, let me ask, should we capriciously withhold the suffrage from women? Why are we to lay it down as an unalterable canon that, no matter what their merits or their capacity may be, women may never hope to exercise any voice or influence in the preparation of those measures which should concern them quite as closely as, and, in many cases, much more closely, than, men? Is it pretended that women are incapable of performing any electoral duties, or is it suggested that any danger will accrue to the State from admitting them, at the present time, within the pale of the Constitution? There has been only one cry of alarm on that point, and that was raised a few days ago in the columns of *The Times*. Admiral Maxse has discovered a possible source of danger in the circumstance that, at a time of great political excitement, the majority of men may find themselves defeated in their purpose by a combination of the minority of men with the majority of women. I do not believe in the probability of any such combination; but I

admit, for the moment, for the sake of argument, its possibility. What becomes of the boasted secrecy of the Ballot if you are able to follow and trace out the votes of so many electors? Admiral Maxse asserts, on the authority of a French statesman, that if female suffrage were exercised at the present moment in France a revolution would certainly ensue; but what is the result at this moment of manhood suffrage in France? At this very moment a Divorce Bill is passing through the Senate, punishing a wife in the most rigorous manner for a single act of infidelity, while refusing relief to her for any number of similar acts committed by her husband. That is the atrocious and infamous legislation which is possible—nay, even probable—under a system of manhood suffrage. Then, again, it has been asserted that women should be excluded from the electoral franchise because they are incapable of performing military service—because they cannot pay what is called the “blood tax;” but I would remind the Committee that this argument is equally applicable to the case of many men—to the case of clergymen, for instance; to men who are physically incapacitated. In this country of voluntary service, comparatively few citizens are called upon to pay the “blood tax,” or to render any military service whatever. Depend upon it, the axiom that there shall be no taxation without representation is quite as applicable to the case of women as to the case of men; and while on this point I rejoice to see this evening, in a letter in *The Pall Mall Gazette* from Miss Müller, who has been called upon to pay her rates, that she has courageously refused to do so, and that when she was warned by the rate-collector that he would be obliged to dis-train, she told him that she felt herself conscientiously compelled to bar the door against him, and that he must force his way in. If all women would act as Miss Müller is prepared to act they would not have long to wait for the electoral suffrage. Again, it has been said that politics are not the business of women; that they take no interest in politics; but if such be the case, is it not the fault of those who do their best to debar them from taking any such interest? Moreover, I contend that the great majority of women take as

much interest as the majority of men in politics, for the great majority of men, except on the polling day, take no interest in politics at all. Why, even Mr. Fox, at the end of the last century, admitted the political capacities of women, for in a speech in the House of Commons on the 26th of May, 1797—that is curious, I believe, as the first occasion upon which the question of female suffrage was ever mentioned in the House of Commons. He observed—

“In all the theories and projects of the most absurd speculation, it has never been suggested that it would be advisable to extend the elective suffrage to the female sex; and yet, justly respecting, as we must do, the mental powers, the acquirements, the discrimination, and the talents of the women of England, in the present improved state of society—knowing the opportunities which they have for acquiring knowledge—that they have interests as dear and as important as our own, it must be the genuine feeling of every gentleman who hears me that all the superior classes of the female sex of England must be more capable of exercising the elective suffrage with deliberation and propriety than the uninformed individuals of the lowest class of men to whom the advocates of universal suffrage would extend it.”—(*Parl. History*, [33] 726-7.)

That was the opinion of Mr. Fox then and if the women of England were capable citizens in the days of Mr. Fox, in what he called the improved state of society, what would Mr. Fox's opinion have been if he could have seen the women of the present day? What would he have said if he could have seen, for instance, the labours of a Miss Nightingale or a Miss Davenport Hill; or if he could have been informed of the great honours reaped only a few days ago by a young lady at Cambridge, in the Tripos, I think, of Moral Science, distancing all her male competitors, not one of whom was able to obtain the First Class, which was only reserved for her? The fact is that the education and the employments, the occupations and the pursuits of women have been completely changed since the days of Mr. Fox, and even since the days of Mr. John Stuart Mill, who in 1867 first brought the question of female suffrage before this House. On that occasion Mr. Mill complained that the Universities were closed against women, and that by the merest accident one lady, Mrs. Garrett Anderson, had succeeded in obtaining admission into the Medical Profession by a door which had been accidentally left open, and which

after she had entered was immediately closed behind her. These things are now happily changed. Women, as we have been informed to-night, have been admitted to the same education, and to the same pursuits as men, and the institution of secret voting has removed the last objection to the admission of women to the suffrage. It is idle to pretend that women are represented by their male relatives—you might as well say that agricultural labourers are represented by farmers. What we ask is that women shall no longer be treated as children or as lunatics, but that they shall vote or abstain from voting as they please for Members of this House. We have been told by the Prime Minister and others that the present time is not opportune for opening up this question; but if the present time be inopportune, will the Prime Minister tell us what time will be opportune? If this question is raised either next year or the year after, will it not be said—“You are re-opening the whole question of electoral reform, which has been happily settled for years to come?” I warn those Liberal Members who have hitherto been supposed to be favourable to this proposal of female suffrage, but who now unaccountably and pusillanimously hold back, that the more convenient season for which they are waiting will never come. Upon those Liberal Members must rest the responsibility for the negation of this measure; and I tell the Prime Minister that again and again, in and out of season, we shall press this matter upon his notice, and that until this matter is happily settled he need not expect any rest or repose. We shall knock louder and yet louder until the doors of the Constitution are at last thrown open to these capable citizens. I am not a recent convert upon this matter. I have studied this question carefully and long, and I never gave a vote with greater satisfaction than that which I propose to give to-night in support of the proposition of the hon. Gentleman opposite.

MR. W. H. LEATHAM: After the speech of the Prime Minister I do not feel disposed to go with the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Major General Alexander) and others who support the proposal. The Prime Minister tells us that it will endanger the Bill, and we must believe him. There can be

no doubt as to our duty in this matter, and after the speeches of to-day my mind is converted from the view I previously took; but it is a matter of real justice that those who have property should have votes. They are perfectly competent to vote; but the speech of the Prime Minister makes it necessary for me to abstain from voting.

Mr. **INDERWICK**: I am one of those Members of the House who are indifferent as to whether the Prime Minister has left this an open question or not; though, for my own part, I rather regret that he has not done so, because if he had left it open, it would have been determined upon its merits; and, for the first time in this House, as a matter of practical politics. I remember many occasions upon which this question has been brought forward in this House when its defeat could be predicted, and many hon. Members no doubt gave votes out of good nature, which they would not have given if they had been satisfied that the votes they gave would be followed by any practical operation; and I believe we should have found the numbers of those who gave votes on previous occasions considerably reduced. In the course of this debate reference has been made by most of the hon. Members who have spoken to the qualification of women for performing certain duties, and for carrying out employments in which they may be satisfactorily engaged. I do not know anyone who desires for a moment to dispute their qualification with regard to these matters. There is no doubt, as has been suggested by the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall), that women are great teachers of the young, and that their number as teachers has greatly increased. I think that is a matter upon which the country and the women themselves are very much to be congratulated. One cannot conceive any duty that can be better or more faithfully fulfilled than that of the noble army of teachers of the youth of this country. Whether it will be equally satisfactory to the country, or at all events to the male portion of it, that there should be the same increase in the noble army of milliners and dressmakers is altogether another question. With regard to the tenant farmers, to which the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) and others have referred, that is a matter which I think requires a

little further consideration. I understand that hon. Gentlemen base their assertions that there are 20,000 women tenant farmers in this country on the Census taken in 1881. I have taken an opportunity of looking at this Return, because I entertained a strong opinion that that was a very exaggerated statement; and I find from the first column with regard to the ages of these women tenant farmers, it appears that two of them are under the age of five years; 50 are under 15 years; 156 are under 20 years; and so on in proportion. Now, I judge from that not that the Return is incorrect—I have no means or desire to impeach the accuracy of the Return—but that it does show that before any strong argument is founded upon it, it must be examined to see how many of these women farmers and graziers in the country are simply owners of the farms and pastoral lands; and we must not too readily come to the conclusion that all these women are living on their farms, and carrying on the business. But I do not think that the question of whether women are suitable for certain occupations is decisive upon this point, although I know it is a consideration which presses much upon the minds of Members and others who support the enfranchisement of women. Before I pass away from this particular item in the argument, I should like to direct the attention of hon. Members to another column in this Census as to the occupations of the people. You will find there described agricultural, mechanical, and other employments; but the last item is the heading “Indefinite and Unproductive,” meaning, I suppose, persons having no visible occupation, or, it may be, persons living on their own means, or persons living on no means, easily ascertained. I should like the Committee to consider these figures in order to see how they are to judge of other figures to which reference has been made. In the United Kingdom there are 7,617,000 male persons who are put under the class of “Indefinite and Unproductive”—that is to say, 7,617,000 out of a total of 17,000,000. When we turn to the figures as to female persons, we find there are 13,195,000 who come under the class of “Indefinite and Unproductive,” out of a total of 18,000,000—that is to say, whereas there are 45 per cent of men under this par-

ticular class, the percentage of women is 73. Now, I do not say this is conclusive, or is a very strong argument one way or the other, and I do not rely upon this particular kind of argument at all; but I do say it is a matter which must be taken into consideration when people are founding an argument on the fact that there are a certain number of women who are engaged in one occupation, and a certain number in another occupation, and attempt to found upon that some argument favourable to this clause. Now, with regard to this question of female suffrage, there have always been two difficulties. One is the difficulty of dealing with married women; the other is, how far, if you are to give women political power at all, you will place any limit to their political power; and if you do that, where the line is to be drawn. The first of these difficulties has never been put before the House in an altogether satisfactory manner. In the debate on a Bill brought forward by Mr. Forsyth, when Member for Marylebone, the question arose as to the position of married women. Mr. Forsyth said he entertained a strong feeling with regard to the position of unmarried women; but he did not entertain a strong feeling with regard to the position of married women; and the result was that, having made that declaration, he ceased to be the Representative in this House of the Woman's Suffrage Association and the position was given to another Member. The hon. Member for Ashton (Mr. Hugh Mason) last year brought forward a Resolution on this question. That was a Resolution which, on the face of it as one at first read it, might have been taken to mean the absolute and entire enfranchisement of all the women in the country, married or single, or it might have been supposed to be limited simply to the case of unmarried women. The hon. Member for Ashton himself, in the speech he made on introducing that Resolution, expressed a very strong opinion with regard to the advisability of including married women in the political representation of the country, and declared that the Resolution was not brought forward with that intention. Then there came that remarkable declaration which was made by Mrs. Jacob Bright, and which has been referred to by my hon. Friend the Member

for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham). That declaration appears to me to embody a very strong argument, for it puts this question—"Why should you refuse that to a wife and a mother which, under your proposal, you would give to a woman who is the mother of any number of illegitimate children?" I feel bound to say that, as I regard the matter, this is in reality a very strong contention. I now come to the proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) which is now before the House; and I should like to ask one question of my hon. Friend. I should also like to ask the same question of some of the hon. Members who are intimately associated with this movement, and with the particular Association by which it is being advocated. The question I desire to put to them and to my hon. Friend is this—whether, when this Resolution was first drawn up, it was or was not intended to include married women? For my own part, I entertain a very strong impression that it was so intended, and I say so for this reason—that I think if it had not been intended that married women should have been included, the Resolution would have said so. Reference has already been made, in the progress of this debate, to the course pursued by the Legislature of the Isle of Man, which has given women the power of exercising the franchise; but in the statute by which that power is conferred, the words "spinsters" and "widows" are expressly used, so that there could be no possible mistake about the intention of the Legislature. I repeat, therefore, that if it had not been intended in the first instance that this clause should include the case of married women, I cannot see the reason why it should not have gone the length of stating clearly and specifically what that intention was. It has, indeed, been stated in the course of meetings that have been held in furtherance of the movement that it is well understood that the clause would not bear this interpretation, and that it had been brought before some lawyers for interpretation, and, they having been well advised upon the matter, were of opinion that in point of law the clause would not be construed to include married women. This is all very well as far as it goes; but it might also be construed the other way; and, for my own part, I have some doubt as to whether it

would not. At any rate, I am quite certain of this—that all doubt on the point could have been very easily avoided by the use of a very few words; and I will tell the Committee why I am induced to think that if the clause should be passed as a portion of this Bill in the way in which it is now drawn it would carry the case of married women. It has been said that this would not beset from the construction which the Court of Queen's Bench put upon a similar clause in the Municipal Corporation Act, in a case brought before the Judges of that Court 12 years ago. But it must be borne in mind, in the first place, that the decision given by the Judges in that case was a decision relative to an Act of Parliament of a totally different character to the Bill now before the Committee, and that, in addition to this, there has been since that period, under various Acts of the Legislature, a considerable alteration in the relations which at that time existed between husband and wife. For instance, there has been a great change in the law with regard to the holding of property and the power of making contracts, as well as with regard to the power of suing and proceeding against each other civilly and criminally. All these things having undergone a radical alteration since the Judges gave that decision, the relations formerly existing between husband and wife on those matters having been absolutely and entirely changed, it is to my mind by no means certain, and, indeed, in my opinion, there is very considerable doubt as to whether any Court before whom this clause might be brought for construction would not feel itself called upon to construe it to the fullest extent in favour of giving the most thorough and perfect franchise which it could be capable of conferring. One of the Judges, in pronouncing the decision to which I have referred, made this observation—that "it was a disqualification of status and not of sex." It is not my business to criticize the decisions of the Courts, or the language or proceedings of the Bench of Judges; but when I find one of the learned Judges laying it down as a legal dictum that the disqualification was one of status and not of sex, I think it right to ask the Committee to bear in mind that the disqualification of marriage is one which does not attach to a man, but which does attach to a

woman, and that only by reason of her sex. I have thought it right to make these few observations with regard to the view that may be taken of the legal construction of this clause, because, on a full consideration of the Amendment of my hon. Friend, I have been led to entertain very considerable doubt as to whether it will not, as it is now worded, carry the case of the married women; and whether it has not been put in this form for the purpose of giving women to understand that under this clause they may have a chance of obtaining the franchise if they can succeed in satisfying the Court before which the question may be brought that they are entitled to it. My hon. Friend the Member for West Suffolk (Mr. Biddell) intends to bring forward an Amendment by which he proposes to insert the word "single" before the word "woman;" and, in case that Amendment should be accepted, the clause will run in this shape—"In every case where words import the masculine gender they shall be held to include a single woman." Now, I should like to draw my hon. Friend's attention to this—that in the old authorities which constitute the law of the country there is a section devoted to the description of those phrases which are to form the additions of women, and in that description is the old phrase "single woman," which is well known alike to the law, and to the history, and to the literature of the country; and it is there stated that the proper description of a single woman is, a woman who is neither a maid, nor a wife, nor a widow. Now, we all know perfectly well from what we have heard that there is an enormous number of that particular class who will receive the benefit of the franchise if this clause should be passed. I think I know my hon. Friend too well to suppose that he would desire to confer the franchise solely on that particular class of persons; and if he wishes to see any Amendment made to the clause I would advise him by all means to get rid of the term "single woman," and to follow the example set by the Legislature of the Isle of Man and go back to the well-known terms "spinster" and "widow." But with regard to the question of including married women, I would say that, assuming this matter should be so disposed of that the Committee in its wisdom should either accept

the proposal to enfranchise women who are married, or should refuse to give the franchise to that class of persons, then will come the further question for consideration—if you decide on giving the franchise to women at all, are you going to limit their selection of the persons for whom they are to vote? Are they to be allowed to vote for everybody except themselves? Four of my hon. Friends who have addressed the Committee have referred to the cases of Boards of Guardians and School Boards. Well, what is the state of things with regard to those Bodies? Under the existing law women have the power of voting for members of Boards of Guardians, and of voting for themselves as Guardians: they have not only the right of voting, but also of being themselves elected. The same right applies with regard to School Boards. Women have not only the right to vote for members of School Boards, but are themselves qualified to sit on those Boards, and may, if they see fit, elect each other. Well, if you make use of School Board and Poor Law and municipal franchise as an argument for conferring a political franchise on women, on what ground, I ask—what reason will you advance for the application of this argument to one state of things and not to the other? If the argument is to be applied to the question of the female franchise we are now discussing, you must either accept it as a whole, or admit that it does not form a sound and solid argument, because when applied to the political franchise it breaks down. For my own part, I am disposed to think that there is no more objection to women being elected to sit in this House than there is to confer on them the franchise in order that they may vote at the election of persons who desire to sit here. If we are to bring women into the political arena at all, I can see no reason why they are not to be introduced into our political gladiatorial combats, or prevented entering this House. But, at the same time, I entertain a very strong objection to their being brought into political life at all. Most of us know something of political life both inside and outside the House, and have had some experience of its toils and troubles, of the envy, hatred, and malice which it engenders, and of the difficulties, disappointments, and dis-

enchancements of political life. I think that those of us who have had any lengthy connection with politics must have formed a very strong opinion on this matter, and agree in regarding it as undesirable that women should be allowed to have seats in this Assembly. It has constantly been said by hon. Members engaged in the discussion of this subject that women themselves have no desire to obtain seats in this House; but that all they are desirous of is to be placed in the same position as clergymen and priests, and to be able to record their votes at Parliamentary Elections, and rest content. I, for one, do not believe a word of it. I am, at any rate, quite certain of this—that the prime movers in this agitation, the most active spirits, the most eloquent and persevering advocates of women's claims, are aiming, in their propagation of female suffrage, first of all at conferring the franchise on married women, and, secondly, on obtaining the right of election for those women who, having before them an object of honourable ambition, look forward to the time when they may have been enabled, step by step, to secure for themselves exactly the same political position as men, and may then claim to be themselves elected as Members of Parliament. I would here remind the Committee of a meeting on this subject that was held not long ago at St. James's Hall. At that meeting the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leominster (Mr. Rankin) made a speech, in the course of which, by a lucky accident, he hit on the question of women's claim to have seats in this House. That meeting was conducted with great skill and care—

MR. RANKIN: I beg to say that what the hon. and learned Member has said is inaccurate, as it was by no means an accident.

MR. INDERWICK: At any rate, from what appeared in the speech of the hon. Gentleman as reported in *The Women's Suffrage Journal*, the hon. Member said—

“Sometimes it was said that if they gave women a vote they must also admit them to Parliament. He drew a distinction between voting for a Member and sitting in Parliament, and said there was no doubt that there was an essential difference in the two things. (A Voice; ‘Why?’ and interruption.)”

And this was followed by other expressions of dissent. That being the hon.

[*Eighth Night.*]

Member's view, he was quite right in expressing it, and no doubt the ladies would not think any the worse of him because he honestly stated his opinion. But it shows that the meeting did not altogether agree with him; and I will go further, and put it to the Committee, whether what I am saying is not absolutely and entirely correct; and whether it is not within the knowledge of many of my hon. Friends that a very considerable number of ladies who take a prominent part in the advancement of this movement do desire to take part in the discussions in this House—whether they do not look forward to the time when, by the action of Parliament, they may be permitted to take precisely the same part in the political affairs of the country as is now taken by men? It is said, and I know it to be the feeling of many hon. Members, including the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) and those who have supported his proposal on this and on previous occasions, that, after all, this is only a limited measure; that it is only intended to give the elective franchise to a limited number of women; and that if Parliament will introduce certain checks and safeguards no great amount of harm or damage will be done. Well, if we could, upon the whole, agree to look at the matter from this point of view, and could satisfy ourselves that that would be the end of it, then we might say that no great harm would be done; but I am disposed to entertain the opinion that before very many years are over there will be a very much greater addition to the electorate of this country than even that which is now proposed by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stoke. I think that events clearly point in the direction of manhood suffrage. We all know that it is so in the Colonies, and that the same thing exists in the United States of America, as well as in Germany, France, Denmark, Italy, Greece, and other countries, and I can see no reason why it should not be the case in this country, except that we, in England, are not quite so quick in accepting Radical or Democratic views. I will, however, suppose I am correct in this, and that it may be so accepted. I will assume, also, that this House should be induced to extend the suffrage in the way now proposed, and to give a household franchise to certain women. What, I ask, in that

event, would be likely to happen? Do hon. Members think that any checks or safeguards we might now be disposed to adopt would, for a single moment, be available when the time came for pressing forward this movement in the direction I have pointed out. It is my opinion, and I think it is that of many other hon. Members, that those checks and safeguards would be entirely swept away. As the movement towards manhood and womanhood suffrage progressed, it would, in course of time, be found that some 17,000,000 or 18,000,000 of men would be admitted to the franchise and be confronted at the polling booths with some 18,000,000 or 19,000,000 of women having a powerful influence in the conduct of political affairs in this country. I have said that a large extension of the existing suffrage is a state of things we have a right to anticipate; I am bound also to say that I do not fear it. If it comes by means of a slow and gradual progress which is good for all parties in this country, there need be no ground for alarm; but I should indeed tremble for the future of our country if the time should ever arrive when its destinies would be swayed, and, perhaps, be controlled by an enormous mass of women, numerically equalling, and, perhaps, exceeding the men—a mass of female voters who would have the power of voting on every question, whose noblest impulses, and whose natural instincts and affections, would inevitably tend to lead them astray on great political questions, and who, I very much fear, would be subject, among other things, to this remarkable influence—that to-day they might be led by fanatics and to-morrow driven by priests. The view I have thus expressed I entertain strongly and deeply; and it is because I believe that to allow the political enfranchisement of women would be injurious to the State that I feel myself compelled to vote against the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Stoke whatever may be the course taken by my hon. Friends around me.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: I do not propose to follow my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rye (Mr. Underwick) through all the legal subtleties he has imported into this subject. I believe that the principle involved in this clause is sound, and that it would be found beneficial in its operation; and it

Mr. Underwick

is because of this belief that I intend to vote for it. I do not claim to be so orthodox a Party man as my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld); but I will say that, so far as this Bill is concerned, no man is more desirous of seeing it become law than I am, and I have been equally consistent with the right hon. Gentleman in giving it a cordial and undeviating support. I believe I have voted in every Division that has taken place upon it, and my vote has always been given in favour of the measure. I have never suggested an Amendment, and, in fact, have never uttered a single word. I do not think the most loyal supporter of the Government could have done more than this. I should regret extremely if the Bill should be imperilled by any vote I am going to give; but I do not think my present vote will have that effect, and I certainly do not think it ought. If the clause is rejected the controversy will terminate. If, on the other hand, the clause is accepted, it will have been adopted by a majority of the Committee; and I think the Government will probably, on second thoughts, be able to discover some means of adapting the Bill to the wishes of that majority. They have done this on other questions of almost equal importance; and I hope, and have no doubt, they will be able to do so on this. They would never allow the work of the Session to be sacrificed to an adverse vote on the part of their supporters in Committee. Therefore, I do not think that hon. Members on this side of the House need have any fear as to the course they may pursue in voting for this Amendment. I quite agree with the Prime Minister that it is undesirable to delay the progress of the Bill by the discussion of extraneous and irrelevant subjects; but the proposal now before the Committee does not come within that category, for it is in strict conformity with the objects of the Bill. All it asks for is that the Bill may be made to fulfil its professions, and establish a uniform household suffrage throughout the United Kingdom. This Bill will, if passed into law, enfranchise 2,000,000 of men, irrespective of intelligence and morals, of character or capacity. Occupation is the only test of fitness it imposes. If this is to be the case with regard to one set of householders, why should it not be so with regard to an-

other? Why should a disqualification apply to women, and not be equally applied to men? The course of modern legislation has been to confirm the maxim that taxation and representation should be co-extensive; that rights and burdens should correspond; and that before a person suffered under the laws he should assent to them. You admit women to the gallows and the gaol, to the Income Tax list and the poor rate book. By what right do you debar them from the ballot box? The onus of proving their disqualification is thrown on the exclusionists. Let them produce it. They have not produced it yet; it has not been shown in the course of this discussion. You allow women to vote in all, to be elected to most, parochial and municipal bodies, and you have also permitted them to vote for, and to become members of, School Boards. In some of the American territories women are invested with all the rights of citizenship. Is there any man who will have the hardihood to argue that any injurious consequences have resulted from the possession of such rights? Woman's influence, whether exercised on a British School Board, or in an election, College, or Convention, amidst the rough miners on the slopes and in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, has been beneficent, and her authority salutary and elevating. Justice and logic, precedent and experience, are all in favour of her inclusion in the roll of citizenship. [An hon. MEMBER: Precedents?] Yes, precedent. What is against it? Two potent forces—prejudice and pride. The prejudice engendered by the organized selfishness of human nature, and the pride induced by ages of predominance. Nothing more. Woman, it is said, is intellectually inferior to man. I will admit, for the sake of argument, the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham) that woman is man's intellectual inferior. What then? Do you not allow the humblest and feeblest, as well as the most gifted, to enjoy the same civil privileges? Has the philosopher any legal advantage over the ploughman? John Hodge is not, and never will be, the equal of a Herbert Spencer. But John Hodge is not therefore kept in tutelage and forbidden to vote. We have, on the contrary, displayed extraordinary care in providing the machinery

for enabling him to exercise his political functions. Ignorance or mental incapacity does not constitute a disqualification for the franchise on the part of man. If not, why should it disfranchise woman, who, equally with John Hodge, is taxed in her labour and her property? The noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) has cited the case of women farmers. I know a district in which there are three women farmers, who hold and cultivate more than one-third of the land in that district. They have some hundreds of acres, and they constantly employ 50 or 60 workmen, and many more occasionally. If the Bill is passed as it now stands some 35 or 40 of those men will be enfranchised, although some of them can neither read nor write, while the persons who supply the capital and intelligence and enterprise, and who find the men their labour, will be deprived of that privilege. Is there anyone, even the most credulous opponent of this clause, who believes that such an anomaly—or rather, I should say, absurdity as this—can continue? Woman, however, is not intellectually man's inferior. History, reason, analogy, prove that her faculties—from diverse vocation and tendency, from perennial legal inequality and injustice—may be dissimilar; but they are not inferior to those of man. Her position has been the gauge and thermometer of civilization in every age and country. Some of the greatest philosophers, from Plato to Condorcet and from Condorcet to Mill, have maintained that, although woman may not be identically, she is equally, endowed with man in all his intellectual capacities. It is difficult to determine whether the inconsistency that would deny Miss Nightingale and Miss Octavia Hill a vote, but would give it to the latest housebreaker just emerged from prison, or the impertinence which affects to prescribe the circuit of duty for the Martincaus, the Somervilles, the Jane Austens, and the Mrs. Brownings is the more intolerable. Women's sphere, forsooth! Who endowed the Members of this House with the power to prescribe the position and apportion the arena in which our fellow-countrymen have to labour? The proper sphere for all human beings is the largest and the loftiest which they are able to attain, and this can only be ascertained by com-

plete liberty of choice. If women wish to become politicians let them. Remove all obstacles and impediments to the freest choice of career either in political or social life. Some hon. Members have argued that the domestic arena is the only one for which women are qualified; but they exhibit great ignorance and great forgetfulness of history. Our parasitic conventionalities, our fantastic and fanciful modes of life, while professing to honour women, degrade them. Our very homage contains a latent irony. It stimulates the cultivation of woman's personal graces and lighter accomplishments to the neglect of her nobler powers. We surround her with a world of dolls, and then complain that she is frivolous. We deprive her of the lessons and stimulus of practical outdoor life, and then we chide her with being flippant and undisciplined. But, notwithstanding these disadvantages, the number of women who have shone as Sovereigns, or who have risen to renown in politics, literature, art, and ordinary life, has been exceptionally large. Call the roll of the most distinguished Rulers the world has known—keep in mind the predominance of men over women—and will anyone contend that the proportion of great Queens has not been in excess of the great Kings? The three brightest eras in British history have been those in which the Sceptre has been swayed by a woman—those of Elizabeth, Anne, and Victoria. What does Austria owe to Maria Theresa, Sweden to the valiant daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, and Spain to Isabella, who pawned her jewels to fit out a fleet for Columbus? Can anyone, in the face of such instances, gainsay the fact that, the opportunity being given, woman, in spite of her artificial training, has risen to the responsibilities of rulership? But hon. Members have argued that one of the first qualifications of a citizen is to be able to fight, and that, as women cannot act as soldiers or policemen, they cannot therefore be electors—that as they cannot build ships, nor make guns, nor lead armies, they should, therefore, be deprived of their civil rights. Do we disfranchise men because they are below the military standard? Are the weak, the aged, and the failing eliminated from the Register? Is it fair to apply to woman a test we do not apply

to man? We refuse to allow her to take a share in the work of the world. The enervating habits we have imposed on her have impaired her physical powers, and then we cite to her detriment the weakness which our customs have created. Men with splendid natural endowments often die mute and inglorious for want of discipline and opportunity. Great Commanders grow out of the circumstances in which their lives are cast. Open to woman the same scenes, immerse her in the same great pursuits and interests and, if she fails, then, but not till then, shall we be able to make a basis of argument against her on the ground of intellectual incapacity. Those hon. Members who use this fighting argument forget the martial energy of the Scandinavian women. When my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) mentioned the names of Boadicea and Joan of Arc, a titter went round among hon. Members, who, in their hurried march of executive life, have allowed reflection to be submerged by locomotion, thought by action, and ideality by a narrow and soulless materialism. But the names of the gifted and the lost will live, and the lessons of their lives will stir the pulses of mankind when all our petty politics are forgotten. It has been argued that domestic cares and political pursuits are incompatible. If so, why need there be any fear of conferring upon her this power? No law is required to exclude either man or woman from incompatible occupations. My contention is that women are as capable of busying themselves in State affairs as men, and that it is unjust and unwise to exclude them from active life in all its higher departments. In every great reform the majority at first have always said the claimants for power were unfit for the possession of the privileges sought. This was the stale argument used against the admission of the Jews, the Catholics, and the Dissenters to political rights. But we admitted them. Let us look around for the consequences. Why not try women? Let the tools be for those who can best use them, be they men or women; let facts, and not prejudices, or mere legal technicalities, settle woman's capacity, and, therefore, her sphere. We take our stand on the ground of justice and expediency, on the self-evident and indisputable prin-

ciple that every class should be endowed with the power to protect itself; and on this ground we claim for women the same rights and privileges that are given to men in like position.

MR. BRYCE: Sir Arthur Otway, I think it has not been fully recognized by those who, up to the present time, have spoken in favour of the clause, that we want something more than abstract argument to justify our acceptance of the principle which it embodies. On the other hand, I must say that many of the arguments which have been used against this proposal to extend the suffrage to women appear to me weak, and such as I cannot adopt. For instance, it is alleged that the franchise would unsex women; but surely Nature is stronger than any laws which we can make. Then, it is urged that women would vote with the Conservative Party; but if women really hold Conservative political opinions why should they not give effect to them? Women, people say, do not fight, and therefore a case might arise in which all the men would be on one side and all the women on the other; but can anyone suppose such cases likely to arise? But I can just as little find any force in the argument for the admission of women that taxation implies representation, for every man who buys an ounce of tobacco pays a tax to the extent of the duty, and, however large may be the taxes which a man pays, he gets no more votes. Yet no one proposes to give votes in proportion to property. It has been well said that if we are to regard the State as a Joint Stock Company, and in that Company the holder of one share and the owner of 100 shares have each a vote, it may in one sense be said that 99 shares are unrepresented. ["Name!"] Those are the words of Goldwin Smith, and I do not think that any political writer has appeared in this country who has brought a more independent judgment to bear upon this question. The State is not, however, a Joint Stock Company in which men vote according to their pecuniary contributions; and it is not really upon property that we base the franchise. Nor is this question, as my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) tried to make it last year, a sentimental question—a means of creating what my

hon. Friend called "noble woman." It is a question far too serious to be decided by vague and speculative considerations of sentiment. The true grounds for extending the franchise to any hitherto unenfranchised class are that the extension should give us a better Parliament—that it should concede a voice and influence to interests needing to be represented, and that it should enable this House more perfectly to reflect the opinion of the majority of the constituencies, so far as that majority is qualified to form an opinion. Can it be said that the admission of women is needed for these purposes? There is a consideration, to my mind, amply sufficient to decide the point, and it is this—that women, taking them all in all, are not politicians—that they know little and care less about political questions. I am aware that there are a few, and an increasing number of women who do; but how small a proportion do they constitute of the whole mass whom this clause would enfranchise? If you go down to other classes of the community you will find the difference greater; whatever class one takes the women of that class will be found to have a far smaller knowledge than the men have of political questions. If we could admit the few women who do take an interest in political questions, without admitting those who do not, I should see no objection; for I do not argue that sex, as sex, ought to disqualify. It is not because women are women, but because the conditions of their lives have not qualified them for the exercise of political power, that they are unfitted to exercise the franchise. The time may, of course, arrive when women will take an interest in, and when they shall have gained a knowledge of political questions, which they are now without, and the objections which I now take would not then be applicable. But, as things stand at present, women are in every rank and class of life much less informed on politics than men are; and they must, owing to the nature of their lives, spent so largely at home or in comparative solitude, want those opportunities of discussion and of gaining a practical knowledge of the affairs of the world which men enjoy. Let each hon. Member ask himself how many ladies there are of their acquaintance who have thought seriously on political questions, or formed their opi-

nions independently? How many ladies do they know, excluding the wives and daughters of Members of this House, who even read the political intelligence in the newspapers? Surely, a very small number. I am prepared for the answer that this holds true, also, of a large proportion of the classes already enfranchised, and of those to whom the Bill seeks to extend the franchise. Doubtless, there are many among them whose political intelligence and knowledge falls far short of what is needed for the exercise of electoral power. But the franchise has been extended so widely even to those classes because there are other grounds which made it necessary—because the special interests of the town workmen and of the agricultural labourers needed to be protected by giving them votes, instead of leaving them to the mercy of the wealthier classes. No such reason exists in the case of women. They are not a class. Their wishes and needs are substantially the same as those of the men who are their relatives. In a few points only can they be said to have any separate interests, and in those points the injustices which they have no doubt suffered from are being gradually removed. One of them has been removed by the Married Women's Property Act. As respects the guardianship of children, the law is still unfair to women; but the reception given to the Bill brought in by me this Session on that subject makes it probable that here, too, their grievance will soon be removed, although the opportunities for obstruction in this House may delay it for a year or two. Looking at the thing broadly, it cannot be said that women need votes in order to obtain remedial legislation. There is, I think, a serious fallacy in the argument of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Woodall) and his supporters, when they urge that because some women are eminent in literature, or in philanthropic and educational work, therefore they need the franchise. Rather might my hon. Friend have observed that the more power women exert in these indirect ways the less need is there to give them electoral power. There can be no more baseless assumption than that the polling-booth is the main source of influence in politics. Women already enjoy greater influence in other ways, both public and

private, than the franchise would give them. In fact, nothing is more remarkable than the skill, the energy, the success, with which they have conducted political and social agitations. They have more leisure for the work than most men; they have powers of persuasion superior to those of men; and they throw themselves into any cause they adopt with more than manlike intensity. I may be told that surely the ladies who have proved themselves to be such accomplished agitators are fitted for the suffrage. No doubt they are, but they are a very small minority; and the great mass would either vote as their male relatives or friends suggested, or else be left to the mercy of wire-pullers—perhaps female wire-pullers—who would be no desirable phenomenon in politics. Washington knows what female Lobbyists can be, and I trust it will be long before wire-pulling or any of the other arts of professional politics, unpleasing even in men, begins to be practised by women. Now, from the nature of the case the female vote in any constituency must, as things now stand, be more open to manipulation, because less independent and less based on practical knowledge, than the male vote; and its introduction will therefore tend to give us a worse instead of a better Parliament. That female vote may become a very large one. For the Committee must bear in mind that, however some hon. Members may try to persuade themselves to the contrary, it is impossible to draw a line between married and unmarried women. My hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent did not attempt to draw such a line, because he felt the logical as well as the practical difficulty. It is intelligible to say that all women, married and single, shall remain unenfranchised; but it is not intelligible to say that married women shall be left without the political privileges which other women are to receive. If you overleap the greater distinction, that between men and women, you cannot stop at the lesser one. The advocates of women's suffrage are usually candid enough to admit this. They do not deny that if the franchise be now conceded to unmarried rate-payers, they will forthwith start a fresh agitation for the admission of lodgers and married women. That agitation will be stronger than the present one, for its logic will be irresistible, and it

will be supported by the women who will then have already obtained votes. We shall be told that it is monstrous that marriage should involve disfranchisement, and truly told, for in many respects married women are better qualified than single women for the exercise of this power. We are bound, Sir, to look at this question as if it were proposed forthwith to establish womanhood suffrage. Sooner or later the suffrage in this country will come lower than it is now; and if we are to have manhood suffrage—not so impossible in these days of Democratic Toryism, when there is really no party of resistance in England—we shall have womanhood suffrage. I cannot think that the Committee will be moved by the ingenious argument of my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), who suggests that we shall find a security against manhood suffrage in admitting some women to a right which obviously would not be extended to all women. That is a highly speculative view. A Parliament bold enough to take the one leap might not recoil from the other. On what grounds, Sir, are we asked to make this change? On grounds of abstract theory, a dangerous guide in politics. Why are we of all nations to try an experiment, a great and perfectly novel experiment, never yet tried in any civilized country, and not so much as talked of in countries like France and Germany? It has not been tried in any of our Democratic self-governing Colonies, nor in any one of the 38 highly Democratic States of the American Union. It has been attempted in the rude and thinly-peopled territory of Wyoming—where, so far as one can make out, it works badly—and in the saintly territory of Utah, where the effect of woman suffrage is to give every Mormon husband as many votes as he has wives. But when the proposal was made recently in the great State of Ohio, it was rejected by a large majority of the people, and I believe, after careful examination, that in the United States the Woman Suffrage Question has gone back instead of forward, and that the idea is less popular, less likely to be carried out now than it was 20 years ago, when sentimentalism was a stronger force than at present in American politics. Sentimentalism must be pretty strong in England, when so many

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hon. Members have been drawn into supporting this movement out of mere theory and a lazy good nature. They are half amused, half curious to see how it will work; they have given a heedless assent to the persuasions addressed to them by ladies whose zeal and eloquence excite sympathy as well as admiration; they have been led into pledges which cannot easily be recalled. But we have to look at a very serious question. We are asked in the Bill to try the experiment of enfranchising 2,000,000 of men, in addition to those who now possess the franchise, and this little clause invites us to try another experiment by enfranchising, perhaps, 700,000 women, who till lately never dreamt of having it. That is a startling thing to propose in a State like this. No Member of this House feels more sincerely anxious than I do that the fullest attention should be given to women's claims, or that their interests should be treated not only with justice, but with that equitable indulgence which is due to the sex less able to protect itself by the methods open to men. I have laboured for 18 years on behalf of the higher education of women. I have joined in advocating the Married Woman's Property Act, have undertaken in this House the task of endeavouring to obtain for mothers their just rights to the guardianship of their children. And it is just because I have had, perhaps, more occasion than some other Members to know how admirable is the work women now do, and how great their influence—it is because I believe the functions they now fulfil in our social polity and in philanthropic enterprise, as well as in domestic life, to be of priceless value to the community, that I hope Parliament will not thrust upon them political duties, for which the vast majority of them are still unprepared, and which comparatively few of them have shown that they desire. If this experiment is to be tried, let it be first tried by some State with less to lose than Great Britain has by an error which may prove perilous not only to our Government but to the best interests of women themselves.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Sir, the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) just now made a speech in which he seemed to imply that we should be almost criminals if we refuse to give the

vote to women. He said that those who opposed this clause were actuated either by pride or prejudice. If that be the case, then the people of all the countries in the world, with the exception of one or two territories in America, must be actuated by pride or prejudice. The hon. Member for Newcastle was exceedingly eloquent and exceedingly poetical; and although if I tried I could neither be poetical nor eloquent, I wish to address one or two observations to the Committee. Sir, I look with considerable suspicion on the conduct of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Individually I believe in the virtues of those hon. Gentlemen; politically and collectively I do not consider that they possess a single virtue; and when I heard that this clause was supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and that it would be supported in "another place" by Lord Salisbury, I thought that a Liberal should pause before going into such bad company. The argument mainly used by Gentlemen in favour of the proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) is that because we have enfranchised men, therefore we ought to enfranchise women. It may be that we should enfranchise women; but because we have enfranchised men is no reason that we should do so. We may discuss the subject eloquently, we may refer to Joan of Arc and Boadicea; but, in point of fact, from the time of Eve till now, there has been a distinct difference between man and woman. There are a great many things which I am ready to admit women can do better than men, and there are other things which I think can be better done by men than by women. Each have their separate functions, and the question is whether the exercise of electoral power is a function which women would adequately discharge? I do not think it is. As yet, I understand that no country has really given women the vote; and were it not that hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are generally averse to giving the franchise to any large body of men, think, and think justly, that a very large majority of women would vote for Conservatives, I should be surprised at their making this desperate leap in the dark. Some hon. Members on this side of the House have told us that women are better than men. That is the language of poetry. But when we come to facts I am not at all

disposed to admit that women are better than men. It is not a question of whether women are angels or not, but whether they will make good electors. They might, of course; but some hon. Gentlemen seem to think that the matter is proved—that they will make good electors and give attention to the interests of the constituencies; and the hon. Member for Newcastle told us that he was convinced of this because Anne was a great Queen; and he told us also that Elizabeth was a great Queen. But Queen Anne was not a great Queen, and Queen Elizabeth had the intellect of a man with the weaknesses of a woman. The hon. Member also spoke of Queen Christina of Sweden as a great Queen; but everyone knows that she was one of the most execrable Queens that ever lived, for after being deposed by her subjects she went to Paris and murdered her Secretary. We learn that by the operation of nature more women are born into the world than men, that women live longer than men, and that a considerable number of men leave the Kingdom as soldiers and sailors while women remain at home. In consequence of this, there are at any given moment a greater number of women than men in the country. I am told that in every county, with the exception of Hampshire, more women would be put on the Register than men if we had womanhood suffrage. And what would be the consequence? They would look to the interests of women rather than to the interests of men; they would band themselves together, and we should have them, naturally, of course, asking to be admitted to this House, and then if they were admitted, instead of being on an equality with them, we should put ourselves under petticoat government; we should have women opposite, women on these Benches, and a woman, perhaps, in the Chair. They would, like women everywhere, have their own way. But it is not for us to consider that at present; we may suspend our judgment; but, at the same time, we must look the matter in the face. But the hon. Member for Stoke himself hesitates as to the consequences—he hesitated a good deal as to whether he would give the vote to married women or unmarried women, and by his mode of dealing with the question it would seem that he gave to vice what

he denied to virtue. As long as a woman remains a spinster it appears that she is to have the vote, but that so soon as she marries she is to cease to be an elector; she is to lose her rights if she enters into the holy and honourable state of matrimony, and if her husband dies she again gets the vote. When Napoleon was asked by Madame de Stael who was the best woman in the State, he said—“The woman who has most children;” and, therefore, I think my hon. Friend is positively wrong in saying that he will give the vote to unmarried women and take it away from them when they marry. But the reason why we ought to vote against the proposal is that this is not an opportune moment for considering it. This Bill is the Bill of the Government and of the Prime Minister, and I think the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly right to object to political cuckoos on this side of the House who lay eggs in his nest. Let us look at the consequence of accepting this measure. As usual, hon. Members think the Prime Minister made a mistake, and that he did not mean what he said. I think he does mean what he said. He told us distinctly that he would throw up the Bill if this clause were passed. [“No, no!”] What would be the effect if my hon. Friends were in a majority on this question? The effect would be that they would not give women the vote, but they would deprive men of the vote. We are here by a distinct mandate of the country; one of the reasons why we were elected was that we pledged ourselves to vote in favour of the franchise being given to agricultural labourers. The Prime Minister says that the adoption of this Amendment would imperil the Bill; so not only should hon. Gentlemen on this side not vote against the Government, but they ought not to abstain from voting with them, otherwise the Ministry may find itself in a minority, and the consequence would be that the Bill might be thrown over altogether. That I consider is a sound reason for voting with the Government at present. There may come a day when we shall discuss this matter on its merits; but in order to do that two things are necessary—first, that we must discover that the majority of women themselves desire the franchise, which I very much doubt; and, secondly, that the majority of the electors whom we

represent should notify to us that they also desire it.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: Before I make any remarks on the main question, I wish to say I think my hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) was not quite right in saying that there was no State of the American Union where this woman suffrage existed. I believe it exists in the State of Wyoming. ["And the Isle of Man."] I merely mention this to show that it has not the dreadful effects my hon. Friend seems to imagine it would have here.

MR. BRYCE: I said it existed in Wyoming and Utah; but these are not States—they are only territories.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I accept the correction. The exercise of the suffrage by women in Wyoming does not do the harm which my hon. Friend appears to think it would do if adopted here. *The Boston Index* of September, 1875, said—

"As far as can be known, the ladies divide their votes between parties as much as men do; rather more, perhaps, voting for personal friends. To sum up, the opinion of the best informed is that woman suffrage in Wyoming has resulted in making everything just as it was before, only a little more so."

Now, my hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham), in his very able attack upon the clause of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall), said that he was inclined to think that Representative Government was on its trial. Well, I do not go quite so far as that; but I am inclined to say that the Liberal Party is on its trial to-night. We shall see whether the Liberal Party is determined to be loyal to its principles, or simply true to its Party Leaders. The discussion on this clause, so far as I understand it, divides itself into two parts. We, first of all, have to discuss, though the discussion has not ranged very much over that ground—we, first of all, have to discuss whether the clause is right in itself, and whether it is proper that women should have the suffrage given to them; and the next question is whether, if the clause be a right one, it is now an opportune moment for dealing with the question? Now, it appears to me that if I prove the first proposition—namely, that this is a proper proposal, the second proposition follows naturally.

Mr. Labouchere

I take that from the words of my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), who said not long ago, in discussing another question in this House—"It is always opportune to do right." That, I think, was the text from which my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) spoke the other day when he brought forward this clause. But before discussing whether this is an opportune proposal, I want to discuss whether it is right. I say it is right, and I do so because I hold the old Whig doctrine which has been alluded to in this debate—namely, that taxation and representation should go together. But when I say it is an old Whig doctrine, I hope the Committee will allow me to read one sentence from a speech of Mr. Disraeli, because I think he put the whole case we have before us to-night correctly in one very short sentence. Eleven years ago Mr. Disraeli said—

"I believe the anomaly that the Parliamentary franchise attached to a household or property qualification when possessed by a woman should not be exercised, though in all matters of local government when similarly qualified she exercises this right, to be injurious to the best interests of the country, and I trust to see it removed by the wisdom of Parliament."

Now, that is our case; I do not think it can be put better than that. My hon. Friend (Mr. Woodall) does not propose any intricate change in the law. If we carry this clause, we simply put those women who are householders exactly in the same position with regard to the franchise as men are now; and I think it is but fitting that on this occasion there should be a combination of Whigs, some Tories, and some Radicals, to maintain that which Mr. Disraeli so long ago declared to be injurious to the best interests of the country. I can understand some of my Tory Friends, with their aversion to all changes of this sort, being against it; but I see the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) in his place. Why should he be against it? ["He is not."] Someone says he is not; but I am afraid he is. I look for better things from him, because I will tell you how I regard the noble Lord. Lord Dufferin, in one of his despatches dealing with Egyptian matters, said that in Egypt there is not an Opposition to the Government; and he added that opposition is the vital spark of Constitutional Go-

vernment, Now, the noble Lord is the Opposition; and I look to him as the vital spark of Constitutional Government. Every day he becomes, to my great delight, more recklessly Radical, and I hope my speech will have the effect of converting him totally to our side, and that he will vote in favour of this proposal. Why should Radicals—old Radicals as well as new Radicals, like the noble Lord—be false to their principles on this occasion? There are a great many people who remind me very much of a sentence that was used by a slaveholder in the old days of American slavery—namely, “All men is born free except niggers.” Why should Radicals vote that “all men is born free except women?” There is a certain amount of reason against this Motion; and it is, to a certain extent, plausible. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick) made a very able speech just now. He had a bugbear; he was afraid of the clergy. He said he was afraid that the clergy would influence women as to the way they should give their votes. Well, why should they not? What are clergy for, unless to influence people to do right? Why does the State employ 20,000 clergy in this country, unless to influence people? Why they should not influence old ladies, as well as other people, I do not know. The argument of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick) may be a good argument for disestablishing parsons; but it is no argument for disestablishing women. Someone—I forget whom—said to-night that women would all vote Tory. Let them vote Tory. It is the most illiberal doctrine I ever heard to say you will only give people the vote if they vote as you wish; it is high-and-dry Toryism of the very worst school. I would give women the vote if I believed that at the next General Election they would bring into power hon. Gentlemen opposite, the multiple control—Lord Salisbury, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), all joined together. [“And the Lord Mayor!”] I should not at all object to the Lord Mayor being one of the party; I think he would improve it. What an extraordinary argument it is, I think my hon.

Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), with whom I sometimes agree, is rather teased with the fear that women will be Tories. He seems to have a horror of Tories—and he called upon us not to vote for this Motion, because the Tories are going to vote for it. What did he do on the “dirty trick” day? My hon. Friend contends that the Tories voted with him, and not he with the Tories. Now, I want the Tories to vote with us to-night. Let us get rid of this fear of giving people their rights because they may form a particular Party. Let us “be just and fear not.” Well, then, another great argument is that women do not want the franchise. I think that shows how bad our present system is. They have got so disgusted and depressed that they take no interest in politics. I think politics are the noblest pursuit anybody can follow. I regretted to hear my hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) say that there are no politicians amongst women. The hon. Gentleman, however, contradicted himself just afterwards when he said they went up and down stamping the county. [MR. BRYCE: A very few.] Oh, a very few; and I hope there will be more. Another great argument is that women cannot fight, and that because they cannot go and kill people they ought not to go and vote at elections. There is a text, “No man that worketh not, neither shall he eat,” and the text of the opponents of this clause is, “No woman can fight, neither shall she vote,” and let us carry that out. Let us prevent the men who cannot fight from voting. What is to become of the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) and me, I should like to know? Well, that argument is of no avail. Another argument is brought forward—I found it in a very able pamphlet by one of the most able opponents of woman suffrage, Admiral Maxse. I read that pamphlet the other day, and it strengthened my belief in woman suffrage. Admiral Maxse said women hate war; but they adore the Army. Well, that is what the Prime Minister does. Surely you would not disfranchise him because of that. I believe that when women come to the study of great political questions they will be as much for peace as my hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr is, or as I am; and I was surprised to hear my hon. Friend the

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Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham) say how much he dreaded that a feminine alloy might enter into our policy. I wish there was a feminine alloy—an alloy of truth and humanity—in our policy. It will be a good day for England when that alloy does enter into our policy. But about this peace question, and about the influence of women. I want to quote a greater authority than the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham)—I want to read to the Committee a few sentences that were uttered by the Prime Minister in the Corn Exchange at Dalkeith on November the 26th, 1879, one of those far-off days never to be forgotten. What did the right hon. Gentleman say to the ladies who presented him with an address? He said—

“I understand it to be your wish that I should say some words as to the particular share that ladies and that women may be said to have in the crisis of the day;”

the crisis of the day was an attempt to turn Disraeli out of power. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

“I appeal to you in virtue of the common nature which runs through all. I speak to you ladies as women, and I do feel that the political crisis has to do not only with human interests at large, but especially with those interests which are most appropriate, and ought to be most dear to you. The harder and sterner and drier lessons of political economy are little to your taste. You do not concern yourselves with abstract propositions. It is that side of politics which is associated with the heart of man that I must call your side of politics. When I look at the inscription which faces me on yonder Gallery, I see the words ‘Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform.’ . . . But of those three words, the one upon which I shall say a few words is peace.”

And then followed a most eloquent passage, descriptive of the horrors of war, such as the right hon. Gentleman has been making since. The right hon. Gentleman continued—

“Do not suffer appeals to national pride to blind you to the dictates of justice. I am making no inappropriate demands; but am beseeching you, as women, to perform a duty which belongs to you, neglect of which would, in some future time, be to you a source of pain; but the accomplishment of which will serve to gild your future years with sweet remembrance.”

What is the use of the Prime Minister making demands of that sort on women if they are not fit to have an opinion upon politics? I say that out of his own mouth that sentence I have quoted only

proves the case of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall); I have proved it so far as the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench are concerned—I do not mean more than that, because I suppose they are all devoted followers of the Prime Minister. But now I come to the second part of my discourse. We are told that this is not the right time to introduce this question, and the Prime Minister said that my hon. Friend had not suggested any plan for carrying out his proposal. I think it was not said with the usual clearness of the Prime Minister, because it seems to me that the clause is simplicity itself. There would be no difficulty about it if it were passed and incorporated in the Act. Women would simply get on the Register if they had the qualification exactly in the same way as men did. There cannot possibly be any ambiguity or doubt in the matter. But the reason why it is not the right time to go on with this matter is, says the Prime Minister, because it is intolerable to mix it up with purely political and Party questions. But he says it is the largest social question which can possibly be raised. Well, surely a social question, and the largest social question, is one which a Liberal Ministry, above all others, ought to take up, and take it up at once, or, at any rate, to have an opinion upon one way or the other. What did Mr. Disraeli say? He said in one of his earlier writings—and it is a sentence I am never tired of quoting—

“The one duty of politics is to promote the social welfare of the people.”

What is the Liberal Party for if it cannot promote great social reform? The noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) knows that he learned a great deal at Birmingham. He went down there—I read his speeches with delight—and he said—“Social questions are the questions of the future”—and so they are, and when he is Prime Minister I hope he will remember that. But what is the Liberal Party for if it cannot make up its mind on these social questions? It seems to me it is useless; its sun is set; its day is done—[Mr. R. N. FOWLER (Lord Mayor): Hear, hear!]
—and the sooner it is carried away and buried with the Lord Mayor as chief mourner the better. I say it is upon the great social questions that the Gentlemen I see sitting upon the Treasury

Bench are bound to have an opinion upon, and to state that opinion, and not to deal with them as they are dealing with this question to-night. Well, now, Sir Arthur Otway, how are we to be coerced—some of us, not me? How are we to be coerced to vote against this great measure of freedom? Why we are told that if we do vote for this clause, and if by a piece of good fortune we should carry it, there is a chance of the Bill being thrown up. I ask my hon. Friends on this side of the House are they such children as to be frightened by shadows, and phantoms, and hobgoblins? Throw up the Bill because this clause is carried! I tell the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who form the Government—I tell them to their faces that they dare not do anything of the kind. If they did throw up the Bill because this clause was carried it would be a disgrace, vast, exceeding, and abiding. Throw up the Bill because the Prime Minister has told us it is a Bill to enfranchise capable citizens, and we merely propose to add 500,000 more capable citizens to the electorate! Why, such a thing was never heard of. We merely propose to add a clause which will not impede the Bill's progress, but which, if carried by those wicked Tories who frighten my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) so much, will smooth its progress to the realms of bliss, and will make it more acceptable to the House of Lords. It must be remembered that this is a clause the principle of which, as the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham) stated to-night, has been already supported in this House by very nearly half of the Liberal Party. I say that for a set of Gentlemen who profess to represent the Liberal Party to come down, under those circumstances, and throw up the Bill would be an act of treachery to freedom and to progress unexampled in the political history of this country. They may get up and say what they like at that Table; but I do not believe they would throw up the Bill, because they dare not. There is another hobgoblin. They might resign. Awful idea! I remember that Mr. Cobden said he never knew a change of Government that the people did not get something out of, and I do not know that we should not get something out of a change of Government even now.

What would happen, suppose the Tories came in? Why, they would do what they did in 1867, what the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock has written a letter about—they would over-trump the right hon. Gentleman. I have no doubt that if the noble Lord was at the head of the Government along with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) they would bring in a Bill to enfranchise every man, woman, and child. As for foreign policy, the Tories might be worse; but it would be exceedingly difficult for them to be so. As to the Liberal Party itself, what would happen if the Tories came in? I mean by the Liberal Party all the patriots sitting round about me. It would be like a resurrection from the dead. From every platform, from every hall in the country, we should have the shout for Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform, raised once more, and all of us Radicals would rise once again into life and liberty—the old political life of the nation would be revived; we should be Liberals once more, instead of poor dummies sitting and voting here as we are bid. I do not believe that all these dreadful things will happen; we know what the result of the Division will be. But, notwithstanding that, I thank my hon. Friend (Mr. Woodall) for what he has done. I am glad there is one man in this House who will stand to his guns; I am glad there is one man who will disregard spurious Radicals and real reactionaries—Whigs, prigs, and philosophers—who will disregard all Ministerial maledictions. He may not win the day. I am afraid he will not; but he will lay the foundation beyond doubt of ultimate success. I congratulate him on the prospect of that success—success of a measure calculated to purify, ennoble, and elevate the national life of this country, and to bring in its train blessings which always attend a policy of freedom and liberty.

MR. GOSCHEN: Sir Arthur Otway, I scarcely know what is the proper tone to adopt in addressing the Committee after the speech of my hon. Friend (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). It is a curious and significant fact that it seems impossible to continue a discussion upon the admission of women to the franchise without sometimes admitting the comic element. Much as we desire to be serious upon

the subject, it appears that jokes can scarcely be kept out. Nevertheless, it does appear to me that we have before us a very serious question indeed, one which we can scarcely afford to pass by with simply a sportive allusion to the great difficulties which surround the subject; and I venture to put it to the Committee that there are many Members present who, judging from the speeches they have delivered, or the cheers they have given, may well be considered to be unconscious of the clause which is now before us. The purport and scope of this clause seem to me to have been misconceived. We have been assured over and over again that certain authorities—for instance, Lord Beaconsfield—have pronounced upon the clause, and again we have been told who are to be enfranchised by it. My right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) began an enumeration of the classes to be enfranchised. The first are women householders, heads of families, and employers of labour, and so forth; and, secondly, he mentioned widows, who, he appeared to think, were exceptionally fitted to vote, but why I confess I am unable to understand. But I thought the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld) was going to proceed with his list, and that he was going to show to the Committee how the clause now before us differs *in toto* from previous proposals that have been submitted to the House in reference to the enfranchisement of women; and it will be a somewhat significant fact if, when hon. Members opposite realize the full purport and scope of the clause, they should in any large numbers support it, unless, indeed, they support it as part of a Bill which they afterwards intend to reject. But, if so, I shall have to tax hon. Gentlemen opposite with cruelly playing with the feelings of the ladies. They will seem to be imitating the conduct of those naval and military officers who in the Colonies will flirt to any extent with ladies of the country, because they know they will be ordered away before it really comes to business. So it appears to me with hon. Members opposite. The noble Lord the Member for South Wilts (Viscount Folkestone) has stated in the most frank way his intention to vote in favour of woman suffrage in this Bill which is going to be rejected by the

Lords; but he said he was not going to commit himself to woman suffrage in the future. Well, now, I submit to hon. Members opposite whether upon a question of such gravity, for it is a grave question, it is right in this way to trifle with a great principle? The noble Lord (Lord John Manners) who opened the debate this evening is perfectly sincere. Other hon. Members have always voted in favour of the enfranchisement of women; but up to what point? So far as they were householders, so far as they were ratepayers, so far as they represented property. Yes; but I understand that some hon. Members opposite, and I expect the Lord Mayor, are going to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stoke, which is totally unconnected with property, which is totally unconnected with ratepaying, and totally unconnected with any qualifications which in Motions submitted hitherto have always governed the case; and they are going to vote in favour—I wonder whether they will do so?—of a lodger franchise for unmarried women. I trust that, even at this hour of the night, it is worth while to put before the Committee what is really the full purport of this Motion. Lord Beaconsfield has been quoted, and I see the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) is likely to take part in this debate. What Lord Beaconsfield said was this—

“A woman having property ought to have a vote in the country in which she can now hold manorial courts, and in which she may sometimes act as churchwarden.”

“A woman having property!” But would he have been prepared to extend the franchise to young ladies who serve behind the counters at the establishments of Messrs Spiers & Pond? Would he have supported the lodger franchise for all the unmarried women in London and the large towns? It is entirely a new proposal. Take the proposal brought forward in the House last year—

“That, in the opinion of this House, the Parliamentary franchise should be extended to women who possess the qualifications which entitle men to vote, and who, in all matters of local government, have the right of voting.”

That is what hon. Members have been pledged to hitherto. It was “as ratepayers,” and all the arguments that have been used have been directed to that particular point. Now, the right

hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) was kind enough to make a special appeal to me; and he urged that this Bill would embody this most valuable principle—namely, that it would establish a household, a family vote. It was the family, he said, that was to vote. But that is not the proposal in the Amendment before the Committee. It is a lodger vote; the family vote will not occur in one out of 20 cases. Where in the case of women there is one family vote there will be 20 other females admitted. Therefore, I say that the situation is entirely changed; and I should like to know, when the Prime Minister quoted his figure of 500,000 women who would probably be admitted under this clause, whether he was not thinking, as my impression is, merely of householders and ratepayers, and that that number did not include all the unmarried women—that army of unmarried women who had left their homes, who do not live in their homes, for if they lived with their fathers and mothers they would not be enfranchised. My impression is that the right hon. Gentleman did not include them in the numbers he gave the Committee. I ask this House, then, and I ask hon. Members opposite, is not this a really startling proposal? It is a proposal for which they ought to vote in order, I suppose, to assert the principle of female suffrage! I do not think it would be right for any hon. Member to vote for such an Amendment. I think it would be a most unprincipled thing to do so unless he fully realized the whole purport of this Amendment. Well, Sir, we are not clear upon one point—namely, how far unmarried women are, or are not, to be admitted under this Amendment. The fact seems to be that married women would be admitted, and that fagot votes might be created in favour of a wife. My hon. Friend (Mr. Woodall) will correct me if I am wrong, but I understand that the hon. Member would be prepared to amend this; but hon. Members have got to vote upon the Amendment as it stands; therefore I will assume that married women will have a vote. [“No, no!”] I say yes. It is rather important to make this perfectly clear. Where there is simply an occupation franchise, I presume the vote of the woman will be merged in the vote of the man; but by property quali-

fication, and under the Married Women's Property Act, 1882, votes will be created for women, and, if that is so, we shall in future have to make an *addendum* to the old text—“These twain shall be one flesh.” It will be—“These twain shall be one flesh, but two votes.” We shall have two votes in one home, and husband and wife may both record their votes possibly for the same candidates, possibly for opposite candidates. I cannot think that this House is prepared or desirous to go to this point; and we should have liked some more distinct declaration from the right hon. Member for Halifax, or from those who have spoken on behalf of the enfranchisement of women, as to whether or not they mean that married women shall ultimately have a vote. That is important. But I will assume for the purposes of my argument that it is not intended to give them votes, but that the votes are to go to unmarried women who do not reside under the parental roof—not the householders, not the ratepayers—but to the emancipated spinsters and widows. I have had a correspondence—many Members have—with lady constituents on this point, and one of them has expressed her case so well that, with the permission of the Committee, I will read a short statement of her views. She says—and I think this will be cheered by my hon. Friends who have spoken on behalf of women—

“We ask to have a voice, at least, in the laws relating to women and children. It is a cruelty to frame laws binding on us in every event of life, laws which regulate our labour and our homes, and which come between a mother and her child, and not to permit us even an expression of opinion as a protest. Men cannot know what we want or how we feel on these points as well as we know ourselves.”

Yes; but how, then, are men going to inform themselves as to the opinion of women if—

“Men cannot know what we want or how we feel on these points as well as we know ourselves.”

It appears to me that many of us have a most excellent source to which we can apply to obtain information as to what women think respecting the relations which ought to exist between mothers and children. It appears to me that many of us know where to go when we want the views of women upon this or any other subject. But how the emancipation and the enfran-

chisement of spinsters can enable women to convey to men a better idea what women want as regards their children baffles my understanding. I can assure the Committee that it is not by way of a simple rhetorical argument that I put this point. It lies at the root of the whole case. How are women to make their influence felt? Through their husbands, through their sons, their brothers, and their friends. To think that a collection of female voters will better be able to instruct us as to our duties in legislating for women is an assumption which, for my part, I am unwilling to make. It is said that women cannot now make their influence felt, and this was one of the points raised in the able speech of the hon. Member for Stoke, (Mr. Woodall). It is alleged that they cannot make themselves heard, and that they have interests which they cannot follow up. I think, on the contrary, that they do make themselves heard. I am bound to admit that my hon. Friend was perfectly fair in saying that it was not the intention of this House to oppress women. I should think not. The interests between men and women are not separate interests. The interest of the father is not a separate interest from the interest of the mother. We take a joint interest in our children, be they sons or daughters. We care for the education and the future of our daughters as much as we care for the education and the future of our sons. Now, I venture to think that women in that way, acting through their legitimate representatives, have ample opportunities of being able to influence political men. But women are to make their influence felt. Well, again I ask, what hon. Member of the House is not, or has not been, more or less, under the influence of a woman? We know the various classes of women who are able to have an influence in politics. Could we not see, from the eloquence of my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), how much he had been under the influence of the noble women whom he so well represents, and who made him eloquent on their behalf? There are other women who may be called the sirens of the political boudoir, and very influential they are sometimes—perhaps quite as influential as the emancipated Amazons of the public

platform. On all sides we see the influence they bring to bear upon us; but what I object to, and what has been pointed out by other Members, is this—that certain splendid examples of womanhood should be put before the House, and that it should be said that because they have so worthily discharged the duties and functions assigned to them, therefore you may enfranchise women generally, and place the franchise in the hands of the whole sex. We have had put before us the case of Miss Octavia Hill. Well, Miss Octavia Hill has done and is doing splendid service in an unobtrusive manner; but I doubt whether she would be stronger, either with the public or with this House, if it were by the votes of female electors that she was obliged to make her influence felt. It is not the polling-booth, but it is through their action of this kind, that women must influence legislation. Then it is said—and the argument has been used so often that I will only allude to it for a single moment—that women are excellent Poor Law Guardians, and that, therefore, we have before us a proof as to the capacity of the sex for high civic duties. I object to this view, and deny that we can argue from the parish or the municipality to the State. I say it is lowering the standard of civic duty. We cannot think that simply because women are good Poor Law Guardians, they are, therefore, endowed with those qualities which are necessary to be citizens. Some of my hon. Friends around me I cannot address my arguments to, because they are in favour of as much flesh and blood as possible being admitted. We always recollect that women are flesh and blood. To those who think that to thrust a voting paper into a hand of flesh and blood is enough to make a “capable citizen,” of course arguments of mine are useless. But I would ask hon. Members, particularly those below the Gangway, whether they really believe that women are capable citizens? I would ask—“Would they be content, if they had—as many of us have—a Political Association in their boroughs or counties, that the President, and the Treasurer, and the Secretary, and the various other officers of the Association should be women?” And if not, why not? I would ask again—“Would anybody be content to represent a constituency simply composed of

women? Would you trust political questions to them?" Certainly not; and why not? Because in your hearts you do not believe that women are "capable citizens." Well, Sir, I do not think that it would be for the interest of women themselves that they should receive the franchise. I have shown what I believe as regards the means they have of making themselves heard; but why I object to this motion, among other reasons, is because it assumes an equality between men and women which never has existed, and which, I believe never can exist. I do not sympathize with the efforts of those who wish to reduce the difference between men and women to an indispensable minimum of difference. There is, as it appears to me, a tendency growing up which is striking more and more at the family, and which is encouraging an independence on the part of women which, however it may please certain sections, is dangerous to society in the future, and which cannot recommend itself to the sympathies of men who are anxious for the future happiness of family and of society; and I do not believe it is good for the State. I believe that manliness, strength, courage, and all the manly virtues are certainly quite as much required in the present day as they ever have been. I do not wish that women should be educated up to our manly virtues, quite as little as I wish that we should be educated to that feminine tendency which the hon. Baronet who has just spoken seemed to welcome. Well, now, in conclusion, I would ask the Committee, is this the moment—when we are proposing to make this gigantic experiment with regard to adding 2,000,000 to the electorate—I would ask hon. Members opposite is this the moment when they are going to try an experiment which certainly is quite as large as the experiment with regard to the reduction of the franchise, and is, in fact, a greater change? There have been cases of universal suffrage for men; but we have had no experience to guide us as to the effect of what has properly been called "womanhood" suffrage. We have no experience in the matter; we have no statistics; we have nothing whatever to guide us. And, do not let hon. Members think that in giving their vote they are doing nothing more than expressing their

own feelings at this moment. These movements gather strength by every thoughtless vote that is given upon them. Hon. Members opposite know that it is in no Party spirit that I make this appeal to them. Let them think that the vote they give is in favour of the female lodger franchise; that it is in favour of the principle that "words importing the masculine gender should include women for all purposes of the franchise;" and let them weigh the full scope of that Amendment before they give their vote for it, and see how it may complicate their votes in the future. It is no light thing to give a vote for this Motion. For my part I shall vote against it, because it seems to me to rest upon a false ideal of the civic duty and of the position of women, and because it rests upon a false ideal of all political aims. I do not wish to include women in our ranks when the responsibilities we have to bear are so great; but I trust the burden of Empire will still continue to rest upon the shoulders of men.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think it must have struck anyone who has been in the habit of attending to the debates which we have had for many years past on this subject, and who has listened to the present debate, that there has passed a great change over the attitude of those who are the promoters and those who are the opponents of the admission of women to the franchise. I remember, in the early days when this subject used to arise, the arguments by which the change was defended and supported were very much of a sentimental and transcendental character, and that we used to hear a great deal about the character of women, and about the refreshing influence which the presence of women in the electorate would have upon the national character; and that opposed to those were general arguments of a more or less practical character. But to-night, it seems to me, we have shifted ground; and that, whereas the demand for the admission of women to the suffrage has been based upon practical considerations, and is of a distinctly practical and moderate character, it is on the side of the objectors that we have had raised all those classes of considerations which I have ventured to designate as "transcendental." We have heard a great deal about not introducing the feminine character into our Legislature;

we have been told that we ought to cultivate the qualities of strength, manliness, and courage, and so forth, which are not the qualities which we usually associate with women. But these are not the arguments by which the practical proposal of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall), and the arguments introduced on his side, can be met. Nor are these answers which ought to be given to such arguments as I have heard; and least of all has the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) a right to put us the question in a way in which it does not present itself to the House. The right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to fix upon the hon. Member for Stoke and his supporters the proposition that it is right to admit all the female lodgers to the suffrage. Now, that is not the position that is taken up by those who support the Motion; it is not the position which is taken up by the hon. Member for Stoke himself. Has the right hon. Gentleman not seen from the Paper Notices that have been given by my hon. Friend the Member for Suffolk (Mr. Biddell), and more particularly by my hon. Friend the Member for Salisbury (Mr. Coleridge Kennard), that, in the event of your accepting, by your vote, the second reading of this clause, you will be immediately called upon to give effect to it by the Amendment to be proposed that women should not be entitled to be registered as voters under any lodger qualification in pursuance of this Act.

An hon. MEMBER: Why not? Well, that directly traverses the argument which the right hon. Gentleman has laid such stress upon. Whatever he may have to say as to what might have been advanced by the hon. Member for Stoke, this, at least, he has no right to say in the face of the universal disclaimer by those who are going to support this proposition, that we are supporters of the female lodger franchise.

MR. GOSCHEN: I know the right hon. Gentleman would not wish to misrepresent me. I have not heard a single disclaimer.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The right hon. Gentleman may hear it now. If he had been attending to the course of the debate he would have seen that throughout the greater part of the speeches stress was laid entirely upon property qualification and the house-

hold qualification. The arguments were all drawn from that, and it is upon that that we are advocating our cause. I say it is unfair of the right hon. Gentleman to endeavour to present what is really a false issue to the Committee. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The Prime Minister shakes his head. He has presented a good many false issues to the House. Now, this question of the admission of women to the suffrage we have had before us, as we are reminded, a good many years ago. I myself have continually supported, or, at least, have never opposed, the Motions that were made for the purpose of giving women the suffrage. It cannot be supposed that, in all these 16 or 17 years during which the question has been before us, we have been so inattentive and so careless as not to consider the objections which were made, and which are made so plausibly, against the proposition which is laid before us. We have continually had before us all those considerations about the difficulty with regard to married women, the difficulty as to their losing the vote itself, the difficulty as to the lodger, the difficulty with regard to the attitude we are to assume in the case of those who have had the vote and who afterwards lose it by marriage. All these matters have been considered, and we have to consider the arguments of a more sentimental character which have been brought to bear on the relations between the two sexes, and the effect which the influence of women might have on elections. We have considered all these matters, and I think we are pretty well-satisfied with the answers that can be made to the complaints and suggestions that have been made. With regard to one of the principal of them, that of those who say that by giving this new right to women, you are about to change the character of women, and in a way which is unfortunate, and which deteriorates them, let me point out that everything you suggest as to making women politicians you have at present. At present women have power to take any amount of interest in elections short of one little act—that the most important of all, in one sense, but by no means the one which bears most on the feminine character. You may have women taking part in your counties, making speeches and canvassing as any man would do

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throughout an election; but when it comes to going into the polling booth, protected by the Ballot, then you say you demoralize and lower her character. Is that common sense? Is it the argument on which such Gentleman as the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) rely? Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that it is on the final act of going to vote that the whole influence of a woman's character depends? No, it is not. He knows perfectly well that it is not the final act of voting which determines the character of a woman. On the contrary, it is the keeping of women from taking a proper share in elections that is likely to make her more of an agitator than she is. The point upon which we lay stress is that upon which the late Lord Beaconsfield laid stress, and upon which so much stress has been laid to-night—namely, that by excluding women you are excluding a large portion of the property owners of this country from representation, and from their share in the legislation. You are now asked to introduce a certain number of women. We believe there will be 400,000 or 500,000 women who will be so admitted. The number is not difficult to recollect, because it is nearly the exact number of persons you are going to add in Ireland from the lowest population in the country. It is a moderate demand we make, when we ask you, as a counterbalance to the effect of admitting so large a body of men as to whose qualification and efficiency for the franchise you have no reason to believe that they have half as much knowledge of the real questions at issue as most of the women of England have—when you are going to admit these people as capable citizens, is it unreasonable to demand that the same privilege shall be given to 400,000 or 500,000 women who are at the heads of households and are managers of property in this country? We have been told that the tendency now is downwards towards something like manhood suffrage. If it is so, it is time that you should connect that with the enfranchisement of those who are representatives of a higher type than the multitude of the people to whom you are about to give the franchise. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce), in his speech, raised a question which I heard with surprise as coming from that

quarter of the House. He said that after all the great question was, would the admission of women give us a better Parliament? That is not a point that he and his set have insisted upon, or will tolerate, when it comes to the question of the admission of a large class of male voters. It is proposed to admit 400,000 or 500,000 of the Irish peasantry, and if anyone got up and asked whether they would improve Parliament, there would be a howl from that part of the House. The hon. and learned Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick) told us that he had no more objection to women sitting in this House than to their voting. That is rather an illegitimate question to raise now, for there is no question of women sitting in this House. There would be strong arguments against that; but there is at present no proposal that they should do so. You have heard the case of the clergy who are qualified to vote, but not to sit or take part in Parliament; but the question, I think, was put in the most pertinent manner by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The hon. Member brought us to the true point now at issue. It is not a question whether it is or it is not desirable for women to be admitted to the franchise. It is the question whether we are to be allowed to discuss whether they should be admitted to the franchise, and to vote, upon our convictions, whether or not that privilege shall be granted. I believe a large proportion of Gentlemen on the other side of the House, who have long ago committed themselves to the principle which so many hold, are now going to vote against it. They have examined the question, and after having examined it, and having satisfied themselves that it is a matter of right to vote in a particular way, they are now busying themselves, as far as possible, to find excuses for getting off. We have heard references made to the number of votes which Gentlemen on the other side are to give; and there was a Memorial presented to the Prime Minister last Session, signed by upwards of 100 of his followers, in favour of making provision for women's suffrage in any Bill brought forward for dealing with the representation of the people. Therefore, the matter has not been sprung upon the Government. It was brought before them by a large number of their own supporters, while they had still time to con-

sider it; and not only that, but at the meeting at Leeds the question of establishing woman's suffrage was brought forward and discussed and accepted, I believe, by a unanimous vote. I do not know, in the presence of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), whether I am correct. Well, the matter has been brought before the Liberal Party, before the country, and before the Conservative Party. It has been considered by us over and over again, it has been considered throughout the country, and has been brought especially under the notice of the present Government, and they have not thought it worth while to introduce it in the Bill. The Government may have very fair reason for not wishing to include this clause in their Bill in the first instance. I can well understand that they may have taken this view—"We have a large business to carry through; we may find some difficulty in passing our measure; and if we add too many clauses we may find ourselves unable to carry them, and we shall be obliged to submit either to the loss of valuable time or to the sacrifice of our Bill, or of the clause for which we have made ourselves responsible." But this is not the position in which they are put by this proposition of one of their supporters. It embarrasses them in no way, as I conceive, if they will only allow it to be discussed on its merits, and let the judgment of the House be taken on the propriety of including it in the Bill in its final shape. If the House decides against it on its merits, the Government will suffer no defeat. On the other hand, if the clause is carried, I cannot see any reason why the Government should object to it, unless they object to the whole proposal on its merits; and if they do that they should say so. They have refused to take us into their confidence; they have not explained why they object to the clause; they have given us no other reason whatever for doing so except that it will imperil the Bill. When, however, you ask how it will imperil the Bill, you get no answer but the extraordinary answer of the Prime Minister that he does not choose to have any such clause in the Bill, and if it be included in it, he is not sure that he will not throw up the Bill. I do not know that he did not go farther, and say that he would throw up the Bill altogether;

and, therefore, he puts on his supporters a strain which I am not surprised if many of them find too much to bear. As the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) wittily said, it is the great offence of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) that he has been laying eggs in the Prime Minister's nest. The right hon. Gentleman deals with the measure very much in the spirit that used to be considered objectionable in olden times. He seems to say—"Am I not to do what I will with my own? This is my own Bill; and if I do not choose to put a clause in it, and if I say I will throw up the Bill if it is put in, you must take your orders accordingly." That appears to show that the Bill is one man's Bill; that it is on the Prime Minister exclusively that the responsibility for the Bill rests; and that if we are opposing the Bill, it is not to be held that we are opposing the will of the country, but that we are opposing the will of the right hon. Gentleman. And we cannot tell to what extent any of the proposals in the Bill have the real support of those who sit behind the Government, because we see in this case how much their strong and conscientious convictions are overborne by the vehemence and the dictatorial language of the Prime Minister. How can we tell that the same spirit has not been engendered in them with regard to the Bill as a whole? There is another point. The Prime Minister treats this Bill as if it were one in which there could not be admitted to be any change. If you change the Bill he implies that you destroy the Bill. I know he did not say that; but that is the spirit shown. Here is a clause of great importance proposed to be inserted—a clause which has long been in the contemplation of both sides of the House—a clause which fits entirely into the Bill and belongs to it in a proper way; but the Prime Minister comes down to the House and says—"I will not have this clause put in because I will not." Not only does he come down and order his followers to vote against the clause because it is his good will and pleasure that they should, but he says that if by accident the clause should get into the Bill, he will throw up the Bill at once. In fact, he treats this Bill very much as we would treat a Money Bill sent up to the House of Lords. If a Money Bill is

sent up to them, the other House is free to reject it, but not to change it. If they change it in any degree, this House rejects the Bill, and it is destroyed. I suppose that is the attitude to be assumed in regard to this Bill. If the Bill goes up to the House of Lords in the shape which the hon. Member for Stoke wishes it to have, or if the House of Lords themselves were to introduce a clause into it to this effect, it will be at once upset and thrown aside by the Prime Minister. He will permit no change to be made in it. In what a position does that put the other House, if they are to be treated on the footing that they must pass without change of any sort the measure sent up to them? They are to be free to reject it, but not to make any alteration in it. That is a remarkable course for the Prime Minister to take, and it raises very peculiar feelings in one's mind as to his position. The right hon. Gentleman has told us, and other hon. Members have told us, that they do not consider this clause to be properly introduced now, because it is not a good opportunity for introducing the question. It seems to me, on the contrary, that it is the very best opportunity for dealing with it, and for this reason—because you are going enormously to increase the electorate, and you therefore make the inequality as between man and woman much greater than it was before; and that is why we say you ought to provide for the class of property in the hands of women, because you are going to sink it still lower in proportion in the balance by the large addition you are making to the franchise. Two arguments seem really to lie at the root of the objections to this clause. The one is that women as a body are too Conservative, and the other is that it is admitting the rights of property, which you wish to keep in the background. It may be an objection on the part of the Government that this clause would operate in favour of property, because it is, as we know, with the greatest reluctance and difficulty that they have brought themselves to the length of recognizing even the existing property franchises. It will be said—"You are going to extend the property franchise, if this Amendment is carried." Well, I say that on that issue we are prepared to join, and we are prepared to main-

tain that it is a right thing, and that it is the duty of this House under these circumstances, to make proper provision for those classes of property holders who are now without a vote. I have no doubt that there are numbers of Gentlemen here who have canvassed boroughs. They will have seen, from time to time, that, after going into two or three shops and asking for the votes of those who are the owners, they have come to one, perhaps, of the most important shops, and have been told—"Oh, it is no use going in; there is no vote there. The owner is a woman." Such women are probably of education and of gentle character, who are, perhaps, living as widows, and taking care of their families, and who have every right to be consulted as to who should be the man sent up to represent the constituency in which they live, to represent not only their own interests, but the interests also of those of whom they are taking care. You are admitting masses of non-propertied classes, and refusing the vote to these. That is the ground, the Conservative ground, upon which we stand. That is the ground upon which Lord Beaconsfield stood. We have adhered to that view for 17 years, and that is the ground upon which we stand now. Hon. Gentlemen opposite will have to reconcile their own opinions and their own declarations upon former occasions with the unfortunate necessity in which the Prime Minister has endeavoured to place them. I have no advice, but only sympathy to offer them. I can only hope that they will be able to reconcile their action to their conscience. But, as for us, although there may not be, perhaps, a general assent—because there has always been a difference of opinion among us on the subject—I claim for those on this side of the House who have opposed female suffrage, as well as for those who have hitherto supported us, that liberty which I am sorry to see denied to those who sit opposite.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I promise the Committee that I will not detain them more than two or three minutes. But the right hon. Baronet appears to suppose that those who on the whole agree with him on this issue as to the general principle, and still find themselves unable to go into the Lobby with him, must stand in need of sympathy. For my part, I do not feel the least necessity for it. Much

has been said about the opportuneness of this Amendment. I am myself, completely and fully, in practical politics an opportunist, and I think that those who are most loud against that doctrine are those who, somehow or other, never think it inopportune to attack their own friends and their own Party. So far as the Leeds Conference is concerned, the right hon. Baronet has been perfectly accurate; but I believe that had the issue been put to the Conference as it stands to-night, the vote would have been different. I do not conceal from myself that there is great and even perfect justification for the reluctance of the Government to encumber a Bill such as the present one with a clause that opens up an enormous subject, and deals with questions with which the Bill is not really concerned. In my opinion, the Government would be absolutely wanting in a sense of the gravity of the question if, on a mere side wind, they made this enormous extension of the scope of the Bill. If the Government think it expedient to make a change which, as both those who like it and those who dislike it agree, will create a social revolution, it is for them to introduce it as a deliberate proposition by itself. Those who are pressing the Motion on the present occasion must either expect to carry it through or not. If not, they are wasting time most unreasonably on an abstract proposition. If they do expect to carry it, then, after the Prime Minister's declaration, they show that they had rather have no Franchise Bill at all than one which does not include women in its scope—in fact, that unless some 500,000 women are enfranchised 2,000,000 men are to be left unenfranchised. In spite of all the reproaches which have been addressed to me I shall, without any scruple, vote against the proposition. So urgent and so important do I consider the object of the present Bill, and so resolute and earnest is the mind of the country upon it, that, for my part, I will allow no side question, however much interested I may be in it, to make me swerve from supporting an object of this paramount importance.

MR. STOREY: Sir, I do not at all agree with the remarks of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley). For my part I do not think that when he announced himself as a

opportunist he spoke as a Radical ought to speak. We have seen a very remarkable political phenomenon to-night. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) has made a speech in which he opposed the admission to the franchise of 500,000 women, and his speech was received with cheers from the Ministerialists. But it will be in the recollection of the Committee that three or four weeks ago the same right hon. Gentleman delivered a speech in this House in which he opposed the admission to the franchise of a large number of the men of the country, on which occasion his statements were received with cheers by hon. Gentlemen opposite and in grim silence by hon. Members on these Benches. I ask myself what is the explanation of that phenomenon, which I think is hardly creditable to the character of this Parliament, and I find that the reason of this is simply that on the one occasion the Ministry was decreeing the admission of men to the franchise, while on the other occasion it was decreeing that women should not be admitted. I have been in favour for many years of admitting to the franchise as much flesh and blood as it might be possible to obtain; I am in favour of women having the franchise, and for very practical reasons which I will briefly state to the Committee. It has been urged against the admission of women to the suffrage that they are intellectually inferior to men, and I ask myself whether that is so? I have heard the same argument urged against the introduction of the agricultural labourer, and against the admission to the franchise of artisans in the towns, 17 years ago, and I say that the very reason urged against their admission constitutes the real ground on which they ought to receive the franchise, because I observed that the moment the artisans were admitted there was a general disposition to elevate and improve their condition; and I believe that if you admit women to the franchise, there will be the same attentive consideration on the part of both Liberals and Conservatives to the improvement of their position. I will give a second reason in support of this clause. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) challenged us to produce a practical reason why women should have the franchise. Now, I have always struggled to pro-

Mr. John Morley

mote three things since I became a politician—namely, peace, soberness, and education; and I know that if the women of England received the franchise, they would constitute a powerful addition to the strength of the Radical Party for the attainment of those objects. For these reasons I am in favour of giving the franchise to women. So far as my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle is concerned, I avow myself, in opposition to him, as no opportunist. I can understand Ministerialists being opportunists, and I can understand the opportunism of those passing along the dangerous road to Office. But what I desire to see here below the Gangway is a Radical Party which prefers on all occasions principles to opportunism, a Party which will vote against the Ministry when it believes that Ministry to be in the wrong.

MR. RAIKES: Sir Arthur Otway—I desire to express an opinion which I think is shared by many Members of the House as to the embarrassing position in which those who have hitherto opposed the principle embodied in the clause of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent, have been placed by the particular turn of the argument used by the Prime Minister in dealing with it on Tuesday last. The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion addressed his observations almost entirely to those who are in favour of this Bill and who are supporters of the Government, and rather left out from his consideration those who sit on this side of the House, who do not support the Bill and who do not support the Government. If this question is put to the House as one of confidence in Her Majesty's Government—if it is put to the House as a question of "aye" or "no" in favour of this Bill—I am bound to say that it puts a very great difficulty in the way of many who would otherwise be anxious to oppose this proposal and support the Government in resisting it; and I know that this feeling has been largely prevalent on this side of the House. Still, although I do not love the Bill, and although I am not particularly anxious to maintain Her Majesty's Government in power, I am unwilling, either for the purpose of embarrassing the Government or of defeating this Bill to vote for a proposal which I believe to be subversive of the whole social system of the country. But

I do not rise only to say that, because the position I have always taken with regard to this question will have made it clear what line I should be likely to take in dealing with this particular proposal. But I do wish to know whether we have heard the last word on this subject from the Ministerial Bench. I see upon that Bench the Secretary to the Treasury and the Postmaster General, and I know that the eyes of this House, the eyes of all England, and especially of those confiding women whose confidence has been placed in them, are turned upon those Members of the Government, and that they will be expected to make some explanation of the course they are about to take on the present occasion. A politician, as we know, is supposed to have a supple conscience; but it was always believed that there were two men in whom women could trust—that they could always rely upon the austere rectitude of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett) and on the stubborn independence of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney). In them, at least, their old associates and present opponents have been prepared to place a confidence which it appears they have not deserved. I believe that when the Prime Minister spoke of encumbering this Bill, and of the necessity of throwing something overboard, he had to balance in his mind considerations which must have occurred to him, as to the result which might follow from the opposition of Gentlemen who sit upon the Treasury Bench; he had to balance the Attorney General against the Secretary to the Treasury and the Postmaster General, and the right hon. Gentleman, I think, very wisely decided that the Attorney General was worth more than the two Gentlemen put together. And I wish to render this tribute to the Attorney General, because I think that of all the Members of this House he has pursued, with regard to this question, the most intelligible and most conscientious course; he has always put his foot down, so to speak, in reference to this question; and I have no doubt that if its principle had been accepted by the Government, it would have cost the Prime Minister the services of one of his most valuable adherents. In this matter the Prime Minister knew with

whom he had to deal; he knew the hon. and learned Gentleman was in earnest, and he knew how great was the earnestness and sincerity of the Postmaster General and the Secretary to the Treasury. It is upon that balance struck by the Government that the fate of this Amendment is to be decided; and I only hope that before the Division is taken, we shall hear the reasons which have led those two Gentlemen to take up a position involving an abandonment of their principles.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Sir, I confess myself in favour of the enfranchisement of those women who occupy a responsible position in their sphere; therefore, I need not apologize for intervening between the Committee and the Division. I think we may have a test of the disposition of the House as regards this question by a momentary reference to the Division which took place last year, and from which it is clear that about one-half of the Members of the Liberal Party are generally prepared to give the vote to women householders. But what was the position of the Conservative Party when this question was last tested? Including Peers, 29 Members of the great Conservative Party were in favour of the enfranchisement of women. In view of that fact, I feel bound to ask myself, what is the cause of the sudden conversion of that Party? I am quite satisfied that if the Prime Minister and the Government had not left this an open question, there would not have been the tenth part of the zeal which we have seen to-night on the opposite Benches. And I would say one word to the women of England, with whom I have been associated in pushing forward this question—namely, that they should beware of what will be the outcome of this sudden conversion. The object of the Conservative Party, I am convinced, is not to secure to women the vote; it is to destroy the Bill which will enfranchise the men of this country. I do not hesitate to confess that I have been waiting for the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, before I finally decided as to how I should vote on this occasion; and if I had been able to gather from him that the inclusion of women in the proposal of the Government would, in his judgment, have insured the passing of this Bill in “another place,” then, Sir, in

spite of the difficulty in my path, I should have been prepared to vote for the Motion of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent. But it has been made manifest by his speech, and by the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), that the support offered to that Motion is nothing but a trick and a trap, which has been laid in order that the great Liberal Party may fall into it; and therefore on this occasion, no more than when my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) brought forward a Vote of Censure on the Government, will I be a party to go into the same Lobby in support of a Motion with hon. Members who vote for it with a diametrically opposite motive and intention. Sir, I shall vote with the Government—I confess with reluctance—but I am satisfied that in so doing I shall be meeting the wishes of the great majority of my own constituents, who, I believe, would infinitely prefer that this question should be postponed for a time, rather than that we should jeopardize or destroy a great measure of enfranchisement. I have no doubt as to the eventual realization of the object which the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent has in view, because, with the Prime Minister, I believe that whatever is just, expedient, and necessary will be more easily secured for the people of the country when this great measure of the enfranchisement of 2,000,000 people shall be placed upon the Statute Book.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 135; Noes 271: Majority 136.

AYES

Alexander, Major-Gen.	Caine, W. S.
Allen, W. S.	Cameron, C.
Arnold, A.	Cameron, D.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.	Carbutt, E. H.
Barne, F. St. J. N.	Christie, W. L.
Bateson, Sir T.	Compton, F.
Beach, W. W. B.	Courtauld, G.
Bective, Earl of	Cowen, J.
Biggar, J. G.	Cubitt, right hon. G.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.	Dickson, Major A. G.
Blake, J. A.	Dickson, T. A.
Boord, T. W.	Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Bourke, right hon. R.	Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Bright, J.	Douglas, A. Akers-
Brooks, W. C.	Eaton, H. W.
Bruce, Sir H. H.	Ecroyd, W. F.
Bruce, hon. T.	Elliot, Sir G.
Bulwer, J. R.	Elliot, G. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.	Elton, C. I.

Marjoribanks, hon. E.
 Martin, R. B.
 Maskelyne, M. H. N.
 Story—
 Mason, H.
 Maxwell-Heron, J.
 Mellor, J. W.
 Molloy, B. C.
 Monk, C. J.
 Moreton, Lord
 Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
 Morley, A.
 Morley, J.
 Morley, S.
 Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
 Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
 Newdegate, C. N.
 Noel, E.
 Norwood, C. M.
 O'Beirne, Colonel F.
 O'Brien, Sir P.
 O'Gorman Mahon, Col.
 The
 Onslow, D. R.
 Paget, R. H.
 Paget, T. T.
 Palmer, C. M.
 Palmer, G.
 Parker, C. S.
 Pease, Sir J. W.
 Pease, A.
 Peddie, J. D.
 Pender, J.
 Phillips, R. N.
 Phipps, C. N. P.
 Playfair, rt. hn. Sir L.
 Portman, hn. W. H. B.
 Potter, T. B.
 Powell, W. R. H.
 Pulley, J.
 Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
 Ralli, P.
 Ramsay, J.
 Rathbone, W.
 Reed, Sir E. J.
 Repton, G. W.
 Roberts, J.
 Roe, T.
 Rogers, J. E. T.
 Rothschild, Sir N. M. de
 Roundell, C. S.
 Russell, Lord A.
 Russell, C.
 Russell, G. W. E.
 Rylands, P.
 St. Aubyn, Sir J.
 Samuelson, B.
 Seely, C. (Lincoln)
 Sellar, A. C.
 Shaw, T.
 Sheil, E.
 Sheridan, H. B.
 Shield, H.
 Simon, Serjeant J.
 Smith, Lieut-Col. G.
 Smith, A.
 Smith, E.
 Smith, S.
 Stafford, Marquess of
 Stanley, hon. E. L.
 Stanton, W. J.
 Stevenson, J. C.
 Talbot, C. R. M.
 Talbot, J. G.
 Tavistock, Marquess of
 Tennant, C.
 Thompson, T. C.
 Tillet, J. H.
 Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
 Hanbury—
 Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
 Vivian, Sir H. H.
 Vivian, A. P.
 Waddy, S. D.
 Walker, S.
 Walter, J.
 Waterlow, Sir S.
 Watney, J.
 Waugh, E.
 Webster, J.
 Whitbread, S.
 Whitworth, B.
 Wiggan, H.
 Williamson, S.
 Willis, W.
 Willis, W. H.
 Wilson, Sir M.
 Wilson, C. H.
 Wilson, I.
 Wodehouse, E. R.
 Woolf, S.
 Wroughton, P.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, right hon.
 Lord R.
 Kensington, rt. hn. Lord

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the
 Chair."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. J. G. HUBBARD, in rising to
 move—

"That it is inexpedient, with a view to the reduction of the burthen of the Public Debt, to effect such Conversions of Stock as will add to the capital values which must be redeemed if the Debt they represent is to be extinguished," said, that the Motion was not of his originating, but it was a repetition of a principle strongly insisted upon by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) last Friday; it was a recognition of a lesson he (Mr. Hubbard) had learnt. And there was more than one lesson to be learnt from the discussion which took place on this Bill on Friday last. In the Division which took place on that occasion there was remarkable unanimity on the part of the followers of the Government. With hardly an exception they all voted in favour of the second reading of the Bill; but the arguments of the speakers for the Bill were of an absolutely mutually destructive character. The hon. Member for Cambridge insisted upon this point—that instead of a Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock, the Stock which ought to have been introduced by way of an innovation was a Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock. The hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac), however, scouted a Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock. The hon. Member for Bedford was followed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), who took a very remarkable line of argument—a line of argument which he had since followed up by a letter to the Press. The right hon. Gentleman's argument amounted to this—that it was utterly immaterial whether they added to the nominal amount of Debt or not, because, upon his theory, an alteration of the denomination of the Stock would not at all alter its value. But the right hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that, although the statement he made was a perfectly accurate one in figures, it placed the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the most curious predicament, that it destroyed absolutely and wholly the entire consideration he proposed to give to the fundholder to induce him to accept the terms offered. As calculated by the

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—
 (*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Motion agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL.—[BILL 186.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon, the matter was strikingly convincing, and he (Mr. Hubbard) would state it to the House in a minute. The right hon. Gentleman imagined that the £600,000,000 of Three per Cents converted into £648,000,000 of Two and a-Half per Cent Stock would remain at the same nominal value; and so it might if it were never to be operated upon in the way which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had in years past been labouring to operate upon it—that was to say, in the way of reduction by purchase. It was impossible to suppose that they could operate to the extent of millions a year upon Stock limited in amount, without raising its value. The only way that they could account for the recent rise in the price of Funds was the persistent action of the Government in redeeming it out of the Surplus Revenue; but for that they would not see the Consols at their present price. A very curious conclusion was to be drawn from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon. According to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, the fundholders, under the operation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would acquire £600,000,000 of Stock, which would be worth £552,000,000, and £48,000,000 of extra Stock, which would be worth £44,000,000, making altogether £596,000,000 against £600,000,000. It was perfectly true there was really no sensible difference one way or other; but where was the consideration to induce the fundholder to accept the change? The hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler), in the course of his very interesting speech, alluded to the opinion which had been expressed at different times upon the subject of adding to the nominal value of Stock, and he quoted the opinion of Mr. Hamilton—a very eminent financier at the beginning of this century, whose works had been recently republished. Mr. Hamilton was clearly of opinion that they ought never to add to the amount of Stock; and what he said on that subject had been repeated emphatically, in still stronger terms, by his commentator, Mr. McCulloch. Now, one of the largest operations of late years in the way of reduction of the interest on Debt, was the operation made by Mr. Goulburn in 1844—an operation which was made in the simplest and

clearest manner. Mr. Goulburn argued that Three-and-a-Half per Cents were at such a price, and the rate of interest was such as to satisfy him that the public fundholder would be willing to take diminished interest, and if he did not, money could be raised wherewith to pay him, and, therefore, without scruple, Mr. Goulburn undertook to reduce the interest on £250,000,000, or to make good the amount which might be claimed. As it happened, Mr. Goulburn was peculiarly fortunate, because out of the £250,000,000, the interest on which he undertook to reduce, very little was cash claimed. What he (Mr. Hubbard) desired to do was to produce Mr. Goulburn as an authority upon the very important question with which the House was now called upon to deal. Mr. Goulburn had to consider whether, in the operation that he contemplated, he should connect with the reduction of interest any increase in the nominal value of the Stock, and the expressions which he used upon the point were so very strong and clear, that he (Mr. Hubbard) would venture to read them to the House. Mr. Goulburn said—

“I do not think it would be just to purchase great present advantages to the country at the expense of burthens to be sustained by those who come after.”

And, again, he said—

“To incur additional Debt in times of peace, and thus burthen those who are to come after us . . . is a course which I do say I myself reprobate. . . . To create a Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock, and give an equivalent in that so as to make it produce Three per cent. per annum, the augmentation of the capital of the Debt must have been increased by such a plan not by £10,000,000 but by £50,000,000, and although the saving by that arrangement to the public would have been £1,200,000 a-year, yet on the principle which I have laid down, I do not think that saving would justify or compensate for an addition to the mass of our Debt by a capital of £50,000,000 to be paid hereafter.”—(3 *Hansard*, [73] pp. 737-8.)

It was curious that the concluding sentence he had read recited the exact figures which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had now in mind. The Chancellor of the Exchequer meant to create exactly £48,000,000 of Stock, in order to effect an annual saving of interest of £200,000, so that he (Mr. Hubbard) most appropriately quoted the authority of Mr. Goulburn, which he trusted would prevail with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the

House, and dissuade them from taking a step which was unprecedented in financial operations. The House of Commons received the scheme of Mr. Goulburn with general acquiescence. Mr. Francis Baring, who was then one of the chief financial authorities in the House, said—

“The first great advantage of the plan was . . . that it did not create any additional Debt. That in itself was a great public advantage.”—(*Ibid.* 748.)

He (Mr. Hubbard) would only say that, having looked through all the authorities upon the subject, he found that it was the opinion of Mr. Hamilton, a great authority in his day, that it was not only the opinion but the action of Mr. Goulburn, and that that opinion was corroborated by Mr. Francis Baring, that it was bad policy to create additional Debt by way of diminishing the yearly interest. He was aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer conceived that, by creating Terminable Annuities, he would cancel, as it were, the disadvantage and the loss attending the creation of additional Debt. He (Mr. Hubbard) said most decidedly that it would do nothing of the kind. The creation of Terminable Annuities which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had undertaken to mix up in this financial operation was absolutely irrelevant to its merits, and had nothing to do with the question as between the State and the fundholder. The creation of Terminable Annuities was a question between the State and the taxpayers, because every Terminable Annuity was a cause to the taxpayers of a so much larger contribution towards the National Revenue. He must insist upon the fact that Terminable Annuities in no degree whatever cancelled the disadvantage of creating an additional amount of Debt. In these matters the House and the country were always anxious to give every possible support and to place all possible confidence in the administration of the financiers of the time. It was a confidence they had a right to claim; but, on the other hand, it was a confidence that the country had a right to ask them to prove they were entitled to. He frankly admitted that he did not place confidence in the present administrators of the Treasury in this matter, and he would give the House an instance of why they ought also to hesitate before they placed full

confidence in the present management of the Treasury. Only as late as last autumn the Government brought in a National Debt Bill, and that Bill was passed for the purpose of enabling them to convert a certain amount of Consols into Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock, the Consols being in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners. The object of the Bill was couched in these terms—

“A Bill to enable the National Debt Commissioners to surrender £4,000,000 of Consols, and to receive in exchange £4,000,000 of Two-and-a-Half per Cents, and to receive the difference of value between the two Stocks in a Terminable Annuity of equivalent capital value.”

But, for some reason or other, the Treasury altered their minds during the Recess, because they dropped the Bill and brought in another which differed from the previous one in a way he would now notice. In the new Bill, brought in in the month of March, the following words were added to the words—“In a Terminable Annuity of equivalent capital value:”—

“With such addition to the said difference as the Treasury, in agreement with the National Debt Commissioners, may determine to be necessary in order to secure the Commissioners from any loss by reason of the conversion.”

It was to him a perfect novelty in finance to find that, after having established between two values a certain equivalent, they should then require to make an addition to the consideration to make the equivalent perfect. In this Bill the Treasury undertook to give an extra consideration to the Commissioners in order to secure them from loss. Let the House see how that operation had worked out. The £4,000,000 of Consols were valued, he found, according to the price of the day, at about 102½. The Two-and-a-Half per Cents were valued at 90½, and the difference between the two prices being £11 7s. 6d., the Treasury added 2 per cent to the equivalent to secure the Commissioners from loss, so that £13 7s. 6d. was the full amount of the difference they were going to pay. The consequence of that was, the Commissioners would receive as income-interest—on £4,000,000 Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock, £100,000; interest on £535,000, at 3 per cent, £16,050; total, £116,050, instead of the £120,000 which they surrendered.

That he mentioned as an exhibition of Treasury finance. They passed two Acts of Parliament in order to make an operation which was to save the Commissioners from loss; but, instead of their being saved from loss, they were actually exposed to a loss of £3,950 a-year. He maintained that, upon their own showing, it was not safe to put absolute trust in the present financiers of the Treasury; and, in his opinion, the House would not be doing its duty if it did not require a full and explicit account of the operations which were to be carried out. There were many points connected with this question which he abstained from touching upon, because they would lead him to take up too much of the time of the House. He simply wished to move a Resolution which he thought was a safe and legitimate one, and one which was in accordance with the opinions and practices of all financiers in past years; it was to the effect that it was not a wise financial operation to add to the nominal value of the Debt to make an annual saving of interest. It was not necessary that there should be such an addition at the present time, because, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to act in this matter with straightforward justice to the fundholder, all he had to do was to follow the example of his great Predecessors, and Mr. Goulburn in particular, ascertain what the excess of interest was, and, instead of altering the capital value, leave the capital value alone and diminish the rate of interest. That was the course pursued by Mr. Goulburn; that was a course simple and straightforward, requiring no complications, requiring none of the mystification surrounding Terminable Annuities, which had nothing to do with the subject, and which only served to throw dust in the eyes of the public. In finance simplicity was the truest policy, for the more simple they made their operations the more customers they found willing to deal with them. He could not look forward with any satisfaction to the Bill as it now stood, and, therefore, he moved the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient, with a view to the reduction of the burthen of the Public Debt, to effect

such Conversions of Stock as will add to the capital values which must be redeemed if the Debt they represent is to be extinguished,"—*(Mr. J. G. Hubbard),*

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that no doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would answer his right hon. Friend before Mr. Speaker left the Chair; but it would be greatly to the advantage of hon. Members, and he himself especially should be very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman, if he would give some explanation as to the course he proposed to pursue, or as to the power he possessed in regard to setting up fresh Terminable Annuities. He (Mr. Sclater-Booth) was under the impression that the greater part of the available fund from the Savings Banks had been already appropriated for the purpose of the Annuities which had been granted of late years. Assuming for a moment, and they might fairly do so, that the right hon. Gentleman's proposal would be ultimately successful, half of the whole—that was to say, some £30,000,000—would be required in the course of the next 12 months. He wished to know by what means, and under what power, the right hon. Gentleman sought to set up these Terminable Annuities?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): said, he had hoped that some hon. Gentleman would have followed his right hon. Friend, because, by requiring him to speak at once, he should not be in a position to answer any arguments which might be adduced later on. However, as no one rose, he would do his best at once to meet the case which had been put by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Hubbard), and to answer specifically the questions which had been put to him. He must remind the House that the right hon. Gentleman came before them as a distinct opponent of the Bill and everything connected with it, and not so much as desiring that the reduction of the Three per Cents should not take place. The right hon. Gentleman argued strongly against the reduction, under any circumstances the other day; therefore, in the proposals he made now they must take him as one who did not wish

to see the Three per Cents reduced, and who put forward arguments in favour of his present Amendment, having that view before him.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, he did not wish the subject to suffer on his account. It was true he was an opponent of the Bill altogether; but in his opposition to it he had been beaten, and he was only now endeavouring to improve the measure.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he was not at the present moment going again over the discussion they had the other night as to the effect of the Government proposals. The case had been put very fairly by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac), who was not here to-night, and it had been so conclusively answered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), that it was not worth while going over the matter again. Since the debate, the same case had been put in great detail in one of the public journals, and he had read with care the figures put before them. But they had contained nothing new; the case was exactly as he had stated it on a previous occasion. If they succeeded in making any reduction in the Three per Cents, and applied, as proposed, a certain part of the interest so saved to the reduction of the additional capital, not only the full amount of the reduction of the Debt under the Act of last year would go on, but either a larger amount, or such a rise in the value of Two and a-Half per Cents as would foreshadow further reductions. These arguments, so lucidly developed by the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), had not been met. He would rather not go again over the old ground, but would endeavour to meet the new specific argument that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City (Mr. Hubbard) had stated that night. The right hon. Gentleman began by comparing the operations which he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) proposed to undertake—namely, this large advantage to the taxpayer and increase of the Sinking Fund—with Mr. Goulburn's operations in 1844 in regard to the Three-and-a-Half per Cents. What was Mr. Goulburn's position? He was able to convert the Three-and-a-Half per

Cents, which stood at a very high premium, into Three per Cents, by two steps; these Three per Cents standing at a premium also. Therefore, the cases were not at all analogous. Her Majesty's Government, at the present moment, had to convert Three per Cents ultimately, and he believed mainly, into Two-and-a-Half per Cents. Two-and-a-Half per Cents were not at the present time at par—they were only at 92, or something of that kind; and the cases, therefore, were totally different. They could not apply the same method now which Mr. Goulburn was able to apply in 1844; and if the right hon. Gentleman saw any analogy between the present and any past transaction, that analogy must be drawn from the Navy and Irish Five per Cents, which were reduced to Four per Cents—an operation carried through in 1822 with perfect success, and by which £100 of the old Five per Cents were converted into £105 Four per Cents. That was an operation somewhat analogous; but there was this difference—that in the operation of 1822 no addition was made to the Sinking Fund in order to pay off the increase in the capital of the Debt. The Government were now proposing to add to the Sinking Fund a sufficient amount to pay off the augmented Stock; therefore, they were following the operation of 1822, but improving on it. When the right hon. Gentleman opposite, therefore, said that the transaction proposed by the Government was unprecedented, he quite forgot what had taken place with regard to the Five per Cents in 1822. Then the right hon. Gentleman had said that in the plan which the Treasury were carrying out, the operation of the Terminable Annuities only affected the taxpayer, and had nothing at all to do with the Debt. On the contrary, if they created a Terminable Annuity, they *ipso facto* reduced Debt. The right hon. Gentleman had imported into this subject a wholly different question. He spoke of some special power given by law to convert £4,000,000 of Three per Cents into Two-and-a-Half per Cents, and he said we had mismanaged this. He was entirely mistaken from first to last. There was no reference in any Act to £4,000,000. But the Act of last year continued the old powers of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the Na-

tional Debt to convert any amount of Three per Cents held for the Post Office Savings Banks into Two-and-a-Half per Cents, obtaining a Terminable Annuity for the difference in value between the Three per Cents and the Two-and-a-Half per Cents. The Government had thought that the words of the Act, when they spoke of the difference of value, intended a difference in the market value. But, on reference to the previous Act, they were advised during the autumn that the word "value" meant not the market value, but the nominal value, and that they would have to give to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, in respect of the change proposed, an Annuity equivalent to 10s.—the difference between £3 and £2 10s. This certainly was not the intention of the framers of the Act. In order to correct that, the Government introduced a Bill at the beginning of the present Session, by which the difference of value was set forth to be the difference of market value; and to make the transaction perfectly safe, there was to be added to that difference of market value such amount of margin as might be agreed to. He thought he had explained this at the time. The result of the operation was exactly the opposite to what the right hon. Gentleman supposed. It had been, so far as any exchange had taken place, profitable to the Savings Banks by a considerable sum, which would be augmented by any further transactions at present prices. These were all the grounds upon which the right hon. Gentleman asked them to reject the Bill by the Amendment which he now proposed.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman doubted the correctness of his calculation, which was that, under the arrangement he had made with such care, the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt would be losing £4,000 a-year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) said, that was not so. It was just the reverse. The right hon. Gentleman did not understand that if they had acted under the old Acts, as interpreted by their legal advisers, the loss would have been serious; but under the present Act the Commissioners would, he thought, gain more than £4,000 a-year. He had not ex-

pected this question to be imported into the present debate, and he could not give the exact figures. He had replied to all the new matter introduced by the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR STAFFORD NORTH COTE wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could give the House any idea of the plan by which he contemplated carrying out the compulsory arrangement?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) said, that he had stated the other day that he did not think it would be expedient or wise to give any such information, because the nature of the compulsory process would depend entirely on the amount of Stock to be operated upon. Suppose they had a large amount of Stock to be operated upon, the method of operating upon it would be quite different from what it would be if they had only a small amount of Stock to operate upon. Therefore, to produce to the House the details of an operation the terms of which they had no knowledge of would be very inexpedient. Of course, when the compulsory process was taken in hand, it would have to be the subject of a distinct Act of Parliament in which the details would have to be set out.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, that nothing but the knowledge of the terms of the compulsory power would induce people to assent to the arrangement.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): Not at all. It was the knowledge of the compulsory power, and not of the manner in which it would be put in operation, which would affect the public. No Minister could, with due regard to the public interest, declare now what he would do in a contingency which had not arisen, and which, when it did arise, might give a perfectly different complexion to the matter from that which it at present bore.

SIR STAFFORD NORTH COTE: When will the right hon. Gentleman be in a position to bring in his compulsory Bill? During the present Session?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): I have already stated that we do not intend to bring it in during the present year. We have asked for sufficient time to carry out the

present operation before we go into the compulsory question.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he did not wish to renew the discussion which had taken place the other day, and would only suggest to the right hon. Gentleman opposite that he should not divide the House on his Amendment. He must say to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that at that hour of the night they had better not go into details in Committee. It was too late to discuss all these elaborate points. They ought to have the freshness of an earlier hour in the day before they brought their minds to bear on the matters presented to them in the Bill; and he should think that if they got the Speaker out of the Chair it would be quite sufficient for to-night, and that the details would be better reserved for another day.

MR. W. H. SMITH trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would agree with what had fallen from the hon. Member who had just down. No doubt, that discussion in Committee would occupy a considerable time; and, no doubt, the "announcement which the right hon. Gentleman had made that it was not his intention to explain to the House the compulsory proposals which he contemplated putting into effect, would cause the discussion in Committee to take place at greater length. It would be impossible, he thought, to proceed without very considerable discussion on the 6th clause. It was clear that that was a clause of very great importance, which would be greatly affected by the operation of this compulsory power. A great many things would have to be explained at some future time, and it would be impossible for anyone occupying the position of Trustee to discharge his duty satisfactorily pending such explanation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) said, that the right hon. Member who had suggested that it would be desirable that they should not proceed with the 6th clause that night, was perfectly right; but he certainly should prefer disposing of the preceding clauses and the Amendment of his right hon. Friend before reporting Progress. If the Amendment were carried—that was to say, if the only conversion were to be from Three per Cent to Two-and-

Three-Quarter per Cent at par—it would mean the entire destruction of the Bill. When they came to Clause 6, he should be very glad to agree to the adjournment.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD: I shall be glad to withdraw my Motion—or, I would rather it were put, and negatived.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Creation of new $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. stock, and of additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stock).

MR. W. FOWLER said, the first Amendment on the Paper stood in his name; but he should like, with the greatest deference and with the utmost friendliness, at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning, to propose that they should not go into a question involving Stock to the value of £500,000,000. It seemed to him to be hardly the right way of conducting Business of such importance to proceed with it when the House was exhausted. The right hon. Gentleman said, truly enough, that the Amendment he (Mr. W. Fowler) had on the Paper was fatal to the Bill. But that was the very reason why the Amendment was so important, and rendered it unsatisfactory to him that they should discuss it under present circumstances. Of course, if the House desired it, he would move the Amendment; but, at the present moment, he thought it his duty to move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(Mr. William Fowler.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) said, he would appeal to the Committee on this matter. They had had a long debate on the second reading, during which the hon. Member had elaborated his proposal. At the time he had stated that such an arrangement would be absolutely fatal to the Bill. It was, that the only offer should be to the present stockholders to take Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cent Stock at par. That, as he had al-

ready stated, was an offer which no one could dream of accepting, and, therefore, if that were inserted in the Bill, the Bill would come to an end. The House had accepted the principle of the measure on the second reading, and the hon. Member wished to move what was tantamount to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hubbard), who had said that the nominal amount of capital, should not be increased. If they did not increase the amount of capital, the only way to avoid it was by adopting the plan suggested by the hon. Member. He had had an opportunity of confirming what he had told the House on the last occasion—namely, that if that were the only option to be given, he had the highest authority for saying that the Bill would be at an end. It was useless to make that offer. It was useless to say to people—"You now receive Three per Cents, and you can now take Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cents or not as you like." The answer would be—"Of course we will keep the Three per Cents. Why should we take less when we can get that amount?" Surely, if that were the case, it was much better to settle the matter at once, and settle it, as they had already practically done, in negating the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. With regard to the hour, half-past 1 was not too late for them to go on with a discussion of a financial Bill of this kind. Measures of this sort were purposely exempted from the Half-past 12 Rule. He had known questions like this to be discussed at a much later hour than half-past 1, and to be discussed with great advantage; and he therefore hoped that the hon. Gentleman would withdraw his Motion, and would make his proposal, and allow the Committee to discuss it and decide upon it.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, that if the hon. Member brought forward his Amendment, he (Mr. Hubbard) should feel it his duty to express his opinion upon it, probably at some length; and he did not think that, seeing that there were £600,000,000 worth of Stock at stake, that he should be called upon to do that now. The proposal of the hon. Gentleman came to what he (Mr. Hubbard) believed to be a proper way of dealing with the matter, and, therefore, he should have to express his opinion upon it at great length.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE considered the remarks of the hon. and right hon. Gentleman to be perfectly justifiable, looking at the hard day they had had. To his mind the Motion was a very reasonable one.

MR. WARTON said, that they had not only had a very hard day's work, but they were to have an early day's work to-morrow.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) still maintained that the hour was not an unreasonable one, seeing that the principle of the Bill had already been adopted by the House. If the hon. Gentleman would proceed with his Amendment, which he must say on the face of it was a practical absurdity, the Committee were perfectly capable of dealing with it; and, as he had said, there was nothing unusual in discussing measures of that kind at that hour.

MR. W. FOWLER said, the right hon. Gentleman had made a very strong statement when he had declared that his (Mr. Fowler's) proposition was practically an absurdity; but as that might lead to some discussion, and as it might be necessary to go into the principles of the Amendment, he would not deal with the question now. What, however, he should be prepared to say hereafter, would be this—that the Amendment would be an absurdity if the right hon. Gentleman were to offer something far better to the fundholding interest.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out that the hon. Gentleman is not in Order in referring to the Amendment, or to any alternative.

MR. W. FOWLER: I only wished to draw the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to this point.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 23; Noes 58: Majority 35.—(Div. List, No. 118.)

MR. W. FOWLER said, he wished to move, in page 1, line 12, to leave out the word "and." This was a small proposal; but it really had the effect of raising the whole question, as it was the first of a series of Amendments consequential one upon the other. The point before them was a very large one, and in one respect a very simple one. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them it was impossible to issue Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cents at par. The

Right hon. Gentleman had pledged his word to that; but he had said that his proposition in the Bill was to give them something much better than that. Why, then, did he come down and tell them that he could not depart from his original proposition? How did the right hon. Gentleman know that what he (Mr. W. Fowler) proposed was impossible? The right hon. Gentleman had asked the opinion of A, B, C, and D; but opinions differed upon these matters; and what he (Mr. Fowler) wished to lay down in this proposition was that if they could issue Stock at par without additional capital at diminished interest, that proposal would have his hearty support; but if there was at the same time diminished interest and increased capital, then he could not sympathize with the arrangement. He had pointed out, at considerable length, his reason for objecting to an increase of capital the other day, and he would not weary the Committee by repeating them now except in one point, which he had neglected to make perfectly clear the other day. He wished to point out the contrast between Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cents at par and what the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed — Two-and-a-Half per Cents at £108. Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cents at par would save in 20 years about £30,000,000; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer absorbed by his Sinking Fund the whole of his extra Stock in 20 years, he would not save the taxpayer 1s. in the course of 20 years. The whole of that saving would be absorbed by the Sinking Fund in 20 years. The right hon. Gentleman said he was going to give 50 years, and therefore he should be helping the present taxpayers by putting the burden on the future tax-payers; but if his (Mr. Fowler's) proposition was carried out, there would be an immediate benefit to present taxpayers and to all future taxpayers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that which he said he could do, as against that which he said he could not do; but he objected to what the right hon. Gentleman proposed, because he considered that it would be no benefit to the taxpayer to do what the right hon. Gentleman suggested, for he proposed to increase the capital to such an extent as to neutralize the benefit of what he was about to do. If the right hon. Gentleman would wait till he could

issue Stock at par with reduced interest, he would find that he had done something worth doing; but he had better wait till then. According to the right hon. Gentleman's ideas, he had only to wait a very short time; but he had better wait rather than disturb matters at present, with the risk of meeting with a disagreeable failure. The right hon. Gentleman might succeed and he might not; but he very much objected to the proposition which dangled something before the world which might be more tempting than Two-and-Three-Quarter per Cents at par. He protested against this proposed increase of capital, and he made his Motion also because he thought the time was very near when, unless there should be some great public crisis, Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cents could be issued at par.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 12, to leave out the word "and."—(*Mr. W. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word "and" stand part of the Clause."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he felt it difficult to deal with his hon. Friend, because he took one view at one time and a different view at another. At one time the hon. Gentleman said the proposal was likely to be a very disagreeable failure, and now he urged that the only offer should be one still less advantageous. He had said that this offer would be accepted by no one, and his hon. Friend asked how he knew that? The only way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could know what the probability of any such plan succeeding was by consulting those who were authorities on the subject, and they told him that if he adopted the hon. Gentleman's proposal he might as well abandon the Bill. He hoped the Committee would not accept the Amendment, which would be fatal to the Bill.

Mr. W. FOWLER pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman had not said anything about compulsion, of which a great deal had been heard. He greatly objected to the idea of increasing the capital fund, and he should certainly move his Amendment.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he thought the Amendment had been put down in order to reduce the Bill to a *reductio ad absurdum*, and that the Chancellor of the

Exchequer had proceeded in a much clearer way than that suggested by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler). He thought also that a great many people would rather wait for compulsion than have it now. The hon. Member wished to diminish the interest; but then the question arose, whether there was any sufficient inducement held out to the fundholders, if no fear of ultimate compulsion should exist? The question before the Committee was, whether they would look to get this reduction of interest at once, or wait for the chance of getting it? He should oppose the Amendment, because it would practically destroy the Bill.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, there was no doubt that the conversion might be more properly and effectually done when they were in a position by one operation to reduce the interest of the higher priced Stock to the lower priced Stock, giving a guarantee for a certain number of years against a further conversion. That could be done under circumstances similar to those of 1844. The House having passed the second reading of this Bill, he did not think it would now be consistent to support such an Amendment as this; but the fundholder had a right to know what was the nature of the pressure there would be behind the offer by way of compulsion. He did not wish to throw anything in the way of this experiment, for he thought it was desirable to make it; but he must urge the right hon. Gentleman to give some information on this point.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he would always do his best to meet the right hon. Baronet; but it would be imprudent to state now what would be the nature of the Bill to be introduced next year or the year after. That would depend on the amount of Three per Cent Stock outstanding, and the condition of the market.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: If the interest went to the payment of Debt, of course the loss would be nominal; but the effect would be that a larger proportion would go to the redemption of Debt. But the right hon. Gentleman said he did not mean that the larger amount was to go to the redemption of Debt, but that £1,800,000 was to be saved to the taxpayer. In that case an alteration of the law would be necessary.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I think if the right hon. Gentleman refers to the terms of the Bill he will see that it has been provided for.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not explained one of my points. I asked whether these Terminable Annuities would swell the amount chargeable for interest on Debt beyond what it is at present?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): No, Sir. The operation of the present Act would be unchanged, but some reduction in the amount paid for interest would occur, and an increase, although a smaller one, in the Sinking Fund.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Sir, I do not know whether anything I can say would induce the right hon. Gentleman to alter the position he has taken up with regard to the exercise of compulsory power in the matter of conversion of Stock; but I cannot help thinking that the refusal of any information on that point will place great difficulties in the way of the operation which he seeks to effect. The uncertainty, the mystery, and the fact that no one knows precisely how or when those powers will be applied—if, indeed, they are to be applied at all—are, in my judgment, likely to cause great indisposition on the part of the holders of Stock to accept the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. My belief is that, if he desires to expedite this operation, he should lay it as a complete scheme before the House—show his hand, so to speak—and then the holders of Stock would be in a position to judge for themselves whether it is right to submit to or resist a compulsory operation not yet brought into effect. The uncertainty which prevails on this subject has, I believe, depreciated the Stocks very considerably. Within my own knowledge changes of investments are being effected from the funds into Debenture Stock in various ways, simply because those interested in them are uncertain as to the extent and method of application, and the time when these compulsory powers will come into effect. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman is well advised, and my opinion probably will have little weight with him; but I repeat, that I hold the opinion most strongly that the effect of

the measure will be impaired, and that the saving to the public will be less than it would be if the whole intention of the right hon. Gentleman were now explained to Parliament and the country. There is one provision in this clause which I think will give a great deal of trouble without commensurate result—namely, that which relates to the quarterly payment of dividends on the Two and Three-Quarter per Cent Stock. My belief is that the holders of those Annuities do not desire quarterly payment of dividends. The holders of ordinary Railway Debenture Stock do not desire to obtain quarterly dividends; and the effect of the arrangement, I think, will be greatly to increase the charge so far as the Bank of England is concerned, and to set up a new Annuity which would be an addition to Debt for the time being—that is to say, the anticipation of the half-yearly dividend due on the 5th of January by payment on the 5th of October next, as explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a previous occasion, will necessitate the creation of an Annuity in order to extinguish the additional amount to be provided out of the Revenue of the year. That would be necessarily an addition to Debt, and the concession of a quarter's interest in anticipation will in consequence be a very small boon, if it be a boon at all, to the public.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): So far as Consols are concerned, the quarterly payment of dividends will not affect the charge; because the anticipation of one quarter will leave the whole amount in the same financial year, because the payment of the whole amount comes within the same financial year. As regards the New and Reduced Stocks, the matter is a very small one, and is provided for by the 4th clause of the Bill. As to the quarterly payment of the interest on Two and a-Half per Cents—they are quarterly now—the immediate effect of the change was to send up the Stock. Then, as to the additional trouble at the Bank of England arising out of the payment of dividends quarterly, I would point out to my right hon. Friend that the Bank will be fairly remunerated under the Act. With regard to my right hon. Friend's observations on the application of compulsory powers

to the conversion of Stock, I may say that no one appreciates the importance of clearness in matters of finance more than I; and it would have been preferable to me, had it been possible, to state the course which we might take in the present instance; but to do so when the amount of Stock, on which the mode of dealing with it is dependent, is absolutely uncertain, would, in my opinion, be imprudent in the highest degree. All I can say, therefore, is that it is our intention and our desire that the conversion shall take place in the manner most convenient to the public, and that when the proper time arrives we shall state to the House the course we intend to pursue.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2 (Exchange of 3 per cent stock into $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, or $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent stock) agreed to.

Clause 3 (Adjustment of accounts as to net saving from exchange under Bill).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(Mr. Warton.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he hoped the Committee would proceed until Clause 6 was reached. There were no Amendments on the Paper, and the intervening clauses were consequential.

MR. WARTON said, it was quite true that no Amendments appeared on the Paper; but he had an Amendment to move on Clause 3.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, if the question involved in the clause was as simple as the right hon. Gentleman considered it to be, it would be no less simple when the Committee met again; and yet, by proceeding hurriedly, they might do a serious injury to the finances of the country. It was, no doubt, right for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to appeal to Gentlemen on those Benches; but they had also a right to appeal to him.

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN stated that he thought the Noes had it; and, his decision being challenged, he directed the Ayes to stand up in their places; and, fourteen Members only having stood up, he declared that the Noes had it.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WARTON said, he was about to move the substitution of the word "twenty" for the word "fifty" in line 12. It was, in his opinion, unfair to have a Sinking Fund extending over 50 years when the Stock was redeemable in 20. The Committee would perceive that there was a saving of about 6s. per annum in the interest on a Two and a-Half per Cent Stock at 108, as compared with a Three per Cent Stock at par. The question was not to be complicated by references to the £28,000,000 annually applied to the payment of Debt and interest, nor by referring to the £1,800,000 which the Chancellor of the Exchequer said would be saved. To simplify the matter, he would take £100 Stock, the saving on which would be 6s. per annum—the difference between £3 and £2 14s., which was the interest on Two and a-Half per Cent Stock at 108. Now, a Sinking Fund, to raise the £8 required, for 20 years, would cost, at 2½ per cent, 5s. 1½d. per annum, the amount of the saving being no more than 10½d., which was what it really amounted to. A Sinking Fund for 50 years required one-fourth of a 20 years' Sinking Fund, or about 1s. 4d. Thus there was an apparent saving of about 4s. 8d., which was dishonestly obtained by throwing on their children by a 50 years' Sinking Fund what ought to fall upon us in a Sinking Fund for 20 years, the time at the end of which the Stock was redeemable.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 12, to leave out the word "fifty," and insert the word "twenty."—(Mr. Warton.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'fifty' stand part of the Clause."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member would, if it were adopted, have the effect of absorbing the whole of the saving we should make by the reduction of interest, and the present taxpayer would get none of it. I think, in view of that fact, that

the Committee will agree with me when I say it is impossible for us to accept the Amendment proposed.

MR. WARTON said, he had no wish in this matter to relieve the taxpayer. It was useless to profess to make the taxpayer a saving, and then throw the cost of it upon their descendants. Every operation of the kind proposed ought to be complete in 20 or 30 years.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, he would not carry his objection further than expressing his protest against the principle which had been adopted in this clause of creating Terminable Annuities as a means of concealing the damage done by creating additional Stock. It was a process for which he could find no precedent in the proceedings of any previous Finance Ministers.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 (Provision as to increase of charge arising from earlier payment of dividends) *agreed to*.

Clause 5 (Adaptation of 43 & 44 Vict. c. 36, ss. 3 and 4, to 2½ and 2½ per cent stock).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. WARTON said, that with regard to the clause he had only one word to say, and that was that the way this Bill had been hurried through the House was perfectly disgraceful.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD pointed out that this was the clause which invited the Savings Bank Commissioners to take part in these proceedings. He had already shown that the Savings Bank Commissioners had sustained a loss of £4,000 a-year under the admirable finance of the Treasury, and yet they were asked to take a further part in these unwise proceedings. As a matter of fact, the Commissioners would be reduced to a state of insolvency before long; but it was hopeless to protest against the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers), who had got a large following at his back.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that all that was said to the Savings Bank Commissioners through this clause was—"If you like to have an investment in the

Government Stock you may have it at Two and a-Half per Cent."

Clause agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

YORKSHIRE LAND REGISTRY AND YORKSHIRE REGISTRY BILLS.

Ordered, That Mr. EDWARD LEATHAM be added to the Select Committee on Yorkshire Land Registry and Yorkshire Registry Bills. —(*Mr. Osborne Morgan*.)

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 13th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Metropolitan Police * (118); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) (Belchalwell, &c.) * (119); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9) (Parishes of Ashen, &c.) * (120); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10) (Parishes of Charley, &c.) * (121); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) (Saint James, Westminster, &c.) * (122); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (Unions of North Dublin, &c.) * (123); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Bandon Waterworks) * (124); Sea Fisheries Act (1868) Amendment * (125).

Second Reading—Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Emsworth Gas, &c.) * (105).

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE—THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.

QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: As I do not see the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) in his place, may I ask the noble Earl at the head of the India Office, Whether there is any information in the possession of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the progress of the negotiations with France with regard to the Conference which he is able to communicate to the House?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The noble Marquess might have anticipated the answer which I believe my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would have given had he been

in his place. My noble Friend is not in a position to-day to supply any information on the subject.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RUMOURED FALL OF BERBER..

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: There is another Question I have to ask, of which I have given the noble Earl private Notice. It is with regard to the reports which have appeared in many of the newspapers with respect to the supposed fall of Berber, and the massacre of the garrison and the people in the town. I am quite aware that the reports are of a conflicting character; but I should be glad to know what the opinion of Her Majesty's Government is on the subject.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My noble Friend has unfortunately as good means of judging between these conflicting reports as I have. No fresh news has been received during the last two days. Some few days ago a report was received saying that according to the intelligence that had reached Mr. Egerton at Cairo there was reason to believe that Berber was safe. Since that telegram, which my noble Friend has seen in the newspapers, information has appeared—and, in fact, our intelligence is identical with it—stating that Berber has been taken and the garrison destroyed. We have no means of knowing which of these two telegrams is correct. Mr. Egerton is disposed to think that the later news is probably not well founded; but I have no means of stating whether that surmise is well founded, as I have no information on the subject.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he would repeat the Question another day.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — APPOINTMENT OF MAGISTRATES—WESTMEATH.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD, in rising to call attention to the annexed announcement, published in Dublin newspapers of 31st May, 1884—

"The Magistracy,—County Westmeath.—On the recommendation of the Most Reverend Dr. Woodlock, Bishop of the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, the Lord Chancellor has appointed Edward Gleeson, Esq., M.D., of Banown House, Athlone, to the commission of the peace for the county Westmeath; "

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

and to inquire whether any change has been introduced by authority in the mode of recommending and appointing magistrates in Ireland, said, the recommendation appeared to be somewhat unusual in point of form. He meant no personal reflection, in putting the Question, upon Dr. Woodlock, nor upon the person appointed, nor upon the Lord Chancellor. What he desired to draw attention to was the ostentatious announcement that the appointment had been made on the recommendation of the Roman Catholic Bishop, without apparently any reference to the Lord Lieutenant of the county. Dr. Woodlock, though his diocese bore an old ecclesiastical designation, resided at Longford. He had met Dr. Woodlock frequently at public Boards and otherwise, and always on good terms. The person appointed to the Commission of the Peace was a stranger, not in medical practice; but he was welcome in conducting an industrial enterprize in a part of the country where real enterprize was scarce. The question had a much wider meaning. Their Lordships might be aware that lately a section of the Irish Press, and also certain Members of the other House of Parliament, had pressed for the appointment of what were called a more popular class of magistrates; and the Representative of the Irish Government in the House of Commons had, he thought, rather incautiously given some encouragement to those who made that demand, by saying that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland had had his attention drawn to the matter, and that in cases in which persons were properly recommended for the Commission of the Peace he would exercise his authority. He thought the Chief Secretary for Ireland went a little farther, and stated that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland would exercise his inherent privilege and make appointments himself. The result had been that the popular Party in Ireland had taken the hint thus thrown out, and that recommendations had come to the Lords Lieutenant of counties from quarters whence such recommendations did not usually come—Town Commissioners and Boards of Guardians, for example. However, Ireland was an eccentric country, and Boards of Guardians there appeared to be elected, not to administer the Poor Law, but for the purpose of gaining a platform from which to de-

nounce all law, especially because it had been made by the British Parliament. Gentlemen who sought appointments as magistrates for private reasons quite outside statutory duties. He did not believe that Dr. Woodlock would knowingly recommend an unfit candidate for the magistracy; but it ought not to be forgotten that he was the servant of a master who never slept, and that his first duty was to increase the power and influence of his Church beyond other considerations. And there were other Prelates of his Church whose sympathies, if he might judge by their language, were more widely popular, and they might possibly be induced to recommend magistrates of whose impartiality there might be some question. For this general reason he had been unwilling that the announcement which he had quoted should pass without review, as otherwise it might come to be accepted that the independent recommendation of a Roman Catholic Bishop, without reference to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, would be accepted by the Lord Chancellor and favoured by the Government. Probably many of their Lordships would agree with him that such a course would not be of advantage to the public service. Therefore he had to ask whether any change had been introduced by authority in the mode of recommending and appointing magistrates in Ireland?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): My Lords, there is no intention to change the mode of appointing magistrates in Ireland beyond what was stated by the Chief Secretary in "another place" a few weeks ago. The noble Earl, I think, rather underrates the difficulty which I think we all feel in respect of the satisfactory appointment of magistrates in Ireland, and the constitution of the Irish Magisterial Bench. He knows very well there have been many complaints arising out of the fact that the great majority of the Irish magistrates are drawn from the members of one Church. These complaints are for the most part unreasonable, because the fact I have just mentioned is generally inevitable, arising, as we all know, from the composition of Irish society, and from the fact that it is very often extremely difficult to find any gentleman in an Irish county possessed of the necessary

qualifications of a magistrate, possessed of sufficient education and leisure and independence, beyond those members who, as it happens, are members of the late Established Church in Ireland. It would, undoubtedly, be very difficult to find anything like a proportional number of persons belonging to either the Roman Catholic Church or the Presbyterian Church who are possessed of the obvious qualifications for appointment to the Commission of the Peace. Nevertheless, the Government do feel, and successive Lord Chancellors of Ireland have felt, that it is most desirable and necessary to take all proper means for the purpose of lessening this inequality, and of not allowing that difficulty—for it is a difficulty—to extend beyond the absolute necessity of the case. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland, as stated by the Chief Secretary for Ireland a month or two ago, has for some time made up his mind to exercise his undoubted right of appointing to the magistracy, in cases where he thinks it fitting and necessary, as far as possible in communication with and in concert with the Lord Lieutenants of counties, but, if necessary, even without that concurrence—in cases either brought before him by Lords Lieutenants of counties, or in cases which, in his own opinion, ought to have been brought before him but were not. That is undoubtedly his right, and if exercised, as I am convinced that such a right would be, and will be, exercised by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, I cannot conceive that anything but good can come of it. However that may be, I have to tell my noble Friend that the general question, to which I have hitherto confined myself, is absolutely unconnected with the particular case which I am not surprised the noble Earl has brought before the House. I am not surprised he has been convinced by the extreme positiveness of the newspaper report that the facts are as the newspaper—I do not know what newspaper it was—states. But I have a letter from the Lord Chancellor, in which he says that the statement is absolutely and totally without foundation. It is a pure invention of the newspaper in question—whatever that newspaper may be—or of some correspondent. Dr. Gleeson, who has an important manufacturing concern in Athlone, and is, I believe, a most proper person to be placed

on the Bench, has been appointed by the Lord Chancellor in the ordinary way upon the recommendation of the Lord Lieutenant of the county.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

QUESTION.

EARL DE LA WARR asked the Lord President of the Council, Whether the Report of Dr. Crichton Browne, relative to over-work in elementary schools could be laid upon the Table of the House? He thought the Lord President of the Council would agree with him that the document ought to be in their Lordships' hands, as it referred to a subject which had lately been much under public notice, and would probably be shortly again brought under the consideration of the House.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL) said, he could not agree with the noble Earl that this was a document which it was the duty of the Government to lay on the Table. It was not in any proper sense of the term a Report to the Education Department. It was a letter of enormous compass, dealing with matters of the most controversial kind, containing the theories of Dr. Crichton Browne, and reflecting on various Departments, including the Education Department. He believed that it grew out of a conversation between Dr. Browne and the Vice President of the Council, who was afterwards much astonished at receiving such a document. The Education Department were in no sense responsible for it, and were not going to make themselves responsible for issuing it as a Parliamentary Paper. It would be extremely inconvenient if any gentleman had it in his power to discharge a document of this kind at the head of any Public Department, and then to require that Department to publish it in the form of a Blue Book. Of course, Dr. Crichton Browne was at liberty to make his own document public in any way he pleased. Certain Papers had been promised in "another place" on the subject of over-pressure in schools, and whatever was presented to the House of Commons would be laid also on the Table of their Lordships' House.

LORD HOUGHTON said, he thought it was only fair to Dr. Crichton Browne

Lord Carlingford

that they should know whether this Report or letter was initiated by him or by the Department.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that he had had no personal communication with Dr. Browne on the matter; but he had no reason to believe that it originated in any proper sense with the Education Department.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA.—QUESTION.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether negotiations on the subject of Angra Pequena were still proceeding, and, if so, whether he could state how soon they were likely to be terminated? Seeing the First Lord of the Admiralty in his place, he wished to ask the noble Earl whether he would lay on the Table any Reports received from the Commander-in-Chief on the South African station with regard to Angra Pequena, as he understood that it had been visited of late by that officer?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I may state, in the absence of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that as Correspondence is still going on between Her Majesty's Government and the German Government upon this subject, it is not possible at present to make any communication with regard to the negotiations. My noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) has asked me to answer the Question as to the Report of the Commander in Chief on the South African Station. He desires Notice that he may look over the Correspondence, in order to see whether it could be published. If so, he will be glad to produce it.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that his noble Friend behind him had done good service in repeatedly calling attention to this subject. It was a serious one, and still more serious that the negotiations should be allowed to drag on for such a great length of time, as in that part of the world the British and the German interests touched each other very closely. His own experience of German policy had always been that it was extremely reasonable and conducted in a reasonable spirit. At the same time, the longer the matter was delayed the greater the risk of misunderstanding

arising. He was afraid that the change of Government at the Cape would not facilitate a solution of the question; but he thought that if his noble Friend the Foreign Secretary had seen his way to deal with the matter more promptly, and bring it to a settlement some months ago, he would probably have found it more easy as far as the German Government was concerned. He, for one, would be glad to see the question disposed of satisfactorily, and disposed of without delay.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that the matter had been affected to a considerable extent by the change of Government at the Cape, because his noble Friend would see that it was impossible to deal with it without communication with the Cape Government. But he did not see why there should be any further unreasonable delay in dealing with the question.

SEA FISHERIES ACT (1868) AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to further amend the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868—Was *presented* by The Earl of RAVENSWORTH; read 1^a. (No. 125.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock
to Monday next, a quarter
past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 13th June, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—National Debt (Conversion of Stock) [Consolidated Fund].

Ordered—*First Reading*—Licensing Act (1872) Amendment * [248].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7) (Tipperary Union) * [235].

Committee—Representation of the People [119] (*New Clauses*) [Ninth Night]—r.r.; National Debt (Conversion of Stock) [186]—r.r.

Committee—*Report*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2).

Third Reading—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Walsall and District Tramways, &c.) * [193]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4) (Colchester, &c.) * [196]; Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Alperton and Sudbury Water, &c.) * [182], and *passed*,

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE—COMMENCEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I understand now, from the authorities of the House, that the state of Private Business is such that it will admit of the Public Business being proceeded with at a quarter-past 4 o'clock instead of half-past 4 after Monday next.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will Ministers be in their places at that hour?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think so.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—CARNGARREE ELECTORAL DIVISION, BAILIEBOROUGH UNION.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, notwithstanding the fact that the Local Government Board have decided that Mr. Richard Clarke, the candidate declared by the clerk of the Bailieborough Union to be duly elected for the Carngarree Electoral Division, at the late election, did not receive a majority of valid votes, they still refused to substitute for him Mr. Patrick Clarke (the old guardian), the other candidate, who did obtain a majority of valid votes, and decided instead to put the division to the expense and inconvenience of a new election?

MR. TREVELYAN: The return of the candidate who had been declared elected, having been set aside by the Local Government Board, they adopted the only legal course open to them in ordering a new election to fill the vacancy thereby caused.

MOROCCO—THE GRAND SHEREEF OF WAZAN—RUMOURED FRENCH PROTECTORATE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any Despatches have been received from the British Minister in Morocco respecting the protection granted by France to the Grand Shereef of Wazan, and its bearing on the relations between Morocco and the other Powers parties to the Treaty of Madrid; and,

whether he proposes to submit any Papers on the subject to Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government do not consider it advisable to present any Papers at present; but I may inform my hon. Friend that the assurances received from the French Government that they have no designs upon Morocco, and repudiate all idea of establishing a protectorate or of promoting troubles in the country, have been communicated to Her Majesty's Minister at Tangier, and, through him, to the Moorish Government.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether Dr. Crichton Browne, one of Her Majesty's Commissioners in Lunacy, was invited by him to visit some of the elementary schools in London, in company with one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and to report on the work of elementary schools from a sanitary point of view, with the object of ascertaining the foundations of the allegations of over pressure; whether that report has now been some weeks in his possession; whether he has invited several Members of Parliament to read the report at his office; whether the report, amongst other things, declares Dr. Crichton Browne's opinions to be—That over pressure exists; that the system of payment by proximate and partial results is one of the causes of over pressure; that the number of suicides of children under sixteen is annually swelling; that mortality from nervous diseases is steadily increasing; that one-third of the children in elementary schools in London suffer from habitual headache; that short-sightedness amongst school children is rapidly increasing, and threatens to become a national infirmity; and, whether, considering the gravity which attaches to a report by a public officer, holding the position of one of Her Majesty's Commissioners in Lunacy, and the impossibility of adequately discussing the Education Estimates without reference to such report, he will place it in the Library for the inspection of Members?

MR. MUNDELLA: Dr. Crichton Browne is not a Commissioner in Lunacy, but a Visitor under the Court of Chancery. The document which he has

addressed to me, in the form of a letter, is a voluminous essay on a great number of disputable questions relating not only to education, but to medicine, lunacy, ethics, and social and vital statistics. It is in no respect an official document; but out of respect for Dr. Browne I have promised to give a *résumé* of it in the Reports which will shortly be laid before this House. Until this is done I must refrain from offering any opinion as to its contents. It has no bearing on the Estimates any more than numerous other communications which I have received on the same subject.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had any other Reports in his Office from Inspectors or others which confirmed the opinion of Dr. Crichton Browne that overpressure existed in elementary schools?

MR. MUNDELLA said, that the general Reports which he had would be shortly laid on the Table of the House. They were all in contradiction of Dr. Crichton Browne's conclusions.

MR. RAIKES asked whether the right hon. Gentleman still proposed to bring forward the Education Estimates on Monday in the absence of this important and material information?

MR. MUNDELLA said, it had nothing whatever to do with the Education Estimates.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)— THE PAUPER TRAINING SHIP "EX- MOUTH."

MR. J. R. YORKE asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Local Government Board have recently sanctioned the erection of a new swimming bath for the boys of the pauper training ship *Exmouth* at a cost of £2,700, of which £200 was the architect's commission; whether such new swimming bath is to be tepid, covered and sheltered, with boiler house, gas engine, and pump attached; and whether the erection of the building was deemed to be so urgent that the contract was entered into without advertising for tenders; whether it is the fact that the original cost of the existing floating bath in the River Thames, when constructed in 1876, was only £300; and, whether he is aware that at Eton and other schools of similar class swimming is taught and learned in rivers, without any such cover or shelter, or any arti-

ficial appliances whatever, such as it is now proposed to supply to pauper boys at the expense of the Metropolitan ratepayer?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The Local Government Board have assented to the proposal of the managers to erect a new swimming bath for the boys on board the *Exmouth*, which is moored off Grays. The estimated expenditure of £2,700 includes £500 for a building required for the repair of the ship's boats and for putting them under cover during the winter. The nature of the subsoil of the site on which the buildings are to be erected renders it necessary that they should be of a substantial character, so that they may resist the effects of the strong winds in such an exposed situation, and this increases the expense. The bath is to be covered and provided with the means of warming the water when necessary. The proposal that the managers should not be required to advertise for tenders was not made on account of the urgency of the matter, but for the reason that the ground on which the building was to be erected was of such a peculiar nature as to render it desirable that a builder should be employed who had experience in placing buildings upon similar soil. The proposal was, instead of advertising for tenders, to obtain tenders from a few firms who had constructed riverside premises. The sum paid by the managers for the floating bath when it was handed over to them by the managers of the Forest Gate School district, by whom it was constructed, was about £300. This was fast decaying, and its condition was reported to have become dangerous. The open floating bath, without any shelter, could, in consequence of its exposed position on the Thames, the keenness of the winds, and the force of the tides, be used for instruction in swimming on only a few days in the year. In 1881 there were only 16 days on which swimming could be taught; in 1882 there were 30 days. The managers fully considered the matter, and, having regard to the importance of swimming as a means of athletic exercise and muscular development, especially in the case of boys who are being trained for the sea service, the Board did not consider that they would be justified in withholding their consent to the proposal of the managers.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE
EAST KENT MOUNTED RIFLES—
DISORDERLY PROCEEDINGS AT
MARGATE.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention had been called to the description in *The Kentish Express*, of 24th May, of the attack made on the shop of Mrs. Ready, High Street, Margate, by the men of the East Kent Mounted Rifles while recently up for training; whether it is the fact that the Mayor requested the inhabitants to decorate their houses with bunting in honour of their visit; that, in compliance with this request, Mrs. Ready hung out a green flag with a harp and Union Jack and the words "Home Rule" underneath; that this flag was cut down by the men as they returned from drill, while under the command of the Marquis of Ormonde; that several of them broke into Mrs. Ready's shop (she having closed the door against them) by the fanlight, and used threatening language towards the woman, who is sixty years of age; that one of them drew his sword and disarranged her stock, demanding that she should give up any more flags or mottoes in her possession, and incited the mob which assembled to insult her; that they trailed the flag which they tore down under their horses' feet, and afterwards burnt it publicly on the Marine Terrace Green; whether the Marquis of Ormonde, as Colonel of the regiment, took any notice of these proceedings, or endeavoured to find out the perpetrators; and, what the War Office proposes to do in the matter?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: An irregularity did take place, which, however, is not quite accurately described in the Questions. There were two distinct transactions; one the tearing down of the flag as the regiment returned from drill under Lord Ormonde's command; the other, the intrusion into the shop by some men of the corps after the regiment had been dismissed, and when the commanding officer no longer had direct control over his men. In the latter case the men did not wear their swords, so that none could have been drawn, and the threatening language is denied. On the occurrence being brought to the notice of the commanding officer, he made full inquiry, and, without ex-

cusing his men, came to the conclusion that the matter had been exaggerated. He ordered the commanding officers to speak strongly to their respective troops, and to caution them against the repetition of such unsoldierlike conduct in future; and inquiries were made with a view to compensating the occupant of the shop for any loss she might have suffered. Under these circumstances, it is not considered necessary to take any further notice of the affair.

LAW AND POLICE — REPORTED OUT-
RAGE AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether there is any truth in the report on page 3 of *The Standard* of the 10th instant, that an outrage was committed on Saturday evening, as follows, at Windsor Castle:—

"It appears that the sentry on duty at the north-east point of the Castle was patrolling his beat as usual when suddenly two men appeared and fired at him, fortunately without doing any harm. The men immediately made off down the slopes on the Royal demesne. The household police and others hearing the shots hurried to the spot, and would have fired at the runaways had they not been prevented by the authorities of the Castle present from doing so, which naturally facilitated the escape of the men, who have not yet been arrested. Owing to the interference experienced by the police on this occasion, differences it is stated have arisen between the Castle and the military authorities. The would-be outrage is now generally believed to be a hoax, got up by the Palace authorities to increase the vigilance of the police and the military authorities in case of any emergency;"

and, whether the Royal servants did as suggested in the report perpetrate a hoax, with a view of alarming the military?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have inquired into this matter. As far as I can discover the only hoax attempted was by the author of the newspaper paragraph, and I am sorry to find he has partly succeeded.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—
RUMOURED FALL OF BERBER.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that Berber has been taken and the garrison and European traders put to the sword; and, what steps Her Majesty's Ministers are taking to save General Gordon and those

dependent upon him from a similar fate?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; no information has been received to the above effect at the Foreign Office. I have already replied to the second Question of the hon. Member in my reply to the previous Question.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Has the noble Lord any information to give to the House as to the European population in Berber?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot give any exact information as to the number of Europeans. I have inquired into the matter, and I find it is believed there are a certain number of Greeks and Italians. M. Cuzzi left Berber some time ago, and if the hon. Member wishes it I will give him the information which the Foreign Office has with regard to M. Cuzzi.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: With regard to M. Cuzzi, whom the noble Lord had described as General Gordon's agent in Berber, I wish to ask him whether it is the fact that he is a prisoner now in the hands of the Arabs, and has been forced to embrace Mahomedanism?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot state anything on that subject as a matter of positive fact; but, as I have just stated in the reply which I have already given, I am quite ready to give the House all the information I have, and it will be laid on the Table on Monday.

EGYPT—THE GARRISONS IN THE SOUDAN.

MR. BOURKE (for Mr. GIBSON) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When was "the original scheme for the evacuation of the Soudan dropped;" and, whether there is any scheme now in existence for the rescue of the garrisons in the Soudan; or, whether those garrisons have been finally abandoned to their fate?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The original plan, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, may be said to have been abandoned, perhaps when General Gordon asked for the appointment of Zebehr Pasha, certainly when he asked for the aid of Turkish troops against the Mahdi. With reference to

the second part of the right hon. Gentleman's Question, I have nothing to add to what fell from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War in the debate on the Vote of Censure; and if the right hon. Gentleman has any further Question to ask in regard to military preparations he will, no doubt, give Notice of it to the proper Department.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: With regard to the reply of the noble Lord, in which he stated that the original scheme for the evacuation of the Soudan dropped when the appointment of Zebehr Pasha was made, or when it was asked for, and when Turkish troops were asked for, I would ask him whether he is aware that the Prime Minister, on the 3rd of April and subsequently, stated in the House that the plan of General Gordon had not failed. [*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. GLADSTONE: I must ask you, Sir, whether the hon. Member is in Order in making recitals of that kind in the course of a Question? [*Cries of "Order!"*] I am speaking to Order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is referring to a debate which took place in the present Session; and the Question, in the form in which he has put it, is out of Order.

MR. GIBSON asked whether the first statement, that the original plan for the evacuation of the Soudan had been dropped, was to be found in the despatch of the 18th of May?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I feel sure that the House will see that in reply to a Question involving complicated issues as to dates I would be quite entitled to ask for Notice; but I have no wish to do so. [Mr. GIBSON: It is the Question on the Paper.] No; it is not. The Question on the Paper I have answered, and answered fully. But I have just said I am quite willing to reply at once. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman will refer to my speech in the debate on the Vote of Censure in reply to his own speech, he will find that I there quoted from the last Blue Book textually two telegrams from Lord Granville, dated the 16th and 23rd of March—I am, of course, quoting the date from memory only—in which the decision to abandon the original plan is fully set out and the reasons.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. RYLANDS asked when the further stages of the National Debt Bill would be taken, and hoped that the measure, which excited great interest, would be proceeded with at an hour of the evening when it could be properly discussed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that all the financial provisions of the National Debt Bill had been disposed of last night in Committee, and there only remained to be dealt with the technical details relating to trustees. He proposed to proceed with the remaining stages of the Bill as rapidly as possible.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, it would be convenient for the House to know what would be the general course of Government Business. Supposing the Representation of the People Bill was finished in Committee that day, what would be the Business on Tuesday and Thursday next?

MR. GLADSTONE: The House is aware that on Monday we propose to go into Supply for the purpose of taking the Education Vote. If we conclude to-day—as I hope we shall—the Committee on the Representation of the People Bill, we should then propose to take the Report on Tuesday. With regard to what lies beyond that I cannot say until I see what progress is made with the Report on the Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether it was proposed to take the Scotch Vote on Monday night?

MR. MUNDELLA: Certainly, if possible.

In answer to Questions,

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he was anxious to meet the wishes of the House as far as possible in regard to proceeding with the National Debt Bill; and, therefore, if the House went into Committee of Supply at the Evening Sitting, the Government would suspend Supply by 12 o'clock, in order to take the National Debt Bill.

MR. MACFARLANE inquired after what hour the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill would not be taken?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he could

not undertake that the Bill would be taken at an early hour; but it certainly would not be taken after 1 o'clock.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would engage not to proceed with the Coinage Bill after 4 o'clock in the morning.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I do not suppose the Question of the noble Lord is seriously put?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Yes; it is.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): We have not the smallest intention of taking the Coinage Bill at a late hour.

MR. SEXTON asked the Prime Minister if he could yet indicate the date on which the Government would proceed with the second reading of the Purchase of Land Bill; and if he could not, whether he would say that such Notice would be given as would enable Members generally from Ireland to be present?

MR. GLADSTONE: I can make no positive declaration until we are clear of the Representation of the People Bill; but I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman that full Notice should be given.

PORTUGAL—EAST COAST OF AFRICA—
THE STEAM YACHT “MAUD.”

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he was able to give the House any information as to the facts connected with the detention of the British ship *Maud* by the Portuguese authorities on the East Coast of Africa; and, whether any representation had been made to the Portuguese authorities on the subject?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Minister at Lisbon has already inquired of the Portuguese Government whether there is any information at Lisbon on this subject; but the reply is in the negative. Beyond the information supplied by the hon. Member himself no complaint on the subject has reached the Foreign Office; but communications are being entered into with the Board of Trade, and the matter will be fully investigated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE
BILL.—[BILL 119.](Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr.
Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.)

COMMITTEE. [Progress 12th June.]

[NINTH NIGHT.]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

New Clauses.

MR. ALBERT GREY: I rise, Sir, to move the following clause:—

(Elections before 1st January 1887 to take place as heretofore unless Parliament should otherwise determine.)

“Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, in the event of a vacancy in the representation of any constituency or of a dissolution of Parliament taking place, and a writ or writs being issued, before the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven, for the election of Members to serve in the present or any new Parliament, each election shall, unless Parliament shall otherwise determine, take place in the same manner in all respects as if no alteration had been made by this Act in the franchises of electors.”

I wish, at the outset, to declare, in the strongest possible manner, that my object in placing this clause on the Notice Paper, and in pressing it on the acceptance of the House, is one that is in every way friendly to Reform. I am as anxious as anyone in this House for the speedy passage through Parliament of a complete and comprehensive measure of Reform; dealing not only with extension, but with redistribution also. Far from admitting that my Amendment, if accepted, will prevent the Franchise Bill from taking effect at the earliest possible moment, I would venture to ask the Committee this question—what chance is there that the Bill will ever become an Act if it does not contain some security that a measure of redistribution shall be passed before it comes into full and active operation? It is not very certain, looking to the declarations of the Conservative Leaders, that if there is no security that a measure of redistribution shall have been passed before the Franchise Bill comes into operation, the Bill will find it impossible to win for itself a passage through

Parliament? On the other hand, is it not equally certain that if this Bill does contain such security, the ground of opposition will be cut away from under the feet of those who object, and, in my opinion, wisely object, to the passing of an incomplete measure of Reform; and the chances of the speedy enfranchisement of the householders of the United Kingdom be immeasurably increased? The fact that this is the case makes me hopeful that my Amendment may meet with the approval of hon. Members on this side of the House. But it is not on tactical considerations only that I have been influenced in putting the clause upon the Notice Paper. I do not think that I should be justified in bringing forward an Amendment of this importance on tactical considerations alone. It is because I believe we have a right, based on principle, to demand that a Dissolution upon the new franchise shall be made conditional on the previous passing of a Redistribution Bill, that I have ventured to put down upon the Notice Paper an Amendment which has for its object to secure the passing of a Redistribution Bill before the Franchise Bill shall come into active operation. My object is very similar to that which the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) had in view when he brought forward his Amendment, which was thrown out; but, although similar in its object, I would venture to point out that my Amendment would be different in its effect. It was pointed out at the time the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was under discussion that it would hang up indefinitely the operation of the Franchise Bill, and that 2,000,000 of householders might be kept out of the enjoyment of their rights conceded to them by Parliament at the pleasure of the House of Lords for an indefinite period. While that might have been the effect of carrying the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Member, I may point out that if my Amendment were accepted the effect would be very different. My Amendment would act as a stimulus, and as an incentive, to all those who wish to avoid the danger of a General Election on the new electorate and the old constituencies, and would cause them to press on the Redistribution Bill in order to secure themselves against such a contin-

[Ninth Night.]

gency. So far from my Amendment having a retarding effect, it would have an accelerating effect, and would help to secure the speedy passage of Reform through both Houses of Parliament. There have been two sorts of objections made to the Amendment which I propose—the objection which comes from hon. Gentlemen opposite that it does not go far enough; and the objection of some of my hon. Friends on this side of the House that it goes too far. In support of the objections advanced by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House they have pointed out that if no Redistribution Bill is passed before the 1st of January, 1887—that if the Government refrain from passing a Redistribution Bill during the Session of 1885 or the Session of 1886 it will be within their power to postpone the Dissolution until the 1st of January, 1887, and then the very evil I seek to avert—namely, a Dissolution on the new electorate and the old constituencies—would be an accomplished fact. Let me point out to hon. Gentlemen opposite that we have distinct and solemn assurances from the Government that it is their serious intention to bring forward their Redistribution Bill with the least possible delay. They have given us repeated assurances that this is their intention; they have always declared that redistribution is the indispensable complement of extension; and they have assured us that the reason why they have been compelled to consent to a temporary separation between redistribution and extension proceeds, not from any desire to bring about a divorce between the two questions, but because it has been rendered absolutely necessary by the irresistible requirements of the case. When, therefore, we have from Her Majesty's Government repeated professions of their determination to proceed with the work of redistribution as soon as circumstances will permit, then all that can fairly be required by those who are willing to accept those assurances as *bond fide* assurances—and that, I think, includes the large majority of Members on both sides of the House—[“Oh, oh!”]—is the adoption of an Amendment which will give to the Government full security that they shall have ample opportunity of carrying into effect the very policy which they tell us they have at heart. That is my answer to hon. Gentlemen opposite who say the date in my Amendment is not far enough

off. But there are some hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House who say that while the object of my Amendment is good it would be attained as effectually, and in a less objectionable manner, if the date in my Amendment were 1st January, 1886, instead of 1st January, 1887. My hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has an Amendment on the Paper which would have the effect of postponing an election under this Bill until the 1st of January, 1886; and it has been pointed out to me that if security to enable the Government to carry their own policy is all that is wanting then this Amendment would be quite sufficient. Well, I admit there would be some force in that contention, if the precedents of 1867 and 1868 had not afforded convincing testimony as to what would be the course of procedure if a Redistribution Bill were, according to the general hope and expectation of this side of the House, to be passed in the course of next year. It will be in the recollection of hon. Members that a clause was inserted in the Reform Bill of 1867 which postponed the operation of the Bill until the 1st of January, 1869; and in the Boundaries Bill, which was passed in the spring of 1868, in order to complete the legislation on Reform, a clause was inserted drawing back the date at which the Franchise Bill of 1867 was to come into operation from the 1st of January, 1869, until the 1st of November, 1868. Therefore, I contend that should a Redistribution Bill be passed next year nothing would be more natural than that it should, following the precedent of 1868, contain a clause altering the date at which the present Franchise Bill would come into operation from the 1st of January, 1887, to the 1st of November, 1885, or any other date Parliament might think fit. I maintain, therefore, that the objection to the date in my Amendment on the ground that it is too remote is a sentimental rather than a practical one. If redistribution is passed in 1885, there is nothing to prevent Parliament from changing the date mentioned in my Amendment to any earlier date should it think fit; but if, on the other hand, unforeseen circumstances should arise in the shape of domestic or foreign complications to make it impossible for the Government to carry out their policy, then I contend that the date given in my

Amendment is absolutely necessary if we wish to avoid the danger of an election upon the old constituencies with a new electorate. I am perfectly aware that if a Redistribution Bill is not passed in 1885 and we are led into the inconvenience of postponing a Redistribution Bill until 1886, we should, if my Amendment be accepted, have for the space of one year the great inconvenience of a double Register. But let me point out that this danger would only arise in the event of the Government not being able to make good their promises. Should such a circumstance unfortunately arise, then I contend that the inconvenience and danger of having a double Register in 1886, great as the inconvenience would be, would be less than the danger of having a General Election on the new electorate and the old constituencies. It is not necessary for me to point out what is the character of that danger, and what are the reasons why there should be a close connection between extension and redistribution. This question has already been largely discussed, and the solemn assurances which have been given by the Government that they intend to deal with redistribution at the very earliest opportunity are equivalent to a profession of belief on their part that extension and redistribution form two integral parts of one great change, and that they ought not in their operation to be divorced. But, although it is unnecessary for me to enter into any discussion as to the reasons why extension and redistribution, even if divided in their passing, should in their operation go together, I should, with the permission of the Committee, like to make a remark upon an expression which has fallen from the Prime Minister on more than one occasion. The Prime Minister has pointed out more than once that in the Reform Bills which were passed at a time when a difference existed between the county and borough franchises, there was an irresistible argument for embodying the measure dealing with redistribution in any measure on the ground that enfranchisement and disfranchisement were necessarily the very essence of redistribution; and the right hon. Gentleman had implied that, as under this Bill, whatever might be the character of the redistribution, it could have no effect or influence upon the number of persons entitled to the vote,

the argument which was irresistible before had fallen completely to the ground. Now, I would venture to submit most respectfully to the Prime Minister this consideration. The right hon. Gentleman will, I am sure, admit this—that enfranchisement is not an end in itself; but that it is only a means to a superior end, and that superior end is the representation of opinion and the participation of those who hold that opinion in the conduct of affairs. Now, if it could be shown that the effect of extension, unaccompanied by redistribution, would be to exclude large sections of opinion entitled by their numbers to a considerable share in the representation, from any share whatever in the representation, would there not be disfranchisement here, even although the individuals thus disfranchised might, by some cruel and mocking irony, be labelled with the name of electors? If the effect of extension, unaccompanied by redistribution, were to give a solid vote from Scotland, a solid vote from Wales, and an almost solid vote from Ireland, and if the meaning of that solid vote were this—that over one-third of the population of Scotland holding the same opinions, over one-third of the population of Wales also holding the same opinions, were to be excluded from representation in this House, and were not to have a single Representative, would there not be monstrous and most unjust disfranchisement here? Would not the electors be entitled to complain that because enfranchisement had been wrongly regarded as an end and not as a means. They were the victims of a cruel and abominable fraud, and were as practically disfranchised as if they had not even the right to vote? So that when the Prime Minister contends that wherever it can be shown that enfranchisement and disfranchisement be the essence of redistribution, there are good reasons why enfranchisement and redistribution should in their operation be indissolubly linked together. Now, if we regard enfranchisement as a means of securing representation, and not as an end in itself, then I am entitled to maintain that inasmuch as everything which makes enfranchisement valuable or invaluable depends on the character of the redistribution to come, the old argument in favour of a close connection between the two branches of Reform

exists quite as powerfully as before. I will not go further into the reasons why I believe we should include in this Bill a provision that a measure of redistribution should be passed before the Franchise Bill comes into active operation. The Government have declared their intention of dealing with the question of redistribution at the earliest possible opportunity, so that redistribution and extension may come into operation at one and the same time. It is my sincere hope that the Government may not fail in their endeavour to accomplish their desire; and in order to place this matter beyond the possibility of a doubt I beg to move that this clause be read a second time, so that the Government may have full security that they shall have ample opportunity for carrying into effect the policy of which they have themselves approved, and which, I believe, meets with the support of a large majority of the Members of this House.

New Clause (Elections before 1st January 1887 to take place as heretofore unless Parliament shall otherwise determine).—(*Mr. Albert Grey*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE: I will not follow my hon. Friend, even to the limited extent to which he has confined himself, into any argument upon the reason for combining enfranchisement and redistribution in the process of framing a series of measures of Reform before that series can be considered quite complete, because there is no difference of principle between us, and because, if any question has been fully argued during the course of the discussion on this Bill, it is that question. What I will do is this—I will endeavour to point out clearly to the Committee what there is we can, and what there is we cannot do. It was quite unnecessary for my hon. Friend to give any assurance to the Government that his making this Motion is compatible with a sincere wish that a Reform Bill should pass. I entertain no doubt upon that subject, and have not a shadow of suspicion upon that point. On the other hand, when we come to examine what is the aim and effect of the clause which he proposes, we find that

the aim of the clause, as interpreted by my hon. Friend, is that some security shall be given that a Redistribution Bill shall be passed before the new enfranchisement comes into operation. Well, Sir, upon that it might not be necessary for us to quarrel with him in any way or with his clause; but then, Sir, he went on to say that he thought there was a right to demand that this should be so—that is to say, that enfranchisement should not come into operation before redistribution had taken place. Now, I must point out to my hon. Friend that this clause does not give that absolute security. The security this clause gives is this—that there shall be two Sessions, during either or both of which efforts might be made to pass a Redistribution Bill. Well, I am not very sure, under the circumstances, that two Sessions would be much better worth having than one Session; because if there was only one Session and the Government were pledged and the House held them to their pledge, they must proceed with such a measure at once, whereas if there were two Sessions and there were questions tolerably pressing, and such questions there always are, what with the pressure upon ratepayers and the rest of it, it would be possible for the Government to say in the first Session "a Redistribution Bill is not urgent this year, because we have another year in which we can deal with it." Therefore I cannot say that two Sessions by any means doubles the possibility of a measure of redistribution being passed. At any rate, if it does, it does not secure in any absolute manner the passing of that measure. You cannot secure it by saying "there shall be two Sessions," because, as a matter of experience, measures have been brought in in one Session and have not been passed in that Session. Measures have been brought in in one Session and have failed, and have been brought in in another Session and have failed, and they have not been passed until even a third and a fourth Session; and, therefore, my hon. Friend does not gain one object which he seems to have in view—namely, the absolute security that there shall be no operation of a new franchise until a Redistribution Bill shall have been passed. Permit me to say that I am not finding fault with this at all, because I think it is morally and politi-

Mr. Albert Grey

cally impossible for this House to enact a vast measure of enfranchisement, which I believe this to be, and then to hang up the operation of it for an indefinite time. I think that even to pass such a clause as this, for instance, that there could be no election under the new Bill until a new area is fixed, and a serious delay were to intervene, we should be obliged to repeal that proposal and allow the new electorate to come into operation. Having said that as to the insufficiency of the clause to secure its object, I will now state what are the reasons which prevent us from acceding to his clause; and my hon. Friend will see that they contain nothing at all offensive in them. In the first place, he has taken into view the contingency that under his clause, as it stands, we might be subjected to the intolerable nuisance and the almost impossible operation of a double Register—of two Registers existing at the same time. My hon. Friend admits very fairly that a double Register would be a great evil; but he points out its improbability. Why is it improbable? It is because, he says, it would be probable to pass a Redistribution Bill next year. I wish to take advantage of that statement—that there is a probability of redistribution being disposed of next year—and I think I have shown to him that more than a probability you cannot possibly have. In all human affairs you must be content with probabilities, and beyond that you certainly cannot go. But there is another reason of a serious nature why we should not agree to the proposal of my hon. Friend. The proposal of my hon. Friend might involve the consequences that this should be a Parliament of seven Sessions. If it were passed, it would be passed with the view and intention of setting aside the extraordinary and unforeseen circumstance that Parliament should not dissolve until the spring of 1887. Now, that appears to be a very nice question. I am not aware that we have any precedent in our Parliamentary history for a Parliament of seven Sessions, properly so called. Of the Parliaments elected since the Reform Bill, there has been one which did wind up, in one Session, the mere residue of Business for a few weeks, and then sat for six Sessions—I refer to the Parliament of 1859; but the whole period of its existence was

only six years and one month. Now, I am not willing to be entangled in any operation which implies an approval or a satisfied contemplation of an arrangement by which Parliament should sit for seven Sessions. I remember that I thought there was very great objection to the course of procedure adopted by the late Government—and I stated the objection at the time—to their commencing their seventh Session in 1880. But that objection was concurred in by them, and, therefore, I will not dwell upon it. I am very loth to depart from the Constitutional usage in this respect, which has always abated something from the seven Sessions which, under the Septennial Act, may exist; and I feel bound to add this—that I can conceive great practical inconvenience indeed—inconvenience to the Crown and the country of the most serious kind—if the Government were to attempt to place the Crown in a position in which at any moment it could not have the assistance of Parliament. I hold distinctly that there ought to be no time—absolutely none—at which the Crown ought not to be able to call Parliament together. If you run too near the extreme period, it is evident that you reach a time during which it becomes absolutely impossible, by law, for the Crown to have the assistance of Parliament. Therefore, I object to anything which implies the sitting of Parliament for seven Sessions. And now let me see what it is we can do. As the Bill was introduced, it expressly provided that it should take immediate effect. The Bill, of course, was introduced, as it had been framed, with the words “at or before the next Session of Parliament.” At that time it was not at all unreasonable to hope, judging from the more favourable precedents of Parliamentary Business, that the Bill might pass before Whitsuntide; and if that had been realized, there would have been ample time for framing a new Register. As I am now dealing simply with the practical aspects of the case, those practical aspects have very much changed indeed. We are now on the 13th of June—I hope at the closing of the Committee on the Bill, but it is not yet closed—and although we may now see our way with tolerable confidence to the last stage of the Bill in the House of Commons, it is impossible for us, even with approximate accuracy, to

define the time which may be required for passing the Bill through the other branch of the Legislature. We should be compelled by courtesy to say that there must be a fortnight, or three weeks, or something of that kind; but that is a matter altogether beyond our jurisdiction. Being, as we now are, on the 13th of June, and still having something to do in Committee, and having beyond that two stages to take, and then having to send the Bill to the House of Lords, and not being masters of the exact time that will be extended to it there, it is quite evident that we require to look at the provisions of the law with regard to registration, and to the duties which the law fixes for the purposes of registration. My hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General is much more competent than I am to explain the whole of this portion of the case; but anyone can see plainly enough that notices are to be given under the Act between the 10th and the 20th of June, and that the operations of the overseers in preparing the list of voters are to last until the 31st of July. We are already between the 10th and the 20th of June, and when the 20th comes the Bill will still be working its onward way. With regard to the interval between the 20th of June and the 31st of July, it is not in our power to say that Parliament will not be occupied with the subsequent proceedings upon the Bill. But it does appear rational to say — and we must confine ourselves to rationalities — that if we leave the Bill as it now is—not tied down by express words, but still subjected to the general rule that there is no doubt immediate operation does take effect—the consequence would be that the overseers would be so driven into a corner in regard to the preparation of a new list, that they could not discharge their duties in a satisfactory manner. My idea is that there would be a likelihood of having a constituency that would neither be the old one nor the new. The business of framing the Register according to the intentions of the Act would be so doubtful and unsatisfactory, that we should have a certain number of persons belonging to the new class of voters who would come in; but the overseers could not possibly overtake the business which would fall upon them under the Act. We must all agree that

this would be a very unsatisfactory arrangement. I have endeavoured to look at this practically, and, looking at it practically and apart from all political questions, it appears to me that the balance of argument is decidedly in favour of the considerations advanced by my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) for inserting a date in the Bill. Then I come to another question, which is the political aspect of the case. One or two Members have expressed a great apprehension that if a date is inserted in the Bill, other than the date on which it receives the Royal Assent, a great shock will be given to public confidence. I am sure that no great shock would be given to public confidence by our doing that which is rational, and I am satisfied that the public generally will be satisfied with any provision which may be introduced into the measure in order to make its enactments correspond with the ordinary rules of law. But, then, there is another question which arises in regard to the insertion of a date in the Bill, and which induces me to go some way in meeting the views of my hon. Friend and other Members of the House. We have endeavoured, as we always do, to frame the Bill with every consideration for the ideas, wishes, and feelings of those who are ordinarily opposed to us. I must own that, as far as regards the Front Bench opposite, our intentions have been a total failure. I do not think we have obtained from any right hon. or hon. Gentleman who sits on that Bench a single word in acknowledgment, I will not say of our intention, but of a belief that we had that intention. But, Sir, I am not discouraged by that fact. I am not discouraged by a want of what is termed gratitude. That is a very rare quality indeed, and one in which I know hon. Gentlemen ought not to deal too largely. There are certainly Gentlemen in this House who have told us that their feelings towards this Bill would be considerably conciliated by the insertion of a date. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), who is not now in his place, but who commonly sits near the noble Lord, have attached great value to the insertion of a date in the Bill. Now, what

the practical significance of inserting date? It is simply this. We have stated all along, and we continue to say, that it is our earnest desire, if we continue to be the Ministers of the Crown, to deal with the subject of redistribution during the next Session of Parliament. We think that we entertain that desire in good faith, although, when my hon. Friend referred to our expressions signifying our real intentions, some hon. Gentleman opposite could not understand so extravagant a supposition as that, and some cries of "Oh, oh!" greeted the announcement of my hon. Friend—namely, that he, at any rate, believed we meant what we said. Therefore, I do not ask for too much confidence from hon. Members who sit opposite. One reason for not asking it is that I am aware that if I do ask it I should not get it. The Government have all along declared that, in their view, the next Session of Parliament is the proper time when the Ministers of the Crown ought to make a resolute effort to settle the question of redistribution, with a view to bringing a Bill for the redistribution of seats into operation before the General Election. Now, it is proposed that some enactment should be put in the Bill, which, as it were, takes the effect of that declaration of the Government, and expresses, if I may so say, on the part of the House, an expectation that it will be fulfilled. We have made that declaration and an offer. If I understand what is desired by some hon. Gentlemen, it is that there should be something in the Bill which should signify, on the part of the House, the acceptance of that offer. We cannot do more than say there is a likelihood—there is no power on our part of giving a certainty—that it will not be necessary to postpone our proceedings in regard to redistribution indefinitely. We believe that redistribution is and ought to be practically possible next Session; and if hon. Gentlemen attach significance to the insertion of that belief in the Bill—that redistribution should be dealt with at next Session—especially hon. Gentlemen who sit on the opposite side of the House—we shall be extremely glad to meet their wishes, as far as we can, without injury to public objects. That being so, and coming to the mode of operation, I think it will best be found in the Amendment which stands on page 18, in the

name of my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), where he says, in a very few words, that this Act should commence and come into operation on the 1st of January, 1885. Of course, it will be understood by this, and I only explain it in point of form, that this is the proper mode of saying that the voting power should come into operation on the 1st of January, 1886. The right to register will accrue in 1885, and the Register itself will come into force in 1886. The registration will go on throughout next year, and on the 1st of January, 1886, the new Register will come into operation. I do not think we shall incur any loss by entering into an arrangement of that kind. We should have this distinct advantage—that we should not be giving possession of the new franchise to constituencies who might only exercise the privilege once, because a Redistribution Bill, when passed through Parliament, might remove them by a change of area to some other constituency. That, however, is not a matter that is worth considering now. I have explained to my hon. Friend that we are in real sympathy with his Amendment, and that we are willing to go with him as far as we can towards the attainment of the object he has in view. But our view is that that object cannot be attained in the form in which it is now proposed. When the proper time arrives we shall be perfectly ready to support the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton; but we cannot agree with the proposal which has been submitted by my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The concession which the right hon. Gentleman asks the Committee to accept does not go a single step towards meeting the real difficulty or towards effecting a settlement of it, and I must say that I feel there is a considerable amount of practical inconvenience in the way in which this House and the country are involved by the peculiar mode of procedure which the Government have adopted in reference to the question of Reform. The Prime Minister says that this question of considering the two branches of Reform together—namely, the reduction of the franchise and a redistribution of seats, has often been discussed during the preceding debates on

the Bill. I think it was a great misfortune that during the whole of the second reading of the Bill, except on the last night, the Prime Minister was not present, because it prevented him from hearing the arguments delivered on this side of the House against the disassociation of the question of lowering the franchise from that of the redistribution of seats. The right hon. Gentleman, unfortunately, did not hear those arguments, and it appears to me that he does not appreciate them. What is his argument in favour of the acceptance of the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler)? I will take his own words. It is that the expectation of the House, that the Government will fulfil their promise, may be embodied in an Act of Parliament. Does anybody suppose that embodying the expectation that the Government will fulfil their promise, will, in the slightest degree, make the Government fulfil or break their promise? The Prime Minister is a perfect master of the English language, and he said that he thought the Government entertained that intention in good faith. He was not quite sure about it; but I do not care what guarantee, or what promise, or what pledge is made by the Government, because it is not in the power of the Government to fulfil their promise; and that is the whole difficulty of the situation. As I understand the object of my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) in bringing the clause forward, it was to prevent an election taking place during the present Parliament on the enlarged constituencies, unless a redistribution scheme had been passed in the first instance. By the 1st of April, 1887, the Septennial Parliament must come to an end, and, therefore, it would be necessary to appeal to the old constituencies, unless a Redistribution Bill be passed. That, however, is not the object of my hon. Friend; but the object of his proposal is that the Government should have two years instead of one with which to pass a Bill for the redistribution of seats. Is that true, or is it not? It is not in their power to force on a Redistribution Bill. The argument of the Prime Minister, in opening the debate upon this Bill, if it justified him in the beginning from dealing with the redistribution of seats, was a most conclusive argument in favour of associating

redistribution with the extension of the franchise. Let the House look at the question impartially. Redistributions must always be unpopular in certain quarters, because it may take away political power which is now vested in the hands of certain people, whereas the extension of the franchise must always be popular, because it gives increased political power to those who do not now possess it. It, therefore, has been an inveterate practice hitherto, to associate the extension of the franchise with redistribution. The argument of the Prime Minister, that the redistribution parts of the Acts of 1832 and 1867 took a longer time in discussion than the proposals for the reduction of the franchise, is a conclusive proof that if the reduction of the franchise had not been associated with redistribution, then it would not have been carried except after considerable delay. If a redistribution scheme is a fair scheme as between England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, you may have the whole of the Irish Members opposing it, and every Gentleman whose constituency it is proposed to disfranchise; and what will you have to overcome their objection? You will have given a franchise, and you will not have the sympathy which would arise out of a proposal to extend the franchise, a great influence would be brought to bear on the Government not to persevere with a redistribution scheme. If James Mander himself were alive, he could manipulate the constituencies more to the advantage of the Liberal Party than this Bill does; and when the Government comes forward with a Redistribution Bill they will have a solid phalanx of Irish Members against it, and the wire-pullers on the Liberal side would say—"Do not be so foolish as to proceed with it, because it will place us in a worse position than we are in now, and we do not think you will be able to carry your Redistribution Bill." Assuming that they bring in a Redistribution Bill, is the House bound to accept any scheme which may be proposed next year? Yet that is the assumption of the Prime Minister. Take my own constituency—the county of Middlesex. That constituency contains within its boundaries the Metropolis of the Empire, and it is a constituency enormously unrepresented, which has the strongest claims to increased representation on the ground of its weight.

and numbers. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman cheers that; but he and the Government say that it is not to be represented according to its wealth and numbers. And why? Because the constituency of Middlesex contains the Metropolis of the Empire, and therefore it is not to be represented according to its wealth, intelligence, and numbers. Notwithstanding that extraordinary argument, within the last few days the noble Lord the present Member for Haverfordwest (Lord Kensington), who acts as Whip for the Government, and is popular with hon. Members on both sides of this House, is coming forward as a candidate for the representation of the county. But his main qualification for the confidence of the electors will be that when the Government brought forward a Bill which would deprive Middlesex of its proper share of representation, he went into the Lobby to support them. I only mention that, to show what extraordinary "fads" even an intellect like that of the Prime Minister can entertain when the question of redistribution is brought forward. What parts of the United Kingdom are to be enfranchised, considering their wealth, intelligence, and numbers? Why, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, because they are further off from the Metropolis; but, unfortunately, they are parts of the United Kingdom which are in favour of the policy of the Prime Minister, whereas those parts which are nearest London are those portions of the United Kingdom which are most Conservative. The Prime Minister ratifies that view by distinctly telling us that he is going to act upon it, and that he is justified in giving an undue representation to those parts of the Kingdom which hold his opinions, and no representation to those which are opposed to him. I am sorry to trouble the Committee at such length; but as the right hon. Gentleman was not present during the debate on the second reading, I have felt it my duty to call his attention to these points, and I challenge an answer to this one statement—that it is tolerably certain it will be for the gain of the Liberal Party to dissolve upon the enlarged constituencies without a redistribution of seats. How much their gain will be it is for the Government to show. A great proportion of the borough representation—upwards of

two-thirds in England and Wales—is held by Liberals, whereas upwards of two-thirds of the county representation is held by Conservatives. If this Bill passes into law without a Redistribution Bill following it, every county will represent on the average more than 12,000 voters, while every borough will only represent on the average 5,500. We, the Conservative Party, hold two-thirds of the county representation, and you, the Liberal borough Members, hold two-thirds of the borough representation. Therefore, you propose to convert the existing anomalies of the representation into a mathematical certainty, and that certainty is that 49 Conservative Members in one Lobby will represent more electors than 99 Liberal borough Members in the other—a disproportion that would be both absurd and unjustifiable. On the second reading of the Bill the noble Marquess the Secretary for War gave us his opinions upon it. He said that if the Bill meant electoral districts he would not vote for it. I thought that a somewhat startling statement; but, as far as I am concerned, I would sooner vote for the Bill if it were coupled with electoral districts than if it were coupled with no redistribution seats at all. It might possibly affect our interests as a Party, or it might not; but, at any rate, it would secure equality between England, Ireland, and Scotland. At present we are absolutely in the dark as to what the principle will be on which the Redistribution Bill may be brought in, except on one or two points to which I have already alluded. Then, what are we to do? It does not seem to me that the Amendment of my hon. Friend effects the purpose for which it has been introduced; and as to the clause which the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) proposes to add, it does not seem to be of the slightest advantage, but is mere surplusage. It is satisfactory to know, after the discussion upon legal points between the hon. and learned Attorney General and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, that the hon. Member has proved himself to be in the right. But if this Bill passes, it cannot possibly come into operation until January, 1886, and that is the date to which the Amendment of the hon. Member refers. Therefore, I cannot understand what the object of the Government is in accepting that Amend-

[Ninth Night.]

ment. The Prime Minister says that he has not received one single word of civility from the Front Opposition Bench. If he has not done so hitherto, perhaps he will allow me to indulge in a compliment towards him and his Government. I am quite ready to admit that, as far as the reduction of the franchise is concerned, this measure is a Conservative measure in its nature, and I am prepared to admit that the Prime Minister has kept to his promise that the Bill should not be a Disfranchising Bill, because he does not propose to disenfranchise anyone who is now on the Register. As the Prime Minister has kept his promise in regard to the franchise, I do think it is unfortunate that he should put himself in such an absolute untenable position in regard to redistribution. We are only arguing as almost all distinguished Radicals have previously argued, and we are merely taking the same position as the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) and Mr. John Stuart Mill always took—that a reduction of the franchise would be useless unless accompanied by a Redistribution Bill. The reduction of the franchise merely confers a vote upon certain individuals, and without specifying the constituencies on which it is to be conferred it really confers no benefit whatever. We have been told that there is no precedent for putting into an Act of Parliament a direction that the House should sit for seven Sessions. But, talking about precedents, is there any precedent whatever for the Government introducing a Bill purporting to be a measure of Reform unaccompanied by a measure of redistribution? There is absolutely no precedent whatever. I would ask hon. Gentlemen to put themselves in our position, and I do not suppose that the most fanatical supporter of the Government would contend that the present House of Commons really represents the accurate feeling of public opinion in the country at the present moment. Recent elections have shown that the Liberal majority in this House is far in excess of the support which the Government received from the country. We are now in the fifth Session of Parliament. The Prime Minister says that Parliament ought not to sit for seven Sessions; therefore, this is a moribund Parliament. I have shown that this Bill manipulates to an

extraordinary extent, to the advantage of the Liberal Party, the constituencies of the country. These are the positions I have fairly pointed out. I say that this Bill, in a moribund Parliament, allows the Government to manipulate the constituencies to their own advantage. Is there a likelihood of the Bill assuming that position? Surely we, who are opposed to the Government, and believe that they have committed gross blunders, are bound to oppose the Bill, and to oppose any proposal which is made ostensibly for the purpose of carrying Reform, but in reality for the purpose of advancing Party objects. I must apologize for detaining the Committee at such length. I think I have made it clear what our position is. The Government have made no concession whatever of any kind or sort. The object my hon. Friend had in view in submitting his Amendment, as the Prime Minister has pointed out, would not be obtained by the adoption of his clause; and the sole and the only guarantee that the Government can give that they are in earnest in wishing to carry a Redistribution Bill is to withdraw the present Bill, and reintroduce it accompanied by a measure for redistribution.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): It seems to be necessary to remind the Committee that the question before us is the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), although it is quite true that the Prime Minister made an allusion to another Amendment which stands in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). But I think a great many of us have heard the speech which has just been delivered by the noble Lord once before. If the noble Lord thought the speech which he made on the second reading of the Bill was sufficiently excellent to demand that he should deliver it over again, then I think the third reading of the Bill would have been a more appropriate occasion than the clause we are now discussing. If I may deal, in a very few words, with the question before the Committee, I would submit to the Committee, and to the noble Lord, that he has altogether misunderstood the effect of the concession which has been made by the Prime Minister. That that concession is a most material, and a most

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substantial one, everyone who understands the legal position of the matter will at once appreciate. The proposition of my hon. Friend the Member for Northumberland is objectionable for the reason the Prime Minister has given. To say that there should be no election virtually under the measure until the year 1887 would be objectionable, and that is really what we should say by accepting the Amendment. To commence with, it would be difficult to say that there should be no election until the commencement of the year 1887, or as soon as the new Register came into play. If that were done, it would be an unfortunate circumstance to the country if we were to have an Election in 1885 or 1886, and were to find that we could not conveniently do without such an Election. The Prime Minister has offered a most substantial concession. If we pass this Bill, with the words "after the passing of this Act" inserted in it, it would come into operation on the 30th July next, or into immediate operation, and from that moment every person affected by the Bill would be entitled to be registered, and to vote. Under the circumstances of the case, I say it would be impossible to pass this Bill by the 20th or 30th of July; and rather than keep these persons off the Register until October, 1885, we should have felt ourselves bound to introduce a Registration Bill, because by that means, and by anticipating by a few days or weeks the power of putting the new voters upon the Register, we should not be keeping them off for another year. We should not have kept them in suspense, which would be the case if we allowed this measure to be passed, and appear upon the Statute Book, and were to keep these persons in a position of being able to see their neighbours vote, without voting themselves, although they would well know that they were equally entitled to vote. Such a state of things would be intolerable and impossible. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord Gorge Hamilton) says that I have come into conflict with my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). No doubt, that possibility might occur; but on this point we have never come into conflict. My hon. Friend saw it was impossible to come into possession of the vote until 1886, unless a Registration Bill were specially passed. The Gentlemen who formed

the Government in 1867 did that very thing, and proposed a Registration Bill for a particular purpose, not following the general law, but to allow persons not to be delayed in their opportunity of voting as soon as sanction was given by the Legislature to the measures which conferred the power of voting upon them. See what difference there would have been if we had inserted the words "after the passing of this Act." We should then have had to submit to Parliament a Bill for the purpose of enabling registration to take place this year. We might have had a difficulty in carrying that measure "elsewhere;" but we put the power of introducing such a measure out of our hands by adopting the suggestion of the Prime Minister. There will be no Registration Bill for the purposes of this measure until 1885, and Parliament has now a positive assurance, in the words of my hon. Friend's Amendment, that there can be no registration under this Bill until the autumn of 1885, and no right of voting until the 1st of January, 1886. Yet the noble Lord, with his profound knowledge, says this is no concession at all. Does he think it no concession to say that there shall be no Registration Bill until 1885? [Mr. RAIKES dissented.] Does the right hon. Gentleman say that that is no concession? The Prime Minister has said that he has never received a generous word, or a grateful word, from the Bench opposite. I think I may add that we have never received a just one. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) implies that it is no concession to say that we will not allow these persons to go on the Register until 1885, when we have the power of putting them on the Register in 1884, his criticism is not a just criticism. I can only repeat what the Prime Minister has stated—that it must prove to be a substantial alteration and concession in the minds of every hon. Member of the House who looks at the matter impartially and fairly. We shall then have before us the whole of the Session of 1885 to devote to a Redistribution Bill. I think that everyone in this House will naturally wish that a General Election should take place after a Redistribution Bill has been passed, and not before. I will not trouble the Committee with Constitutional rea-

sons, but I think we are all agreed upon this. The noble Lord says it may be impossible to carry a Redistribution Bill next year. He says that we may have opposition from this side of the House; but shall we not have support from that? I wonder in whose hands the fate of the Redistribution Bill will be? If hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House choose, as it were, in defiance, to pledge themselves, in the words of the noble Lord, that no fair redistribution can or shall pass, it is probable that we shall fail; but if every man of moderation who desires to do justice to the constituencies will aid—and I give them credit for believing that they will aid—in passing what the noble Lord called a fair Redistribution Bill, then the next Session of Parliament will accomplish that work. The only alternative suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) is, that there should be two opportunities instead of one. To my mind, the pressing necessity of doing what ought to be done, is better than having two chances. There are men who shoot much better with a single than a double-barrelled gun; it makes a man more careful of his shots. Therefore, I think if we devote the Session of 1885 to that Bill, which everyone of us wishes to pass, there will be every chance of our being able to carry that Bill into effective legislation. I will only ask, as to the noble Lord's second reading speech, and his contention that we ought to have accompanied this measure by a Redistribution Bill, that if we had attempted to pass a Redistribution Bill in 1884, *plus* the present Bill, what would have become either of the Redistribution Bill or of the Franchise Bill? Sir, I hope that hon. Members will believe that the concession which has been made by the Government is a most substantial one, and I trust it will be accepted with the desire to secure a satisfactory measure for the representation of the people.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: The hon. and learned Gentleman has made a very remarkable speech, which has thrown a new and a strange light upon the intention and spirit with which Her Majesty's Government have approached this question of Reform. We have always hitherto been led to suppose that Her Majesty's Government, to use the words which the Attorney General him-

self employed in the latter part of his remarks, had only separated this question of the extension of the franchise from that of redistribution, because of the difficulty of dealing with the two questions in the same Session, but in their hearts they desired, as far as possible, to deal with these two great questions together as essential parts of the question of Reform; and if it was necessary, from their point of view, to pass a Franchise Bill before a Redistribution Bill, at any rate it was also essential that a Redistribution Bill should follow the Franchise Bill at the earliest possible date. But what has the Attorney General now disclosed to the House? Why, this—that Her Majesty's Government, when they framed the measure now under consideration, and when they inserted words to provide that it should come into force “after the passing of the Act,” had the intention of introducing a Registration Bill during the present Session—so that a fresh registration of new voters was at once to take place, and those new voters were to be put on the Register by the 1st of January, 1885, so that from that date they should have the franchise, and be able to vote at any dissolution of Parliament, or at any bye-election which might occur after that date, the intention being that such election should be decided by the voters created under this Bill, registered according to the present constituencies. Well, Sir, I should very much like to know why that announcement has now, for the first time, been made?

MR. GLADSTONE: That was the original announcement.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: It is the first time, as far as I am aware, that it has been made, and I think I may say the same for all the hon. Members sitting on this side of the House. We have never entertained the faintest idea that Her Majesty's Government proposed to introduce a Registration Bill at all during the present Session. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman told us that to complete the scheme a Registration Bill would be necessary; but he led us to suppose that redistribution, and not registration, would be the thing that would immediately follow the settlement of the franchise, and in that belief we have hitherto been considering the measure now before the House. What can be more ridiculous than the anomaly

which, according to the Attorney General, Her Majesty's Government proposed to establish by this mixture of franchise and registration? The idea that the House of Commons, which may sit next Session, and possibly for two subsequent Sessions, to consider the great questions which may come before it, and to decide on a change of Government, or upon vital measures concerning the country, should be composed of Members, partly elected under the old franchise and partly under the new, sitting together to perform the work of legislation, is most absurd. I say this—that it is perfectly clear, from the speech of the Attorney General, that Her Majesty's Government had in view not only the possibility of bye-elections taking place under the new franchise with the present constituencies, but that they had also in view, or, at any rate, they regarded with no great amount of disfavour, the possibility of a General Election under the new franchise with the existing constituencies. I would venture to say that such a course would have been entirely opposed to the feeling of the great majority of this House. It was to guard against such a possibility that my hon. Friend who sits opposite (Mr. Albert Grey) has moved his Amendment to-day. I wish that the Amendment of my hon. Friend was sufficient to carry out the purpose he has in view; but I am sorry to say that circumstances may occur in which the Amendment of my hon. Friend, even if it were inserted in the Bill, might fail to have the effect he intends. But the proposal the Committee virtually have before them is the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which has been accepted by Her Majesty's Government. I quite agree with my noble Friend that that clause amounts simply to nothing at all—that it would be impossible, with any fairness to this House or to the country, for a new franchise to come into operation, and the new elections to take place under it, before the date the hon. Member proposes by his clause, if Her Majesty's Government really propose this Bill with the intention that it should come into operation at the date from which it might fairly be expected to take effect. Certainly, the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton will be better than the scheme which the Attor-

ney General, for the first time, has suggested to us to-day. Certainly, it will save us from what I have already described as the ridiculous anomaly he has proposed to the Committee; but I am afraid it will be utterly insufficient to secure that we shall have a *bond fide* redistribution of seats before the next General Election; and, therefore, if it be added to the Bill, it will not in the least degree diminish my objections to the measure.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had delivered what might be called an imaginative speech. He quite agreed with the Prime Minister that it should be their endeavour to act in a conciliatory spirit in regard to the views of hon. Members opposite; but that was found to be absolutely impossible, because the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) had made a proposal, and the Prime Minister had made another, and neither one nor the other seemed to find favour with hon. Members opposite. Indeed, he despaired of hearing from any quarter of the House any suggestion in which hon. Gentlemen would coincide. He had risen, in this position of affairs, for the purpose of making an appeal to the hon. Member for South Northumberland, whether, as his proposition was regarded with something like disfavour by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and seeing that most hon. Members on that side of the House were prepared to accept the proposition of the Prime Minister, he would not deem it desirable to withdraw the Amendment, and not press it further upon the House? He wished to point out to his hon. Friend that he was not strictly correct when he said, in reference to the Act of 1867, that there was a clause inserted in it postponing its operation until the year 1867. That Act, in its inception, was like the Bill before the House, and dealt primarily with the franchise; and if his hon. Friend would look at the principal clause of the Act of 1867, he would find that the operation of the Act was fixed to take effect from the end of the year 1868. Now, he must say, for his own part, being somewhat Conservative with reference to precedents, that he should have preferred, although it would make no difference whatever, if, instead of the proposal the Prime Minister had made, he had suggested that on the Report he

sons, but I think we are all agreed upon this. The noble Lord says it may be impossible to carry a Redistribution Bill next year. He says that we may have opposition from this side of the House; but shall we not have support from that? I wonder in whose hands the fate of the Redistribution Bill will be? If hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House choose, as it were, in defiance, to pledge themselves, in the words of the noble Lord, that no fair redistribution can or shall pass, it is probable that we shall fail; but if every man of moderation who desires to do justice to the constituencies will aid—and I give them credit for believing that they will aid—in passing what the noble Lord called a fair Redistribution Bill, then the next Session of Parliament will accomplish that work. The only alternative suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) is, that there should be two opportunities instead of one. To my mind, the pressing necessity of doing what ought to be done, is better than having two chances. There are men who shoot much better with a single than a double-barrelled gun; it makes a man more careful of his shots. Therefore, I think if we devote the Session of 1885 to that Bill, which everyone of us wishes to pass, there will be every chance of our being able to carry that Bill into effective legislation. I will only ask, as to the noble Lord's second reading speech, and his contention that we ought to have accompanied this measure by a Redistribution Bill, that if we had attempted to pass a Redistribution Bill in 1884, *plus* the present Bill, what would have become either of the Redistribution Bill or of the Franchise Bill? Sir, I hope that hon. Members will believe that the concession which has been made by the Government is a most substantial one, and I trust it will be accepted with the desire to secure a satisfactory measure for the representation of the people.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: The hon. and learned Gentleman has made a very remarkable speech, which has thrown a new and a strange light upon the intention and spirit with which Her Majesty's Government have approached this question of Reform. We have always hitherto been led to suppose that Her Majesty's Government, to use the words which the Attorney General him-

self employed in the latter part of his remarks, had only separated this question of the extension of the franchise from that of redistribution, because of the difficulty of dealing with the two questions in the same Session, but in their hearts they desired, as far as possible, to deal with these two great questions together as essential parts of the question of Reform; and if it was necessary, from their point of view, to pass a Franchise Bill before a Redistribution Bill, at any rate it was also essential that a Redistribution Bill should follow the Franchise Bill at the earliest possible date. But what has the Attorney General now disclosed to the House? Why, this—that Her Majesty's Government, when they framed the measure now under consideration, and when they inserted words to provide that it should come into force “after the passing of the Act,” had the intention of introducing a Registration Bill during the present Session—so that a fresh registration of new voters was at once to take place, and those new voters were to be put on the Register by the 1st of January, 1885, so that from that date they should have the franchise, and be able to vote at any dissolution of Parliament, or at any bye-election which might occur after that date, the intention being that such election should be decided by the voters created under this Bill, registered according to the present constituencies. Well, Sir, I should very much like to know why that announcement has now, for the first time, been made?

MR. GLADSTONE: That was the original announcement.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: It is the first time, as far as I am aware, that it has been made, and I think I may say the same for all the hon. Members sitting on this side of the House. We have never entertained the faintest idea that Her Majesty's Government proposed to introduce a Registration Bill at all during the present Session. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman told us that to complete the scheme a Registration Bill would be necessary; but he led us to suppose that redistribution, and not registration, would be the thing that would immediately follow the settlement of the franchise, and in that belief we have hitherto been considering the measure now before the House. What can be more ridiculous than the anomaly

which, according to the Attorney General, Her Majesty's Government proposed to establish by this mixture of franchise and registration? The idea that the House of Commons, which may sit next Session, and possibly for two subsequent Sessions, to consider the great questions which may come before it, and to decide on a change of Government, or upon vital measures concerning the country, should be composed of Members, partly elected under the old franchise and partly under the new, sitting together to perform the work of legislation, is most absurd. I say this—that it is perfectly clear, from the speech of the Attorney General, that Her Majesty's Government had in view not only the possibility of bye-elections taking place under the new franchise with the present constituencies, but that they had also in view, or, at any rate, they regarded with no great amount of disfavour, the possibility of a General Election under the new franchise with the existing constituencies. I would venture to say that such a course would have been entirely opposed to the feeling of the great majority of this House. It was to guard against such a possibility that my hon. Friend who sits opposite (Mr. Albert Grey) has moved his Amendment to-day. I wish that the Amendment of my hon. Friend was sufficient to carry out the purpose he has in view; but I am sorry to say that circumstances may occur in which the Amendment of my hon. Friend, even if it were inserted in the Bill, might fail to have the effect he intends. But the proposal the Committee virtually have before them is the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which has been accepted by Her Majesty's Government. I quite agree with my noble Friend that that clause amounts simply to nothing at all—that it would be impossible, with any fairness to this House or to the country, for a new franchise to come into operation, and the new elections to take place under it, before the date the hon. Member proposes by his clause, if Her Majesty's Government really propose this Bill with the intention that it should come into operation at the date from which it might fairly be expected to take effect. Certainly, the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton will be better than the scheme which the Attor-

ney General, for the first time, has suggested to us to-day. Certainly, it will save us from what I have already described as the ridiculous anomaly he has proposed to the Committee; but I am afraid it will be utterly insufficient to secure that we shall have a *bona fide* redistribution of seats before the next General Election; and, therefore, if it be added to the Bill, it will not in the least degree diminish my objections to the measure.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had delivered what might be called an imaginative speech. He quite agreed with the Prime Minister that it should be their endeavour to act in a conciliatory spirit in regard to the views of hon. Members opposite; but that was found to be absolutely impossible, because the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) had made a proposal, and the Prime Minister had made another, and neither one nor the other seemed to find favour with hon. Members opposite. Indeed, he despaired of hearing from any quarter of the House any suggestion in which hon. Gentlemen would coincide. He had risen, in this position of affairs, for the purpose of making an appeal to the hon. Member for South Northumberland, whether, as his proposition was regarded with something like disfavour by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and seeing that most hon. Members on that side of the House were prepared to accept the proposition of the Prime Minister, he would not deem it desirable to withdraw the Amendment, and not press it further upon the House? He wished to point out to his hon. Friend that he was not strictly correct when he said, in reference to the Act of 1867, that there was a clause inserted in it postponing its operation until the year 1867. That Act, in its inception, was like the Bill before the House, and dealt primarily with the franchise; and if his hon. Friend would look at the principal clause of the Act of 1867, he would find that the operation of the Act was fixed to take effect from the end of the year 1868. Now, he must say, for his own part, being somewhat Conservative with reference to precedents, that he should have preferred, although it would make no difference whatever, if, instead of the proposal the Prime Minister had made, he had suggested that on the Report he

would insert words in the 2nd clause of the Bill making the Act operative after the end of the year 1884. The operation of the Act would then have been exactly the same as that suggested by the clause of his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton; but the words would have been in accordance with the last Act for the Representation of the People. His hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland had also failed to remind the House that the clause from which his own was taken was a direct copy, as far as it was possible, of the clause of the Act of 1867; nor had his hon. Friend reminded the Committee that that clause was not inserted by the House of Commons, but was placed in the Act of 1867 in "another place," and that the Act of 1867 left the House of Commons without any provision such as his hon. Friend proposed now to insert. His hon. Friend seemed to him to have made another omission in reference to a matter which was not very important in form. During the short period he had had the honour of a seat in that House, he had observed one rule which struck him as being applicable to this proceeding. He never remembered a case of legislation in that House in which a date had been proposed with such a view as that which was now suggested by his hon. Friend. It might be necessary to make use of it, or it might be necessary to repeal it; but it was the invariable rule of the House that the date might be progressive, but that a date once fixed should never be put back. In all proceedings of that House they acted upon that principle. If an hon. Member gave Notice at the Table of a Motion, he was not allowed to bring it on at an earlier date, although he might put it back until a more remote date. As to the arguments which had been used by his hon. Friend in support of a certain date, it was quite possible that a Redistribution Bill might be passed next year, and in that case the measure would not become operative until the date suggested by his hon. Friend. Then, why proclaim a want of confidence in the action of Parliament in one respect, and of confidence in another? His hon. Friend, and other hon. Members, contended that it was not desirable that the Franchise Bill should come into operation before a Redistribution Bill had passed, and he was disposed to concur in a measure that would

prevent it from coming into operation before the passing of a Redistribution Bill, provided that that step were not taken with a view of retarding the operation of the Franchise Bill. He trusted that a complete scheme for the redistribution of seats and the enlargement of the franchise would be in force next year, and that it might come into earlier operation than the Amendment of his hon. Friend would allow. He gladly supported the suggestion of the Prime Minister, although he thought it would have been better if the Government had acted in conformity with the Act of 1867 by inserting words in the earlier part of the Bill to provide that the measure should come into operation at the end of the present year.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the form of the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was a more convenient form than that of the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey). The question of a double Register seemed to him to be one of a serious character, and if the Committee desired to postpone the dates as far as was proposed by the hon. Member for South Northumberland, it could do so by amending the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. He thought that they on the Ministerial side of the House, at all events, might come to the conclusion that the form in which the matter was now raised was not so good a form, from any point of view, as the form which was proposed by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. He agreed with much that had been said opposite, to the effect that the clause of his hon. Friend (Mr. Albert Grey) did not entirely secure them against the danger of a Dissolution without a Redistribution Bill having been carried. It had already been attempted to guard against such a state of things, and he endeavoured to contribute to the attempt. But they were defeated, and now all that remained to be done was to see how far they could still secure the general object—namely, of having a Redistribution Bill passed before an election took place under the new franchise. He differed from the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), because he considered that the House had distinctly advanced; they had certainly secured one Session, partly by the time

which had elapsed, and partly by the fresh declarations that had been made by the Government, and the engagements they had undertaken that they would not attempt in any way to hasten the time in which the new electors would be put on the Register. They were, therefore, in this position—that, at all events, they had the year 1885 before them, during which he trusted that every effort would be made by all Parties in the House to carry a Redistribution Bill. There remained, therefore, the question between one Session and two Sessions, and that was the chief difference between his hon. Friends the Member for Wolverhampton and the Member for South Northumberland. He confessed he preferred two Sessions to one; but, on the other hand, he admitted that there was considerable force in the argument that perhaps more pressure would be put upon the Government to bring in the Redistribution Bill if only one Session were allowed in which it could be brought in. He, for one, would not press his hon. Friend to divide upon the second reading of this clause, especially after the debate which had taken place.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he did not think that either the clause proposed by the hon. Member for South Northumberland, or that proposed by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, was worth the ink it was written with. The real difference between the two great Parties in the House was that hon. Gentlemen opposite believed that the Government would introduce and pass a fair Redistribution of Seats Bill, while hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House had no such belief. It was on that ground that he and his hon. Friends had always endeavoured to tie and link the question of the extension of the suffrage with the question of redistribution of seats. A very interesting illustration of what might happen in the future occurred last night. Let them suppose, for argument sake, that next Session a majority of the House affirmed, as he hoped they would affirm, that it was desirable to extend the principle of the representation of minorities. They would very likely have the Prime Minister coming down, as he did yesterday, upon the unfortunate advocates of woman suffrage, and saying—“If you choose to insert in this Bill for the redistribution of seats any extension of the right of minorities to

representation, I will throw up the Bill.” If the House—even a majority of the House, much less a minority—were disposed to accept the suggestions which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) and by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), such was the rod which might be in pickle for them; the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would, no doubt, get up and say—“I am no longer responsible for any Bill for the redistribution of seats.” What would be the consequence? They would have to take the Bill of the Government pure and simple. Now, what was the effect of the clause of the hon. Member for South Northumberland? Why, it was that unless the House of Commons and another House were prepared to accept the Bill for the redistribution of seats which the Government chose to bring forward, whether the House or the country believed it to be just or not, the next appeal to the people would be made, not to the existing constituencies, but to the constituencies manipulated, and fraudulently manipulated, in the interest of the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party were going to make a raid upon the county constituencies, in which they were notoriously weak, while they left their own constituencies untouched. Now, the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was not worth the ink with which it was written, because the effect of it was already the law, and would remain so unless the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) brought in a Bill for a special registration of the electors. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton knew perfectly well that on the 10th of June—now three days ago—the first process of registration for next year began. Long before this Bill was sent to “another place” for discussion, the great majority of processes with reference to the registration of electors for next year would have taken place; therefore, without special legislation, the Bill, even without the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, could not come into operation before the 1st of January, 1885. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General only to-day said he hoped they would agree to pass a moderate Bill for the redistribution of seats. It was a moderate Bill

that he (Mr. T. Collins) objected to. He wished that there should be a very extensive Bill for the redistribution of seats. He wanted to see a Bill which should lay it down that no town under 20,000 inhabitants should have a Member at all, and that no town under 40,000 or 50,000 should return more than one Member. He wanted to see larger constituencies; he wanted to see the minority vote and the system of the single vote and the single Member very largely extended. He would do away with the system of the dual vote—namely, a person voting for two Members for one constituency. He maintained that no good would be done by the clause of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey); and he hoped, therefore, that the hon. Gentleman would withdraw it.

MR. ALBERT GREY said, that after what had been said by his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), and considering that his proposal was not likely to receive support from hon. Members opposite after the speeches which had been made from the Front Opposition Bench, he would ask leave to withdraw his clause. In doing so, however, he desired to express his personal satisfaction at the renewed and more emphatic expressions which had fallen from the Ministerial Bench that it was their decided and determined resolution to pass a Redistribution Bill before the Franchise Bill came into operation. He only hoped that should the contingency arise which was in the contemplation of some hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that the Government should fail in their endeavours to carry a Redistribution Bill, that the Prime Minister would take care, either by having recourse to an Autumn Session, or to a Dissolution on the old electorate, to secure that the House should have every opportunity of passing a Redistribution Bill before the Franchise Bill came into full and active operation.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I hope that the Committee will agree to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman to withdraw his Amendment. I entirely concur in the spirit which has led the hon. Gentleman to propose that Amendment, and I am far from thinking that we have derived no advantage from the discussion. I think, however, in the circumstances—and, indeed, in almost any circumstances—we should gain

nothing, but, on the contrary, we might involve ourselves in some inconvenience, by putting that Amendment in the Bill. The hon. Member told us in the beginning of his speech that his object in putting down this Amendment was to obtain some security that a Redistribution Bill should be passed before the present Bill came into operation.

MR. ALBERT GREY: Before elections were allowed under the Bill.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I may have mistaken the expression; but what the hon. Gentleman meant was that it was desirable that a Redistribution Bill should be passed before this Bill came into operation and the new electors began to exercise their functions. Now, it has always been our contention from the beginning and throughout all these debates that it was desirable that, before parting with this Bill, and before committing ourselves to the extension of the franchise, we should know, and, if possible, should secure, the principles of the Redistribution Bill. That was to be done in one of two ways, either by putting something into the Bill, or by an undertaking on the part of the Government. My right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) endeavoured, on the part of the hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, to obtain a security which should stand in the Bill itself, and the clause which he proposed was one which would certainly have had that effect, because his provision was that the Bill should not come into operation until a Redistribution Bill had been passed. Therefore, a strong pressure was put on the Government to proceed with a Redistribution Bill in order to bring their Bill into operation. The matter was discussed, and my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) was defeated. The hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) did not think it right to support my right hon. and gallant Friend; but I believe the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) did. The hon. Member for South Northumberland referred us to the Amendment which he proposed to move; but the Amendment does not in any way accomplish the object we had in view. It undoubtedly puts off for a certain time the coming into operation of the new Franchise Bill; but what do

we gain by that? We do not ensure that during the next Session, or the next two Sessions, the Government will proceed with the Redistribution Bill. We can only trust to the assurances of the Government, and those assurances have been renewed. It is one great advantage of this debate that it has called forth another and more distinct assurance from the Government that they will waste no time, but will proceed with the measure. After all, however, it is one thing to say that you will proceed with a measure of redistribution, and quite another thing to say that it will be a satisfactory measure, or one which will be approved by the House; and I think we should be taking false comfort to ourselves if we sat down and said that we had a year or two years during which the Redistribution Bill is to be passed, while we did not know what sort of Redistribution Bill is to be passed. In the meantime, we do not gain any advantage, but some disadvantage, from limiting the time or putting a restriction on the time during which this new electorate might come into working order, because during that time you put a sort of embargo on the Government, and I think you give an encouragement to the Ministry to abstain as long as possible from their redistribution scheme and appeal to the country. I say that, under all the circumstances, I think we can do no more—and I am quite willing to give the Government credit for being perfectly honest and sincere in what they now say—we can do no more than trust to their repeated assurances that it is their intention, as early as possible, to proceed with a Redistribution Bill, and we must wait to see what we can do with that Bill when it comes before us. There is another observation I wish to make, and it has reference to what was said just now by the Attorney General in regard to the remark that the Government had made no concession. Certainly, when my noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) said that the Government were making no concession, we were all of opinion that he was perfectly right; but the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General said—"It is a great mistake; we are making a great concession; we shall not do now what we had in our minds as a probable thing to do; we shall not bring forward a

measure to hasten the registration." Undoubtedly, that was a revelation to us. It reminded me of one of the fables of Æsop, with which we are all familiar. When the wolf had a bone in his throat, the stork went to pick it out, intrusting his head in the wolf's mouth for the purpose, and when he had extracted the bone, the stork asked for some reward for the service he had rendered; whereupon the wolf said—"I have given you quite enough reward by not biting off your head." The Attorney General now says—"We have made concession enough by not bringing forward a measure which we might have proposed for hastening the registration. And then the hon. and learned Gentleman, and other hon. Members, said—"Well, after all, this bringing forward a measure to hasten the registration is a thing which you did yourselves in 1868, and why should you now object to it?" There is no doubt the Government of that day did introduce a clause for hastening and having a special registration; but let me remind the Committee of the very great difference between the circumstances. At that time, the measure of Reform included not only the question of the franchise, but a scheme of redistribution had been completed, and, owing to extraneous circumstances which had nothing to do with the Reform Bill, it became desirable to have a Dissolution and a new Election, and it was found necessary to accelerate the registration so as to enable the new constituency to vote. That is a very different thing from bringing in a measure to accelerate the registration when you have not completed your scheme of Reform. Our complaint is, that the scheme presented to us is not a complete scheme, and we have hesitated to give our assent to it until we know what your whole scheme is. It is rather hard on us to find that, after all, we have escaped the great danger of having this incomplete scheme brought into operation at once without any time being allowed for redistribution. If that is the only advantage we have derived from this discussion, I should say it is a very considerable one. We must tender our thanks to the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Gray) for having brought the matter forward, and for the speech in which his proposal was made. I am bound to say I do not think the clause

would have proved any great safeguard itself; but, indirectly, the discussion and declarations it has drawn forth have been of a real and valuable character.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, that one of the functions of the House was to preserve itself; and he asked if it was becoming on the part of the House of Commons to trust to any agreement or understanding between the Leaders of the Government and the Leaders of the Opposition as to when this Bill should come into operation, and thereby change the whole constituencies of the country? It was admitted on both sides of the House that the change in the franchise ought not to be brought into operation until there had been a redistribution of seats. Was it becoming in the House to allow the fixture of the date at which the Bill was to come into operation to pass out of their own hands? Practically, that was the question before the Committee. Despite what had been said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), the clause of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) had this value—it brought within the command of the Committee the date at which this Bill should come into operation. In 1867, the House of Commons was so careless, or was so occupied, he supposed, in Party discussions, that it left the decision of such a matter as this to the House of Lords. Thank God there was a House of Lords! He prayed the House of Commons not to do its work in so slovenly a manner as not to retain within its own jurisdiction the fixing of the date on which the Bill should come into operation. He was opposed to personal government in every sense, and he, as an old Member of the House, entered his protest against the idea of intrusting to the Prime Minister the fixing of the date on which an Act of Parliament should come into operation, because it was, if not unprecedented, a disgrace to the House.

MR. WARTON said, he desired to call attention to a point which had been overlooked. It seemed pretty clear, from what had fallen from the Prime Minister, that he was disposed to accept the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). That being so, it was right the Attorney General's attention should be called to the fact that in the 4th clause the words "after the

passing of this Act" still remained. The 4th clause was really a disfranchising clause, inasmuch as it prevented the possessors of rent-charges voting. He would like to know whether it was the intention of the Attorney General to retain the words he had quoted, or to strike them out on Report? because he (Mr. Warton) was inclined to think that if the Committee were to accept the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, the effect would be that the words "after the passing of this Act" might override the general words which the Government seemed disposed to accept.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the retention of the words in Clause 4 was quite unintentional. They had been struck out of Clauses 2 and 5, and it would be possible on Report to strike them out of Clause 4.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he claimed the indulgence of the Committee while he made a few remarks upon this clause. He had risen several times during the progress of the Bill to offer some observations upon the question of Reform; but he had never, until the present moment, succeeded in catching the eye of the Chair. He came down to the House to-day with a most cordial desire to support the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland, and he extremely regretted that it was now on the point of being withdrawn. For many years he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had been a warm advocate of Parliamentary Reform; indeed, it was now 31 years since he made the proposal—and he believed he was the first to make the published proposal—to introduce household suffrage in boroughs. He merely mentioned this circumstance to show that for some time he had been a warm and consistent advocate of Parliamentary Reform. He would have been a warm advocate of the Bill now before the House had it contained ingredients similar to those contained in every Reform Bill which had hitherto been presented to the House. The first proposal in the Reform Bill of 1832 had reference to the disfranchisement of certain boroughs and the enfranchisement of others. Every Government knew that to pass a proposal to take away the Parliamentary rights of certain boroughs required all the strength of the Govern-

ment; and, therefore, in the case of the Bill of 1832, and, indeed, in the case of every subsequent Bill, redistribution had always accompanied, if not preceded, a proposal for the extension of the franchise. There was only one exception, and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would remember it, and that was when Lord John Russell, after the death of Lord Palmerston, introduced, in 1866, a measure for Parliamentary Reform. Lord John Russell omitted, what the Prime Minister had omitted in this case, the indispensable ingredient of redistribution. What was the result? One of his own Party—Lord Grosvenor—proposed an Amendment, which, notwithstanding the great strength of the Government, he carried by a majority only of five votes. Redistribution was added to the Bill; but ultimately the Government went out of Office; the Derby and Disraeli Government came in, and, as was well known, carried a measure of Reform in the subsequent year. His objection to the present measure was that redistribution was not one of its accompaniments, because he regarded redistribution as an indispensable ingredient of every proposal of Parliamentary Reform; in fact, he considered that it ought to precede it. He was in favour of any measure giving the Parliamentary franchise to the agricultural labourer; but he was not in favour of giving the agricultural labourer that franchise in such a manner that his influence and power would preponderate over that of every other class of the community; and that must necessarily be the case if extension of the franchise were to be carried without redistribution. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said to them—"Let us pass this Franchise Bill; and then we will give you a solemn promise that we will, in the course of the next year, bring in a Redistribution Bill." But a Redistribution Bill was easier spoken of than carried. To enfranchise a number of electors, and to introduce a Bill which would deprive electors of their rights, were very different things; one was an enfranchising measure, and the other a disfranchising measure. He maintained that when the 2,000,000 electors were enfranchised their power would be supreme; they would completely overwhelm every other part of the constituency. He agreed with the

hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), that the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was not worth the paper on which it was written. The proposal of the hon. Member (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was that the Bill was to take effect on the 1st January, 1885. Knowing, as they did, the circumstances in which the House was placed, did they think there was even a probability of a Redistribution Bill being carried in the course of next year? If the Government remained in power so long, which seemed very doubtful, they must encounter very great opposition when they proposed to disfranchise a large number of boroughs, depriving, as such a process would, many Members of their seats? Was there, therefore, a certainty, much less a probability, that a Redistribution Bill would be carried next year? It was because there was no such certainty that he extremely regretted that the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) had expressed a wish to withdraw his clause. The Committee were indebted to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Albert Grey) for bringing forward his clause, by which he wanted to add to the promise of the Government a guarantee that within a certain time a Redistribution Bill should be brought in, if not carried. He (Sir Eardley Wilmot) could not understand why, in the face of the arguments in favour of the clause, the hon. Gentleman should have been prevailed upon not to take the sense of the Committee upon it. Desiring, as he did, to see a good and sound measure of Reform passed, he confessed that, after studying the history of his country most carefully for 40 years, it had never been his lot to look into a Bill more unsatisfactory, more unstatesmanlike, more fragmentary, and more unworthy of the character of the statesman who introduced it, than this measure. Mr. Pitt, when he introduced a Bill for Parliamentary Reform, did exactly what the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government was not doing—he preceded an extension of the franchise by redistribution. The present Prime Minister had no greater admirer than he (Sir Eardley Wilmot), although he politically altogether differed from him. For 40 years he had looked up to the right hon. Gentleman as a great scholar and a great man. He had heard what he

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believed was the first speech which the right hon. Gentleman made in that House. On that occasion a relative came to him under the Gallery, and said—"Did you hear the speech of that young man? If you live long enough you will see him Prime Minister of England." Greatly as he admired and appreciated his wonderful genius, his eloquence, and his unrivalled talents, and looking back over the long period of 50 years that had elapsed since then, he could not help thinking that the Bill, with which he probably very nearly was closing his memorable career, was totally unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman; and he solemnly believed that it would add to his honour with posterity if, by any means, this Bill could be withdrawn or thrown out.

MR. LEWIS said, he had some remarks to make which, if the Amendment was to be withdrawn, he should reserve until the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was reached.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause *withdrawn*.

MR. PULESTON, in moving that the following clause be added to the Bill:—

(Votes of officers and men in the Navy and Army.)

"Every officer and man enrolled in Her Majesty's Navy or Army who shall be registered as a voter in any constituency of the United Kingdom shall, when stationed or engaged on Her Majesty's service more than twenty miles away from the constituency in which he shall be so registered, but in some part of the United Kingdom, be entitled to give his vote for such constituency at the place at which he shall be so engaged or stationed, under such conditions and in such manner as may be prescribed by Her Majesty in Council,"

said, he thought hon. Members would agree that a person serving Her Majesty in the Army or Navy or Marine Force should not be deprived of his right to vote because he happened to be stationed at a distance from his voting locality. He proposed to prevent that by the clause which he asked the Committee to read a second time. He had put the distance from the constituency at 20 miles; but, of course, he was not bound to that limit or measure of distance. The principle of the clause was not a new one—it involved no new principle of voting, and it only gave to those who possessed

votes the right of recording them. In the case of America, everyone during the War there, he remembered, was allowed to record his vote at the place at which he might be at the time of election. As there could be no sufficient reason why a person serving the country at a reasonable distance from his constituency should not have the right of recording his vote, he trusted the Prime Minister would be able to meet him in this matter. He begged to move the clause of which he had given Notice.

New Clause (Votes of officers and men in the Army and Navy,)—(*Mr. Puleston*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that while the object of the clause was a good one, it was impossible for the Government to accept it. It would be almost hopeless to endeavour to work such a system, owing to its complexity and difficulty, and also to the fact that it would be almost impossible to prevent personation.

Question put, and *negatived*.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE, in moving the following clause:—

(Suspension of the franchise of convicted persons.)

"Every person convicted of offences against the person or against property shall be excluded from the exercise of the franchise for a term of years proportionate to the nature of the offence for which such person may be convicted, that is to say:—(a) every person convicted of an indictable offence other than felony shall be, and is hereby declared, incapable of exercising the franchise for a period of seven years from the date of such conviction, and for each subsequent conviction shall be rendered incapable of exercising such franchise for a further period of seven years for each offence; (b) every person convicted of a felony shall be, and is hereby declared, incapable of exercising the franchise for a period of fourteen years from the date of such conviction, and for each subsequent conviction shall be rendered incapable of exercising such franchise for a further period of fourteen years for each offence; provided that any person convicted for a third time of felony shall, from and after the date of such conviction, be wholly incapable of exercising the franchise,"

said, that the object of the clause was that persons convicted of crimes against person or property should be excluded from the exercise of the franchise during

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a term proportioned to the nature of the crimes for which they had been convicted. He did not think this was a perfectly novel idea, as he understood there were provisions of this kind in force in various other countries. He believed that provisions of this kind were in force in Germany and in Austria, where a person convicted of crime was deprived of the right of exercising the privilege of the franchise for various periods, ranging from five years to total disfranchisement. He knew, for a fact, that there were provisions of this nature in the Penal Code at present in force in France. They were to be found in the 42nd Article of that Code, which was really the Code Napoleon under another name; and in Section 10 there were provisions set forth for the same purpose. He believed that the periods of suspension ranged, as he had before mentioned, from five years to total disfranchisement, the term having to be determined by the Judge, before whom the convicted person was tried. They had been told, in the course of the debates on this measure, that the admission to the franchise of a large number of capable citizens would be fraught with no disadvantage; but he could not help thinking the Committee would consider that persons convicted of crime were such as could not properly exercise the franchise proposed to be conferred upon a large mass of the people by this Bill. He had another case in point, which he would place before the Committee as an argument in favour of the admission of his clause. He believed that in the year 1848-9 the Chartists, whose agitation was going on at that time, promulgated a Charter, one of the provisions of which was that the country should be given manhood suffrage; and amongst the provisions which were to disqualify persons from possessing the franchise were that a man should not exercise it if under age, and if he had been convicted of crime. Therefore, as the provisions of this clause were analogous to those in force in other countries with regard to the franchise, and as it had entered into the minds of others who wished to extend the franchise to the people of this country to make similar provisions, he was not averse to its being incorporated in our electoral law. He begged to move the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause (Suspension of the franchise of convicted persons).—(*Viscount Folkestone*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he quite admitted that under this Bill some persons might be placed on the Register whom they conscientiously believed were unfitted to exercise the franchise; but he could not accept the clause, because he believed it would be most objectionable in its consequences. The clause included all convictions, and the effect of it would be that a man sentenced by a Judge to the light punishment of a day's imprisonment would be deprived of his vote for a period of seven years. He did not think the Committee would sanction any such proposal.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS thought it would be very improper that a man who had been convicted and served the period of punishment which the law imposed upon him should be stigmatized as a criminal for so many years afterwards by having his name, perhaps, exhibited over the blacksmith's shop in the village, to remind all his neighbours that he was a person convicted of crime. He thought it had been ruled by the highest legal authorities in the land that it was a libellous act on the part of a Railway Company to placard their premises with the announcement that John Smith, or as the case might be, had infringed one of their bye-laws. Another objection to the clause was that, although under it a person would be prevented from voting, he might yet be elected to sit as a Member of the House of Commons. There was a distinguished prisoner in Dartmoor Gaol who, it was not at all inconceivable, might become a Member of the House when his period of punishment was at an end; however, it was hard to say that a nobleman should be deprived of the vote, and yet be perfectly qualified for election as a Member of Parliament. On the whole, he thought the noble Lord had better not pursue this Amendment.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, there was a precedent for his proposal in the measure passed last year with regard to corrupt and illegal practices at elections.

By that Act, persons convicted of bribery and other illegal acts at elections were deprived of the right of sitting in that House for various periods. The precedent, being thus established, there was nothing to prevent the clause being amended so as to deprive persons convicted of crime of the right of sitting in the House of Commons for a certain number of years. He certainly had no desire to see there the distinguished person referred to by his hon. Friend as languishing in Dartmoor Gaol. He felt it his duty to take the sense of the Committee on this clause; and it seemed to him only right that if they excluded a man from sitting in the House of Commons for an offence against the electoral law, they should also prevent a person from exercising the franchise who had been convicted of felony.

MR. WARTON said, the hon. and learned Attorney General would remember that seven years ago it was decided as improper to apply the word "convict" to a man who had been convicted and served his term of penal servitude. Although he considered that the disqualification of persons from sitting in that House for the time specified in the Act of last year for an offence against the electoral law was too heavy, the principle was a sound one.

Question put, and *negatived*.

MR. BRINTON, in rising to move the following clause:—

"No person shall be entitled to be registered under this Act in any year as a voter in the election of a Member or Members to serve in any future Parliament who shall, within twelve calendar months next previous to the last day of July in such year, have been convicted and sentenced for felony or indictable misdemeanour in any court of justice in the United Kingdom," said, he thought it was a very reasonable thing to ask the Government to accept this clause. They all agreed that persons subsisting by honest labour should be allowed to exercise the franchise, but that those who came within the definition of the criminal classes, who lived in a state of destitution and crime, should not be allowed to do so. The Act of 1832 brought up the electorate to about 800,000 for the United Kingdom, and under it peers, women, and imbeciles were excluded; in a subsequent Act idiots, lunatic persons, and convicted felons and paupers, were excluded from the exercise of the fran-

chise. There were on the average, during the last 10 years, 16,000 convictions annually. The Act of 1869 increased the electorate to 2,000,000; it was at present 3,000,000; and under this Bill, when it became law, the number would be increased probably to 5,000,000. That being so, he thought it only fair to ask that, during the period of 12 months from the time when persons convicted of felony had completed their sentence and were turned loose on society, they should not be allowed to be registered as voters. It was asked why paupers should be placed in a worse position than persons convicted of indictable offences. There were similar suspensions of civil rights in Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland; and under the Corrupt and Illegal Practices at Elections Act of last year a man might be deprived of the privilege of voting for seven years. As he thought the time had arrived when the principle advocated by him should be adopted, he begged to move the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause (Conviction for felony to disqualify for twelve months.)—(*Mr. Brinton*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) said, the same objections applied to this clause as were urged against that moved by the noble Lord (Viscount Folkestone). For some crimes visited with light penalties the clause would make a heavy addition to the punishment awarded, and would interfere with the discretion which it was desirable to leave in the hands of the Judges and magistrates.

MR. LEWIS said, there was a great difference between this and the proposal of the noble Lord. The Attorney General, moreover, had objected to them on different grounds. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman was hardly the person who should object to disqualification as a punishment, considering the extent to which last year he applied the principle to crimes, so-called, but which certainly did not involve immorality in the same sense as was understood by the word felony. In a Bill conferring wholesale enfranchisement one might suppose respectability

to count to the extent of putting disqualification on a felon; but if the Government thought it necessary to have all and sundry on the Register, he supposed there was nothing for the Committee but to submit.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, that under this Bill they were likely to have a large number of convicted criminals on the Register if the existing law remained without change. That being so, it was only right that a man who had committed a crime and been convicted should be in at least as bad a position as the person who was compelled to obtain parish relief. He did not think it looked well that a man, simply because he was a pauper, should be disfranchised; while a person convicted of theft, and punished with two or three months' imprisonment, could go immediately he was liberated and vote in a Parliamentary Election. A man convicted of an offence punishable with hard labour might, in his opinion, be with propriety excluded from exercising the franchise for a certain period of time; and he hoped the Government would reconsider the position they had taken up, because he believed it would be to the advantage of the country and an improvement of the Bill that a clause such as that proposed by the hon. Member for Kidderminster (Mr. Brinton) should be added to it.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the clause of the noble Lord and that before the Committee were totally different; and he was much astonished at the cavalier way in which the hon. and learned Gentleman had dealt with the latter. For his own part, he could not see a single reason for allowing offenders to resume the right of voting earlier than paupers. He should vote for the second reading of the clause if the hon. Member divided the Committee upon it; and if it were carried the Amendments which it might be necessary to make in it could then be added. They were told that the Bill was to admit capable citizens to the franchise. No doubt, in one sense, gentlemen who broke into houses and those who stole the money and property of others were very clever and capable; but they were not capable in the sense in which he and other hon. Members understood the term used by the Prime Minister, and certainly when they were convicted and punished they ought not

to be allowed to vote, at any rate during the period for which even a man obliged to obtain parish relief was excluded. He hoped the hon. Member would press his Amendment to a Division, in which case he should give it his support.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) said, the same observation applied to the case of a person convicted for assault as applied to that of a man convicted and sentenced for felony. So long as the person suffered punishment he could not vote; and the question they had to consider in reference to this Amendment was whether they should continue the punishment of the individual when his sentence expired by refusing him the vote for one year? Again, they had to consider whether they should, as they had done before, leave the Judge to determine the extent of punishment, or whether they should draw the hard-and-fast line which the Amendment would render it necessary to be observed? Ought they not rather to say that when a man had served his term of punishment he should have an opportunity of retrieving his position, and that it should not be permitted that a person should get up in the Registration Court and say that, having received one day's imprisonment, he should not vote?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman was not a speech adapted to the second reading of a clause, but to its discussion in Committee. Moreover, the hon. and learned Gentleman had not, throughout the three speeches he had made upon this Amendment, and that of the noble Lord, advanced a single valid argument against the principle of excluding the criminal classes from the Register. What argument had he used? He said that a Judge might find himself obliged to impose for a small offence a very long term of exclusion from the privilege of exercising the franchise. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): No; not in those words.] To this it might be replied that the Judge might safely be left a discretion in the matter; he might be allowed to fix the term of exclusion. But that was not all. The Attorney General, who thought it so mischievous and unjust that a man should be excluded from the exercise of the franchise for a misdemeanour or a felony, forgot that as

the law at present stood a man was excluded from voting for a whole year who had received the smallest amount of medical relief from the Union either for himself or his family. What conclusion could the ordinary working man draw from that? Beyond all doubt, he would think that it was more disgraceful to be poor than to be criminal. A man who, through temporary misfortune, had been obliged to ask the parish to provide him with one day's medical relief was excluded for a year from the exercise of the franchise, and yet the Attorney General refused to impose the same disability upon a man convicted of felony. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) thought, apart from the advantage there would be to the State from the exclusion of persons of that character, that in the interest of public morality they should express in the Statute Book their sense of the justice of the principle that a man convicted of felony was not competent to exercise political rights.

MR. MACFARLANE observed that there was a great deal in the principle which the clause of the hon. Member for Kidderminster (Mr. Brinton) embodied. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had pointed out that, as the law now stood, a penalty attached to poverty which the Attorney General refused to attach to crime. The hon. and learned Gentleman told the Committee that a crime might be venial; but he would ask whether poverty might not also be venial? For his own part, he should think that poverty, as a rule, was more venial than crime, although the Attorney General did not appear to hold that view. He did not think any Party question was involved here, because there were not, as far as he knew, any Returns published which would show to which side of the House the criminal classes were likely to belong. But, however that might be, he did not think it an excessive punishment to add to the sentence of a convicted person that he should not be allowed to vote for one year, because the privilege of voting in a Parliamentary Election was one that, after all, was not likely to be made use of more than once in about four or five years. They had not yet come to yearly elections, and, therefore, the occasions on which the pet criminal of the Attorney General might exercise the franchise would

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be but few. He thought the hon. Member for Kidderminster had done good service in bringing forward the clause.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, although the clause of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Brinton) did not go so far as his own, he was glad that it had been moved, and he could not but feel some regret at not having pressed his clause to a Division; because he believed, after listening to the discussion which had taken place, that it would have received more support than at the time he anticipated for it. He trusted his hon. Friend would divide the Committee, in which case he believed the clause would be supported by a considerable number of hon. Gentlemen. He thought, so far as the amount of punishment was concerned, that the remarks of the Attorney General upon the clause in its present form were in some respects correct. There were offences that might be too heavily punished by incapacitating the individual for voting, as was proposed in his clause; but he proposed to obviate the difficulty by giving discretion to the Judge to limit the amount of punishment as regarded such incapacity for voting, and removing it altogether if he considered it advisable in the case of a man sentenced for the crime for which he might be convicted. If the clause of the hon. Member for Kidderminster were carried, he should move to amend it in such a manner that it would run thus—

“Any person who has been convicted and sentenced for felony or indictable misdemeanour in any Court of Justice in the United Kingdom shall be disqualified from voting for a Member of Parliament, or from being eligible to sit in the House of Commons, for such period not exceeding five years from the expiration of his sentence as the presiding Judge may determine.”

In that way it would be perfectly competent to the Judge, in certain cases, to inflict no disqualification at all. For instance, if a young man given to stealing apples should come before a Judge and be sentenced to one day's imprisonment the Judge might not inflict upon him any disqualification. With the object, then, of amending the clause of the hon. Member, if it were carried, he should support it on a Division.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I agree entirely with those who hold that this is not a Party question; and, therefore, I say let us approach it impartially. I

own that it is impossible to listen, without a certain amount of sympathy, to the opinions expressed in the speech of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and in that of the noble Lord who has just spoken. But what aspect does this question assume when we examine it? We find that when a man is punished for a criminal offence, his punishment is defined and limited, and that when the whole punishment has been inflicted no other penal consequences are allowed to fall upon him. Then my hon. Friend comes in and says, let us purge the electorate of convicted persons. But let us see how far that will carry us. The hon. Member for Carlisle (Mr. Macfarlane) has judiciously referred to the proportion of criminal Members who might be found on one side of the House or the other. Now, there is nothing to prevent Her Majesty, after a man sentenced for a criminal offence has served out his time, from appointing him one of her Secretaries of State. His chance, I believe, would not be very great; although hon. Gentlemen opposite might say that such a course was not at all inappropriate to the case of the present Government. But if the House is to decide that a certain system of disabilities shall attach to criminal conviction, it is a question which demands that we should consider at large why we should inflict the very smallest of these disabilities, and leave every other franchise capacity in full working. I do not think we can afford to deal with a question of this kind piecemeal; and although, as I have admitted, it is impossible for us not to sympathize with those hon. Members who have supported the clause, I think it is our duty to give an impartial, and not an intimidated, vote against it.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the proposal ought not to be looked upon so much as providing punishment for the criminal classes as a protection to the people generally; and it was upon the latter ground that he should support the clause of the hon. Member for Kidderminster. They were considering the capability of citizens; and he contended, notwithstanding what had fallen from the Prime Minister, that if a man so misconducted himself as to be convicted of felony, he had shown by his act that he was a man from whom the community ought to be protected, and that,

consequently, he and his hon. Friends were right in claiming that the community should be protected from the votes of the criminal class.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he could not agree with the noble Lord in giving the Judge discretionary power as to the enfranchisement or disenfranchisement of any individual, because, in his opinion, it would be wrong to convert the Judges into political characters. The Committee were not called upon by the hon. Member for Kidderminster to decide that question, however. They were asked whether they intended to put the convicted felon on the same level as the pauper? Everyone acquainted with the system of Union relief knew that a man might come upon the pay list for some temporary assistance—perhaps in the case of his wife's miscarriage—and that that circumstance was, in the eye of the law, sufficient to constitute him a pauper, and disqualify him, as such, from voting during a period of 12 months. All that the hon. Member asked was that a person convicted of felony should not be in a better position in respect of the exercise of civil rights than the unfortunate man who received parochial relief. The adoption of the clause would have the effect of making our laws consistent in this respect, and it would have the good effect also of showing to the people of the country that Parliament did not regard the commission of an act of felony in a less serious light than it looked upon the act of a man who applied for parochial relief. Upon those grounds he should feel it his duty to vote for the clause.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he thought that the discussion on the clause had shown that it would act very unfairly indeed. He believed that all those acquainted with the subject would know that one of the greatest difficulties that had to be encountered was the restoring of discharged prisoners to their lost position as citizens, and that it was never thought desirable to rake up the fact that a man had committed an offence. But, if this clause became law, in every Registration Court a man might have his offence brought forward and again registered against him, the effect being that he would have to suffer another year's punishment. The two cases of the pauper and the criminal should be kept entirely apart in their

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endeavours to arrive at a just solution of this question; and it was because he believed the Amendment would, on the whole, have an injurious effect that he felt it his duty to vote against it.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, if the clause, or one which embodied its principle, were not adopted, he should have to propose, in due course, that the enactment which prevented paupers being upon the Register as voters for one year after the time of their receiving relief should be repealed. It seemed to him that they must either disqualify criminals from exercising the franchise for a certain term, or that they should qualify paupers. This was not a question, as had been pointed out, of punishing a man for an offence; it was a question of discretion—whether they should or should not make a distinction between two classes of men in favour of the criminal. Were they to disqualify a poor man for receiving parochial relief; and, on the other hand, say that a convicted thief should be continued on the Register?

MR. WHITLEY regretted the view taken of this question by the hon. and learned Gentleman at his side (Mr. Grantham). It was impossible for him to think that the question of depriving a person of civil rights ought to be kept quite distinct from that of the punishment to be inflicted for the offence. The Attorney General had endeavoured to lead the Committee away from the real considerations attaching to the subject. The Prime Minister said that the disfranchisement of a convicted person would be equivalent to a double punishment, and that was no doubt true; but he would point out to the Committee that double punishment was enacted by the Corrupt and Illegal Practices at Elections Act of last year. By that Act a man could not only be sentenced to fine and imprisonment; he was, at the same time, to be deprived of his rights of citizenship. Therefore, he asked why, if the principle were right in the case of the Act referred to, it should not be applied in the present instance? What distinction there was between the two cases which should place them upon a different footing he was totally unable to perceive. Nor could he perceive any force in the argument that the Judge would take into consideration the disfranchisement which would follow upon

conviction in awarding sentence; he did not think the Judge would go into the question of civil rights at all; but that, on the contrary, he would punish the individual for his crime, whatever it might be. He held, in the interest of civil society at large, that a man who had committed felony ought not to be allowed the same privileges, in respect of the franchise, as capable citizens, a term which, to his mind, certainly did not include the criminal class. That consideration, he said, was one which ought not to be put out of sight, especially at a time when it was proposed to add an enormous number of the people to the electorate. He repeated his belief that the Judge would in no way be influenced by the clause in sentencing the convicted person. The punishment which the Judge would award would be for the crime itself, quite irrespective of the civil disability which he (Mr. Whitley) thought should be imposed upon him during the time which his hon. Friend had spoken of, as a period of probation at the end of which, having restored himself to the rights of citizenship, it was proper that the individual should be allowed to vote. For these reasons he should cordially support the clause of the hon. Member for Kidderminster.

MR. PELL said, it was because he valued very much the clause in the Act which disfranchised paupers that he should support the proposal of the hon. Member for Kidderminster. If it were not agreed to, he did not see how they could consistently maintain the present law by which paupers were excluded from voting. Reference had been made to the desirability of not following up a criminal by subsequent punishment; but he would point out that in cases where a person was convicted of an offence, any previous offence which he had committed was brought up against him. What would the people think when they saw one man disfranchised by the mere act of receiving parish relief, and another man, perhaps, followed by a detective to the Revising Barrister's Court, allowed to register himself as a voter? He hoped the hon. Member would go to a Division on a clause which involved such a very important principle, when, for the reasons stated, he should feel it his duty to vote for it.

Mr. Grantham

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, the hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins) objected to its being left to the Judge to decide for how long a period a prisoner should be disfranchised; and he objected to the proposal on the ground that it might convert the Judge into something like a political partizan. In that respect it would appear that he had a higher opinion of Her Majesty's Judges than the hon. Member. However that might be, he would remind the Committee that the Judges who tried Election Petitions, whatever their political opinions might be, had the power the hon. Member deprecated already; and no complaint had ever been made of the manner in which they discharged their duties in connection with them. He wished to make an observation with regard to the remark of the Prime Minister against the idea of putting additional punishment on criminals by disfranchising them for any period after the expiration of the punishment inflicted upon them for the crimes they had committed. The right hon. Gentleman stated that after the expiration of his sentence a criminal was under no disability whatever, though what he meant by being under no disability he (Viscount Folkestone) did not know. After a criminal had come out of prison he was obliged, in many cases, to undergo a certain amount of police supervision; and if that was not a disability he should very much like to know what was. As a matter of fact, this police supervision was one of the most severe punishments, short of imprisonment, which could possibly be inflicted on a man. It did away with his freedom; he could not move from one place to another without giving notice to the police in the district. He had to report himself from time to time to the police to show that he was in the district, and when he left for another place he had to make known his intention and report himself in the new locality in which he had taken up his quarters. That, he was led to believe, was one of the most severe punishments, short, as he had said, of actual imprisonment, which could be inflicted upon a person; and, therefore, it appeared to him that there were cases in which, after the expiring of imprisonment, criminals underwent a certain amount of disability.

MR. WARTON said, he hoped the Prime Minister would allow him to congratulate him upon his improved tone. He (Mr. Warton) was very glad to hear that this was not a Government question, for, that being so, they could approach it impartially. Last night they could not approach the matter then under discussion impartially because of the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman; and he (Mr. Warton) had been obliged to vote against him to counteract the action of one of his (Mr. Gladstone's) supporters. He had been obliged to vote against the right hon. Gentleman because the matter had been discussed partially; and now that it was discussed impartially he (Mr. Warton) was going to vote with the right hon. Gentleman. As a matter of fact, the proposal of the hon. Member (Mr. Brinton) was a most absurd one. It was one, the title of which did not agree with the substance of the clause—neither had the speech of the hon. Member agreed with the title nor the clause. The title referred only to felony, whereas the proposal referred to felony and misdemeanours; and the hon. Member's speech did not agree with his Motion, because his Motion had reference to convictions 12 months previous to a certain date, whereas his speech referred to a period of 12 months after the expiring of his sentence. It had been asked with considerable gravity—and even the Prime Minister had condescended to notice the question,—which political Party sympathized most with the criminal classes? He was inclined to think that the criminal classes as a rule must be Liberals, because it appeared to him that those who stole would sympathize with those large schemes of plunder that had been brought forward by Her Majesty's Government. He was not saying this merely from theory, but had proof to adduce in support of his assertion. He remembered a case about the time of the destruction of the Irish Church when a Liberal—a man whom he presumed belonged to the Liberal Party—was brought up for an assault and robbery, and he recollected that the man defended himself by stating that he merely “disestablished the man's legs, and disendowed his pockets.” But even though he believed that the great majority of the criminals of the country belonged to the Liberal Party, that did

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not prevent him from supporting the principle laid down by the Prime Minister, that when a man had served his punishment he had expiated his crime. It was perfectly foreign to what he might call the gentle spirit of our Criminal Law to hold a man responsible for his crime after he had suffered the penalty of it; and he did not care whether the criminal was a Liberal or Conservative. That was the ground he took. But the matter had been encumbered with a comparison between paupers and criminals. He did not know whether they adopted the Russian proverb in this House that "poverty was no crime, but twice as bad;" he did not know whether hon. Members agreed with that proverb; but the reason why a pauper could not vote was because he was not possessed of the means which made him sufficiently independent to exercise the franchise. The question was not whether poverty was venial, but whether it was venal, because that was what it was likely to be in the face of the bribery which recent inquiries had proved to prevail so extensively in many parts of the country. A comparison between poverty and crime had nothing at all to do with the question. It was evident from the Motion before them that the hon. Member who submitted it had not considered for a moment the question of a ticket-of-leave, or of police supervision; and he said, moreover, most distinctly, that the question of poverty and crime had been unduly introduced. He wondered that the metaphysical mind of the Prime Minister had not suggested the idea that the prisoner in gaol was in a certain sense receiving Government relief, because he was being fed and clothed at the expense of the State. He thought that might in some minds bridge over the difficulty, and that hon. Members might vote for the proposal to deprive a person who had been in prison of the franchise for the reason that he had been a pauper. He had great pleasure in supporting the view of the Prime Minister and the Attorney General.

MR. HICKS said, he would venture to suggest to the Committee that it had some claim to call on Her Majesty's Government with respect to those points so often put before them during the last half-hour by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) and the noble

Lord the Member for South Wiltshire (Viscount Folkestone). The point raised by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire showed them the position that two men were placed in for exactly the same offence. Was it right that one should be disfranchised and the other not? The noble Lord the Member for South Wiltshire also drew the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that criminals were not white-washed immediately after their discharge from prison. They were subject to many disabilities, and at any time their former crime might be brought up against them; but the question before the Committee at the present moment was not the wording of the clause, but the spirit of it. The question they had to decide now was, should they allow every description of criminal to be placed on the Register the moment he came back from penal servitude? The words in the clause were "indictable offences." It might be considered that those words were too wide when they took into consideration the present mode of administering justice in this country; but, if he rightly understood the Attorney General, the case to which the hon. and learned Gentleman alluded—namely, "stealing apples," was not applicable to "indictable offences" at all. It was an offence which he had never understood to be an indictable offence, but one which for years had been dealt with summarily under Peel's Acts. [THE ATTORNEY GENERAL dissented.] Yes; under Peel's Acts, and not of the same character as those which, up to a very recent time, were tried by Judges and juries. But of late years they had considerably altered the mode of administering justice, and there were many cases which were known in the legal books as "indictable offences" which were now dealt with by Courts of Summary Jurisdiction; and it might very likely be thought right, when this clause had been read a second time—as he trusted it would be—and when it came to be considered in detail, to introduce words limiting the effect of the provision to cases which had been dealt with in the Superior Courts. However that might be, he trusted the Committee would accept the proposal, and would not allow it to go forth that men were to be deprived of the vote on the ground that recent legislation put them under disabilities

for a long period for corrupt practices, but that those who were fresh from prison, to which they had been committed for felonious or other serious offences, might take part in the election of Members to serve the country in this House.

MR. BRINTON said, he believed this discussion to have been, on the whole, favourable to the clause; and though it might hereafter be found to admit of a little amendment, yet he thought the proposal was too valuable to be allowed to drop; therefore, he should feel it to be his duty to press it to a Division.

MR. TOMLINSON supported the second reading of the clause. He sincerely hoped that it would be carried; but what he wished to say was that there appeared to him to be some misapprehension on the part of many hon. Gentlemen who had spoken on the other side of the House as to its effect. A number of Members seemed to think that the disqualification that would be brought about by the clause would be after the completion of the sentence on a prisoner. The date from which the disqualification would operate would be that of the conviction, and not the end of the sentence. He hoped that some limitation would be put into the provision, and he trusted that the clause would not go beyond felony and misdemeanour, such as involved imprisonment with hard labour, because he believed there were many offences which would not deserve to be stigmatized by such a disqualification as it was proposed to attach by this clause. The Attorney General, in opposing the Amendment, and other hon. Gentlemen, had spoken of the mischief of branding a person who might have been a criminal by bringing him, after he had served his punishment, before a Registration Court, and compelling him to make the fact of his old offence public. But he (Mr. Tomlinson) wished to point out that it was a man's own act if he was ever brought before a Registration Court. It was very easy for a man to avoid being put upon the Register without appearing before the Revising Barrister. All he had to do was to avoid being entered upon the Register in the first instance by the overseers without asking questions or making statements.

MR. LEWIS wished to refer to the manner in which the Prime Minister had treated this very important subject. The Attorney General had objected to

the clause on two grounds—first, he said it was drawing a hard-and-fast line affecting a lot of persons whose cases might differ very considerably; and, secondly, he said it was keeping up a system that was unjust after an offence had been suffered for and expiated. Well, it was very unfortunate for the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to have the Corrupt Practices Act quoted against him. He invariably repelled such quotations, and objected to them; but hon. Members had a right to refer to them and to the hon. and learned Gentleman in this context, as he was the responsible Member of the Government who had been most associated with the Act, and the head of the Department from which it had issued. Last year it was contended by himself (Mr. Lewis) and other hon. Members that it was improper to draw a hard-and-fast line, and that such a line declaring that where a man was guilty of an “illegal payment,” he should not only suffer a heavy penalty, but for five successive years be disqualified from voting. Under the terms of the Act of last year, a person could be placed under disabilities for five years for doing an act which was not even bad in itself, but merely prohibited by the Statute. Evidently, the Prime Minister, who had been absent from the previous part of this debate, was not aware of the points which had been made. He had had to treat it as a new and entirely unprecedented thing which it was now proposed to effect; but this debate had thrown a light upon what had hitherto been in darkness. They had never yet been favoured with an interpretation of the right hon. Gentleman's favourite phrase “capable citizens.” In the present instance, however, they got only a negative light—a negative light, because the right hon. Gentleman's theory seemed to be that a convict was not a less “capable citizen” after than before his conviction. That was enfranchising with a vengeance. It was right that this declaration, this *reductio ad absurdum*, should be retained and crystallized in the Division List, and that they should let it be known throughout the length and breadth of the land that whilst ladies of education and property had been considered disqualified, convicts were considered qualified to take their place on the electoral roll. Men, fresh from prison, were to be allowed to vote, while

women were to be refused the privilege, simply because they were not men. Let it be known throughout the country that in the opinion of a Liberal Government any man, even though he had been convicted of the most horrible offence it was possible to conceive, might, within 12 months, be allowed to take his part in the exercise of the franchise. It seemed to him (Mr. Lewis) that it was very important that they should divide on this subject, in order that the country could see who were the people who supported this proposal.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 131; Noes 178: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 119.)

EARL PERCY said, he had a clause on the Paper dealing with persons serving in sea or land forces of Her Majesty. He did not wish to speak at great length in proposing this clause; but there were a great many hon. Members who wished to say something about it, and he was afraid that at this hour (6-40) it would not be possible for them to do so. Certainly, they could not dispose of the clause; and, therefore, he would move that the Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Earl Percy.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, the noble Lord, at any rate, would be able to make his observations before the hour for adjournment, and in the present state of the Business he (Mr. Gladstone) could not possibly consent to this Motion.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, his impression was that all the noble Lord required was already in the Bill.

MR. WARTON: I rise to Order. Under the New Rules it is not competent for the Attorney General to discuss the matter of an Amendment when a Motion to report Progress has been moved.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I would point out that the reason why I make this explanation is—

MR. WARTON: There can be no reason at all. ["Order, order!"] I rise to Order, and I ask for the judgment of the Chairman. I ask whether, under the New Rules, it is competent for

the Attorney General to consider this Amendment, and whether he must not confine himself to the Question of reporting Progress, giving reasons for or against it, as he may think desirable?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Attorney General is perfectly in Order.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he would refer the noble Lord to page 6, line 12 of the Bill, where it was set forth—

"Both in England and Ireland where a man inhabits any dwelling-house by virtue of any office, service, or employment, and is deemed for the purposes of this Act and of the Representation of the People Acts to be an inhabitant occupier of such dwelling-house as a tenant, and another person is rated or liable to be rated for such dwelling-house, the rating of such other person shall, for the purposes of this Act and of the Representation of the People Acts, be deemed to be that of the inhabitant occupier."

That would include the persons the noble Lord wished to enfranchise.

EARL PERCY said, he must submit that the clause he had in his mind certainly did not include them. If the Attorney General meant to assure the House that a sergeant living on a staircase, having a separate apartment or apartments, would be entitled to a vote, he should not press his Amendment. He referred to every sergeant in married quarters in every barracks in England. Would every one be allowed to vote? The Attorney General said he would be entitled to vote if he was admitted, for the purposes of the Act, to be an inhabitant occupier of the dwelling-house as a tenant. Although as a sergeant he was the servant of the Crown, he would have a vote.

MR. LEWIS said the Question before the Committee was whether the Chairman should report Progress; but the discussion now was as to the meaning of a clause in the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is wrong; the Question before the Committee is that I report Progress, certain provisions in the Bill being given as a reason for so doing; and the Attorney General is giving reasons why I should not report Progress, by endeavouring to correct what he says is a misapprehension on the part of the noble Lord. The noble Lord has replied to that statement.

MR. GRANTHAM said, this was a very important question.

EARL PERCY said, he should submit the question to the House, because he

Mr. Lewis

did not think anyone had understood it up to the present time. What he wanted to effect was this—every sergeant in every barracks in England should have a vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out that the noble Lord is not entitled to discuss this clause on the present Motion.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he thought that no time should be lost in reporting Progress, because if the Attorney General was right in his interpretation of the clause, the noble Lord would, if there were an adjournment of the discussion, have time to consider the matter between this and the next sitting of the Committee, which he could not do at a moment's notice. At the next sitting of the Committee the noble Lord would come down having had the advantage of taking the advice of his Friends as to the meaning of the clause. They would gain nothing by endeavouring to take the discussion now.

MR. GIBSON wished to know whether the Attorney General would answer the question of the noble Lord? Was it intended that the clause to which he referred should include such a case as that referred to by the noble Lord? Was the hon. and learned Member in a position to say whether at present, under the existing state of the law, soldiers in sole occupation of apartments had votes?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the reason why, under the existing state of the law, soldiers had not the vote was that the Crown had not been rated; but now that state of things had been altered. He could not answer the question of the noble Lord as to any particular sergeant. If a sergeant had sole occupation he was qualified.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MR. PULESTON asked to what period the Bill would be deferred, and what position it would occupy on the Paper?

MR. GLADSTONE: It will be taken on Monday. It was intended to put the Royal Courts of Justice Bill down as the first Order, as it was expected that this Bill would go through Committee to-day. Under the circumstances, this Bill will be taken first.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Debate arising;

And it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ARMY—WAR DEPARTMENT—MR. LYNAL THOMAS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. MACFARLANE, in rising to call attention to the claims of Mr. Lynam Thomas against the War Department; and to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Lynam Thomas against the War Department,"

said, he had to submit to the House the case of a poor inventor who had suffered grievous injustice. It was about 30 years since Mr. Thomas began foolishly to serve his country. If he had been wiser in his generation he would have known better than to adopt the profession of an inventor. The result had been absolute ruin to him. Mr. Thomas went to the War Office with the statement that he had invented a particular kind of gun, and, in fact, had started an entirely new theory with regard to explosives. He laid the case before the War Office, and received assurances from General Peel, who was then Secretary of State for War, that if

he would carry out experiments at his own expense and the inventions proved beneficial, he should at least be repaid the costs which he had incurred. He had a copy of General Peel's letter to that effect. Mr. Thomas acted on that assurance, and proceeded with his experiments, which proved successful, and on those experiments was founded the artillery which was now used in the Navy. For several years Mr. Thomas was engaged in an ineffectual endeavour to obtain the redemption of General Peel's promise from the War Office. Failing in those endeavours he sued the Department, and at the trial before the late Lord Chief Baron and a jury, extending over three weeks, he obtained a verdict for nearly £9,000. But the Department appealed, and the verdict was set aside—not on the merits, but on purely technical grounds, which were—first, that the War Office could not bind the Crown; and, secondly, that the contract was insufficient to bind the Department. The question had been before the House once or twice already, but had never been fairly discussed. Successive War Ministers had stated that they had investigated Mr. Thomas's claims and found them to be unsustainable. But, of course, all that meant was that Ministers had made inquiries of War Office officials, who were the very persons inculcated. Mr. Thomas charged certain War Office officials with fraud and perjury, and those officials had not thought proper to vindicate their characters. If such a charge were made against an officer in the Army or Navy he would not be allowed to display the meek spirit of those officials, but would be compelled to demand a court martial. He was afraid the Surveyor General of Ordnance would take refuge in the acts of former Ministers and refuse to wash this atrociously dirty linen in public. But he still entertained hopes that the hon. Gentleman would agree to refer the question to the recognized tribunal of the House, a Select Committee. If it was a just claim let it be proved; and if it was not, let it be shown to be unjust. He did not propose to enter into the merits of the case, but would leave the whole question to be dealt with by that Select Committee. Without attempting to deal with the merits of the case he asked that the grievance of Mr. Thomas should, in a spirit not only of equity but of justice, be referred to a

Committee of the House, whose inquiry, he was told, the facts being simple, need not last more than a day. In conclusion, the hon. Member moved that a Select Committee be appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Lynam Thomas.

Mr. LEAKE, in seconding the Motion, said, he saw no reason why the Government should refuse the demand which Mr. Thomas had made, and in support of his contention produced models of guns to show that the weapon made by the War Department must of necessity have been based upon the designs of Mr. Thomas, which were submitted to, and rejected by, the officials of that Department. He asked that the charge of fraud should be investigated by any number of impartial Members of Parliament. It was not alleged that the Government had taken Mr. Thomas's gun, but that they had taken the whole of the principles upon which his gun was manufactured. Two years ago he thoroughly investigated the claim of Mr. Thomas with all the impartiality of which he was capable; and the conclusion which he came to was that Mr. Thomas was the victim of administrative antagonism and sharp practice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Lynam Thomas against the War Department,"—(*Mr. Macfarlane*),—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

COLONEL NOLAN, in supporting the Motion, said, he did not impute fraud to the War Office, but thought the officials of the Department had overstrained their very useful function of trying to spare expense to the Public Purse. The Artillery officers who had advised the War Office could not understand the claim of a man like Mr. Thomas. Though there were some of them clever enough to improve guns they had never invented any, and they were too wise to spend £8,000 or £10,000 in their manufacture. Consequently, they could not understand the commercial claims of a man like Mr. Thomas, who had spent £7,000 or £8,000 in carrying out his idea. The fact was that there was no one in our time who had made money by the invention of guns but Sir Wil-

liam Armstrong. He contended that Mr. Thomas was the first man who made a really useful heavy gun in this country. That gun was a success, and although Mr. Thomas spent £7,000 or £8,000 in making his experiments, it was not taken up by the Government. All the facts of the case were before the House and the War Office, and he saw no reason why a Committee should not be appointed to examine them. A Committee might settle the whole thing in five or six hours, and be able to present a Report which the Government could accept and act upon.

MR. BRAND said, it was quite true, as the hon. Member for Carlisle (Mr. Macfarlane) had stated, that General Peel gave an assurance to Mr. Thomas that if his invention proved to be of public benefit he would be reimbursed the cost of his experiments. The War Office, however, contended that the invention did not succeed, that it had totally failed, that they had not adopted Mr. Thomas's theories or ideas, and that the gun made by him in 1860 had nothing whatever to do with the present system of ordnance. The War Office contended that Mr. Lynam Thomas had neither an equitable nor a legal claim against the public. It would be a very easy thing for him, in answer to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, to say that the Government were prepared to give Mr. Thomas £10,000, or any other sum which might be considered necessary; but strict regard to the public interests prevented him from taking that course. They who sat there as the Representatives of the people were bound to see that no public money was expended unless that expenditure could be justified. The courage of the hon. Member in bringing forward for discussion a question which ought to have passed out of the region of controversy was much to be admired. There was absolutely no novel feature in the case, unless the charge of fraud made by Mr. Lynam Thomas against the permanent officials of the War Office could be so considered. For his own part, he could not envy the condition of mind of a man who made such a charge against permanent officials who had no other object to serve than the interests of the public. The charge of fraud, however, was only one of many charges made against War Office officials by Mr. Thomas. It was one more unfortunate incident in a long

and weary case, and proved a very sad condition of mind in the case of Mr. Lynam Thomas. The charge was that certain War Office officials had wilfully given false evidence at the trial of the action instituted against the Crown by Mr. Thomas with the view to strengthen the case of the Crown. The hon. Member made objection to the manner in which that charge had been met by the War Office; and he stated his opinion that when officials were charged with fraud they, being the defendants, should not act as judges in their own case. The officials at the War Office had certainly not acted as judges in this case, for the points at issue had been most carefully considered by successive Secretaries of State, as well as by the tribunals of the country. The present charge of fraud, even if it were true, had no bearing on the case, for the trial at which this alleged false evidence was given ended in a verdict for Mr. Lynam Thomas. When the second trial ended in a verdict for the Crown Mr. Lynam Thomas did not give notice of appeal; and having failed to do so, the hon. Member now desired to constitute the House of Commons a Court of Appeal in this case to review the decision of a Court of Law. The House of Commons had enough work to do without usurping the functions proper to another place; and he was sure that there would be a general consensus of opinion that Mr. Thomas, having appealed to the law, should abide by the decision which he himself had invoked. The facts of the case were shortly as follows. For some years subsequent to the year 1854, Mr. Thomas was engaged in endeavours to improve the system of heavy ordnance. During these years frequent communications passed between him and the War Office, the general tenour of which, as far as the War Office was concerned, was to the effect that no expense was to be incurred by the public, no guarantee entered into, nor promise of future compensation made, before the superiority of the invention had been clearly proved. The War Office did not deny that Mr. Thomas's gun of 1860 was of a considerable weight and thickness; and as an instance of evidence contrary to what Mr. Thomas had alluded to in illustration of fraud, he would refer to Captain Noble's admission that the service breech-loader 7-inch guns were much lighter than Mr. Thomas's—four

tons as against seven tons. On the other hand, the officials at the War Office urged and maintained that heavy muzzle-loader guns of considerable weight and thickness had been designed before Mr. Thomas's gun of 1860, and they urged and maintained that neither Mr. Thomas's theories and laws nor his gun of 1860 had been instrumental in any way in bringing about the service system for construction of muzzle-loading ordnance. They also urged and maintained that any promise of payment of expenses to Mr. Thomas depended on a successful result of his trials, which was not attained. Such was the position of affairs when Mr. Thomas, in 1867, claimed his expenses and compensation for his invention. This claim was considered and rejected by successive Secretaries of State on the ground that the superiority of the invention had not been proved, and that, as a matter of fact, his proposals had not been adopted nor his invention used. Thereupon Mr. Thomas commenced proceedings at law, and obtained in March, 1877, a verdict for £6,500, a portion of expenses which he said he had incurred and was entitled to recover under a contract with the War Office. The War Office denied that any contract of the kind ever existed, and in June, 1877, they moved to set aside the verdict. After full inquiry the Court decided that there was no contract, and they left Mr. Thomas to appeal. He had not done so, and the decision of the Court was therefore final. The hon. Gentleman now asked for a Select Committee to review the decision of successive Secretaries of State, of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had carefully examined this matter, of the present Secretary of State, and of the Courts of Law. He denied that any reason existed for the adoption of this course, which would be a most unwise one. If the House of Commons were to allow itself to be placed in this position, and were to review the decisions in this case, it would open the door to a host of inventors who were equally persuaded with Mr. Thomas that the War Office had acted unjustly to them in refusing to estimate their inventions at the value which they themselves set upon them.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR stated that having, when in the War Office, had occasion to read the Papers connected with this claim, he was then

quite satisfied with the decision that had been previously passed. From what had fallen from the Surveyor General, he accepted the more recent decisions, as in keeping with those originally come to, as adverse. He could bear testimony to the impartiality and high sense of honour of the officials of the Department concerned in regard to judging fairly on the claim. He could assure the House that there was no ground for the charges which were brought against the officers of that Department in connection with this claim. With regard to inventors and their claims for large rewards, he could remember the way in which the lobbies of the War Office were at one time constantly haunted by inventors; and he had always protested against that system, which seemed to him an abominable one, by exposing officers of rank to vilification because they would not squander the public money to inventors, who had no merit except in the minds of the individuals.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 42; Noes 20: Majority 22.—(Div. List, No. 120.)

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

EGYPT (FINANCE)—LOAN OPERATIONS.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR, who had given Notice that he would call attention to the circumstances of the issue of Egyptian loans by Messrs. Goschen and Fröhling, and other English houses; and to move—

"That the representative of Her Majesty at the Conference of the Great Powers on the Egyptian Question ought not, in the opinion of this House, to propose any reduction in the rates of interest payable to the creditors of Egypt among the subjects of Germany, France, and other Foreign Powers, unless such proposal be accompanied by a resolution calling for the refunding of the excess of the ordinary rate of commission received by the firm of Messrs. Goschen and Fröhling, and by other British subjects who have been engaged in floating loans for the late Khedive of Egypt,"

said, that he was precluded from moving the Motion which stood in his name by the Forms of the House; but he would call attention to the subject generally. The House would perceive that the Motion consisted of two parts. It called attention to the manner in which loans had been raised by British firms, and it

invited the British Representative at the coming Conference to take up a particular line. He would remind the House that the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan), who had a very intimate acquaintance with the affairs of Egypt, had on a previous occasion drawn a distinction between the case of the bondholder and that of the loanmonger. The bondholder had, he said, a claim for high interest, because his investment was of a somewhat perilous character—that possibly he might not get all his principal back, and possibly might not get all his interest back. But the hon. Gentleman stated that the case of the loanmonger was very different; for, in the first place, he ran little risk; and, in the second place, he got his money down, and that accordingly the loanmonger had not the same right to a high rate of interest as the bondholder had. The hon. Gentleman further stated that between the years 1862 and 1879 the nominal loans amounted to £77,000,000, but that of those nominal loans only £55,000,000 had been received.

MR. GOSCHEN: Will the hon. Gentleman give the reference for that statement?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I am quoting from the speech of the hon. Member for Wicklow, made in Committee of Supply on the despatch of the Forces to the Mediterranean.

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member in his last speech on this subject made a misquotation of £20,000,000. He mentioned £75,000,000, whereas the hon. Member for Wicklow gave the figure as £55,000,000.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I am quoting from the speech of the hon. Member for Wicklow, and if I make a mistake, he will correct me.

MR. GOSCHEN: I think the hon. Member for Wicklow will bear me out that the figure of £75,000,000 was erroneously quoted, and that it was £55,000,000.

MR. M'COAN said, that he had not intended to take any part in the discussion that evening, and was not, therefore, prepared to do so; but within the last two or three hours he had jotted down a brief note of the figures, which showed that the whole of the nine loans negotiated between 1862 and 1879 amounted to a nominal total of £77,000,000, and that the net proceeds of those loans were £55,589,000. It

was due, however, to the contractors to state that he never meant to say that they had pocketed the difference between the nominal and the net amount.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: If the right hon. Gentleman wishes to make a correction, I will sit down and let him make any explanation he pleases.

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member quotes from a speech delivered by the hon. Member for Wicklow. He also quoted from that speech the last time he addressed the House upon the subject. He quoted the figures given by the hon. Member for Wicklow as £75,870,000, instead of £55,870,000. The hon. Gentleman has now given the same figures again instead of £55,870,000. It is a clerical error of the hon. Member.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the hon. Member for Wicklow made two speeches on this question. In one of those speeches the hon. Member stated that the amount was £77,000,000 odd. The hon. Member also made the statement that the actual sum received by the Egyptian Treasury was not £77,000,000, but £55,850,000. The hon. Member for Wicklow admitted that he had correctly quoted his speech. He would now say a few words with regard to the character of these loans. The nominal amount of the first of the three loans issued by the firm of Frühling and Goschen was £3,292,000, and the actual amount received by the Egyptian Treasury was £2,500,000. The nominal amount of the second loan was £5,704,000, while the amount actually received by the Khedive was £4,864,063, and the third loan was of the nominal amount of £3,000,000, while the amount actually received by the Khedive was £2,640,000. He had put down on the Notice Paper a reference to two other firms, and he wished to call particular attention to two other loans which were commented upon by the hon. Member for Wicklow. In 1868 there was a loan of the nominal value of £11,890,000, and of that nominal amount the Egyptian Treasury received £7,193,334. Again, in 1873, there was an immense loan of £32,000,000 also issued by an English firm, and the Egyptian Treasury received £20,740,077, of which £9,000,000 were in the shape of depreciated floating stock. The House must not be under the misapprehension that this charge against these houses was that they received the entire difference

between the nominal amount of the loans and the actual amount received by the Egyptian Treasury. He would point out the manner in which these loans were repaid. There were various expedients by which the indebtedness of Egypt was increased. First of all there was the enormous difference between the nominal amount of the loans and the real amount the Treasury received. Secondly there was the exorbitant interest, the minimum rate being 12½ and 13 per cent, and the maximum 30 per cent. Thirdly, there was this transaction of the £9,000,000 of depreciated stock. The result, according to Mr. Stephen Cave's book, entitled *Spoiling the Egyptians*, was that the more money Egypt paid back the larger her debt became. Mr. Cave stated that the sum of £34,898,000 had been paid away as interest in 10 years, and that, nevertheless, the principal of the debts was greater than ever. Of course, the main portion of these burdens fell upon the unfortunate fellaheen, who were crushed by the taxation and most cruelly treated. Thousands of broken hearts and blasted lives cursed the day when Ismail became acquainted with the resources of Occidental finance. He now came to the part which had been played in this matter by the English loanmongers. The name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon ran through this whole sad history like a silver, or, should he say, a golden thread. It was the firm with which he was associated which first introduced Ismail Pasha to the European markets. It was the right hon. Gentleman who had the doubtful honour of being the initiator of European control in the finances of Egypt, and in all the discussions on the Egyptian Question he had been the principal preacher of the Jingo gospel of British intervention in that country. When taken to task by the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan) the right hon. Gentleman said the nominal value of the loans was of no particular importance, and he gave the instance of a Portuguese loan which was taken up at 50 per cent. If it were true that the loans which Fröhling and Goschen negotiated were taken up at 50 per cent, there would, of course, be an easy way of accounting for the difference between the amount of the loan and the amount received by the Khedive. But this was

not the case in regard to these loans. The first, of £2,195,200, was taken up at 82½ per cent; the second, of £1,097,600, was taken up at 84½; the third, of £5,740,000, was taken up at 93; and the fourth, of £3,000,000, at 92. The first loan at 82½ produced £1,811,040, and the second at 84½ £927,472, making together £2,738,512. Of this sum the Khedive received £2,500,000, and in respect of these two loans the firm of Fröhling and Goschen therefore received £238,512. On all the loans the difference between the sum realized by them and the sum paid to the Khedive was £899,355. In other words, in the negotiating of loans amounting to about £11,000,000, the firm of Fröhling and Goschen retained nearly £1,000,000. This was a pretty handsome commission. Then it was that, under the direction of Lord Derby, the officials of this Empire were instructed to use all their exertions for the purpose of wringing money out of the unfortunate Egyptian peasants, so that the interest on these loans might be paid. He was not addressing an assembly of bondholders, loanmongers, or financial agents, and he thought he should carry the general assent of the House with him when he said that this was a grossly exorbitant rate of interest to charge; and that if there were any reduction in the sums charged to the Treasury of Egypt on account of her financial embarrassments, there should be a refund of a portion of this money by the firm of Messrs. Fröhling and Goschen. It might be that the Egyptian people had no legal claim upon these gentlemen, but assuredly they had a strong moral claim; and if he were the right hon. Member for Ripon he thought his mind and conscience would be disturbed by the reflection that the scourged backs, bastinadoed feet, the impoverished wives and children, and the broken homes of hundreds of thousands of Egyptian peasants were too large a price at which to purchase even enormous wealth. He passed on to another transaction in which the right hon. Gentleman and his firm were involved. He went to Egypt in 1876, he went there in the interest, as he himself stated, of 2,000 holders of Egyptian Stocks, he went there to enforce the carrying out of the flagitious bargains that had been made between the Egyptian Ruler and European financiers, and

he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had to complain very strongly not merely of his conduct in this matter, but still more of the conduct of the Government. The Consul General who had given the terrible pictures he had already quoted with regard to the misery experienced from the interest on these loans amongst the peasants, the man who described how the peasants were obliged to pay one or two, and then three years' taxation in advance, who described the fellaheen as in many cases reduced almost to starvation, who had declared that the taxes were wrung out of them by torture, this same official did everything he could to induce the Khedive to believe that behind Mr. Goschen and his 2,000 bondholders of Egyptian Stock stood the might and influence of this great Empire. In other words, the political position of the right hon. Gentleman was used for compelling the fellaheen to pay more taxes, to undergo more starvation, and to have additional application of the courbash to back and to feet. What did the right hon. Gentleman do? He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) failed to see any proof whatever of any sentiment in what the right hon. Gentleman did except that of securing the last farthing for the bondholders that the Egyptian peasant could be persuaded or tortured into giving. More than that, the right hon. Gentleman made himself a partner in perhaps the most scandalous transaction of the ruin of Ismail Pasha. He had informed the House of the nature of the Law of Moukabala. On the strength of the pledges made under that law, £12,000,000 had been raised from the peasants between 1872 and 1875, and by 1879 £17,000,000 were raised. Yet the right hon. Member for Ripon, as part of his stipulation in his arrangements with the Khedive, consented to deprive the landholders of the reduction of the rent to which they were entitled in consequence of having paid these taxes in advance. Finally, on this part of the question the right hon. Gentleman, who had, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) believed, the deserved reputation of financial ability, estimated the Revenue of Egypt at £10,000,000. Everybody now knew that this estimate was proved to be far above the amount that Egypt could produce, and the result of the extortion of the Revenue of Egypt was that the bondholders were able to

secure more favourable terms, and the hapless peasants were more cruelly taxed. He believed the defence made for the right hon. Gentleman was that he was deceived by the Khedive. It looked as if he had no objection to being deceived. The right hon. Gentleman had been, whenever Egypt had been discussed in this House, one of the foremost, as he was admittedly one of the ablest, advocates of the policy of intervention in that country. He had no hesitation in saying that the right hon. Gentleman had a large share of responsibility for the invasion of Egypt by this country, which had cost so many thousands of lives and so much treasure, and was now bringing such a tragic Nemesis to all who were concerned in it. He had laid the materials before the House, which would enable it to form a judgment as to the title that the right hon. Gentleman had to take up such a position, and he hoped the remarks which he had made would help to awake the consciences of the people of England and the consciences of Members of this House to the odious and terrible responsibility upon the Ministry—upon any country—upon any Parliament which would perpetuate the extortions of loan-mongers and bondholders and the miseries and sufferings of the Egyptian people at large. Already he thought he saw signs of a better and healthier state of feeling on this question in the country and in this House, and in the rise of that better feeling he saw the share of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon in the affairs of Egypt receiving their due and proper estimate. The time he hoped had passed, and passed for ever, when he and his like would have any influence over the decisions and resolves of this country in her Egyptian policy.

MR. M'COAN said, that in justice to the firm of Fröhling and Goschen he should point out that of the nine loans negotiated by the Egyptian Government during the last years of Said Pasha down to the abdication of Ismail Pasha in 1879, that firm had negotiated only three—namely, those of 1862, 1864, and 1868. No doubt, £900,000 was a large sum to be charged as commission on these loans; but the expense attending the issue of such operations was always great, and the commissions on many of the other loans were even higher. They must

bear in mind that in Egypt 12 per cent was the legal and ordinary rate of interest. The average rate of interest on the loans negotiated by the firm of Fröhling and Goschen was $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, which in Egypt was a very low rate. The loan issued by the Anglo-Egyptian Bank cost the Treasury 11 per cent, and that issued by the Ottoman Bank cost 12 per cent. The advances made at the same time by the Anglo-Egyptian Bank rose in some instances as high as 28 per cent. It was true that these Fröhling-Goschen loans were in some sort exceptional, as they had the advantage of being well secured, and they had a very high sinking fund. By the operation of those sinking funds more inconvenience, however, was caused to the Egyptian Treasury than by some of the loans that paid a higher rate of interest. Passing from the loans of Messrs. Fröhling and Goschen to those of Messrs. Oppenheim in 1868 and 1873, he reminded the House that the latter amounted to the nominal sum of £32,000,000, but that the net amount received by the Egyptian Treasury was only £17,810,000. That sum, again, was represented by only £11,000,000 in cash and £9,000,000 of depreciated Treasury bonds, which were bought in the market at 65, and paid into the Egyptian Treasury at 93. In face of those facts, he thought a great deal too much had been said of the Fröhling and Goschen loans, while those other transactions had received much less comment than they deserved. Then, again, there was the Rothschild Loan, negotiated in 1879, of £8,500,000 nominal, which produced only £5,992,000. It was, however, due to this firm to say that the balance between these two sums in no way represented their share of the profits. Their commission was the ordinary and moderate one of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent; nor was even that all clear profit. In connection with the issue of a large loan, great expense had to be met in advertising, in various commissions, in "squaring" the City editors, and other diplomacy of various kinds. He thought that in regard to the loans from 1862 to 1873 a great deal of censure attached to all those contractors who had pandered to the vanity, the extravagance, and what might even be called the financial vices of Ismail Pasha. At the same time, he felt bound to say, of the whole of those concerned, the firm of Fröhling

and Goschen, in his opinion, came out of the business with the cleanest hands.

MR. GOSCHEN said, the House would probably expect him to say a few words on this subject, seeing that it concerned him personally. He wished to begin by referring, first, to the mission which he undertook in 1876. The hon. Member had referred to the question of the Moukabala, and had charged him with, if he understood him rightly, having changed as against the fellaheen the arrangements that had been made with regard to the Moukabala.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I said that the statement was made by Mr. Seymour Keay.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that all the statements of the hon. Member had been founded on second-hand authorities, and that he had not quoted a single case from original documents. The fact was, that as regarded the Moukabala he insisted and made it a condition of going to Egypt that the engagements towards the fellaheen taken under the Moukabala laws should be respected. Under the previous decree they had been tampered with, and before he went to Egypt he had the statement of the Viceroy that in no case would any arrangement be made which would upset the Moukabala. A change was made in 1880; but with that he had absolutely nothing to do. So far as the Moukabala was concerned, he took a very different line from that which he understood the hon. Member for Galway to charge him with. He would not make any defence with regard to the engagements and the arrangements made in 1876. That he had done often before; but he wished to address himself to one or two mistakes which had been made by the hon. Member with regard to figures and to facts. He wished to remind the House that since 1866 the firm with which he had formerly been connected had neither directly nor indirectly anything to do with the negotiations of Egyptian loans. They had had no such transactions with the Egyptian Government for 18 or 20 years. With regard to the charges which the hon. Member had brought forward respecting the negotiation of those loans, this was not the first speech which the hon. Member had made upon the subject. He made a speech on the 19th of February, and in that speech he had relied, as he had

done that night, upon the speech of the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan) on the 25th of July, 1882; but in his speech of the 19th of February, strange to say, the hon. Member for Galway misquoted two figures given by the hon. Member for Wicklow, making a mistake in one case of £20,000,000. ["No, no!"]

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the figures he had quoted were those which he had found in a speech of the hon. Member for Wicklow, and that hon. Member had confirmed those figures again that night.

MR. GOSCHEN said, it was not so. The hon. Member said that, although the nominal amount of the loans was £75,870,000, the actual sum received by the Egyptian Treasury was £35,000,000. That figure of £35,000,000 did occur in the speech of the hon. Member for Wicklow; but the hon. Member for Wicklow had contrasted it, not with £75,870,000, but with £55,870,000.

MR. M'COAN explained that it referred to the period up to 1875.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that the hon. Member for Galway had clearly made a mistake in quoting the hon. Member for Wicklow. A five slipped into his speech instead of a seven. There was another mis-quotation from the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). In the same speech, the hon. Gentleman said that the second loan issued in 1864 had been of a nominal amount of £5,704,000, and the actual sum received by the Egyptian Government was £2,500,000. That night he had stated the figures as £4,860,000. Thus, the last time the hon. Member spoke he gave the figures as £2,500,000, instead of £4,860,000.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that he never revised his speeches for *Hansard*.

MR. GOSCHEN: No; but the hon. Member had repeated his mistake.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the figures he had given that night were quoted from the hon. Member for Wicklow, who had just stated that they were perfectly accurate.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that the hon. Gentleman had not yet heard him out. When the hon. Gentleman asked the Question of the Prime Minister, whether there should not be a refunding of the commission beyond the difference between the amount received by the contractors from the public and the amount

given to the Egyptian Treasury, did he remember that he put his Notice on the Paper without giving any figures at all; but that he sprung the figures upon the Prime Minister, and to elucidate his Question, he gave £12,000,000 as the nominal amount, and £7,640,000 as the amount received by the Khedive of Egypt? That involved a repetition of the mistake he had made before—a mistake of more than £2,300,000, by giving £2,500,000 instead of £4,860,000. That was the way in which the hon. Member put Questions intended as an attack on the character and reputation of a firm. When a Motion was made in order to attack private character and reputation, surely one had a right to demand that care should, at least, be taken in examining the figures that were put before the House. When the hon. Member put his Question the other day, he alluded to the nominal amount of £12,000,000, and contrasted it with £7,500,000 received by the Khedive. Now he had reduced the figures; but the hon. Member had spoken to-night of £900,000 as commission. That figure was incorrect. Another hon. Member had made a calculation which put it at £800,000.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, he had taken it as £799,000.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that the hon. Member had stated that that sum had gone into the pocket of Messrs. Frühling and Goschen; but he had not given a tittle of proof of anything of the kind. Messrs. Frühling and Goschen were not the contractors for those loans, but were the London agents for them. The terms of those loans, and the whole arrangements, had been made before they were submitted to his firm; and it was the contractors who came to them and asked them to issue those loans in the London market. No such sum as that of £800,000 which had been mentioned by the hon. Member had ever gone into the pocket of the firm, nor any sum in any way approaching it. He wished to say one word in confirmation of what had fallen from the hon. Member for Wicklow as to the rate at which those loans had been issued. It must be remembered that 22 years ago the whole position of the Money Market was totally different. It was somewhat of ancient history, but the House might be interested to know that when the 1864 Loan

was issued, the Bank rate in England itself was 8 per cent. In January, 1866, when the Railway Loan was issued, the Bank rate was again 8 per cent; and at that time Italy was borrowing at an interest of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and Austria at over 7 per cent. Again, by one example, he would show that there was no criterion in the difference between the amount of nominal value and cash received, which was so constantly alluded to. Austria had had to give £14,800,000 Stock for £10,000,000 in 1865, while Egypt had given £12,000,000 for £10,000,000. Such figures proved nothing. In conclusion, he was quite content to make this declaration to the House, that the commissions given to the firm on the loans in question had been strictly within the limits of commercial usage and custom, and he would be prepared to justify them to anyone.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and agreed to.

Supply considered in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) [CONSOLIDATED FUND].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to pay, out of the Consolidated Fund, additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, in respect of any increased duties which may be imposed upon them, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for giving facilities for the conversion of Government Stock.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL.—[BILL 186.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 12th June.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 6 (Power of court, trustees, &c., in relation to exchange of stock).

MR. GREGORY said, that, in the absence of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), he begged to move the first Amendment standing in that hon. Gentleman's name. He explained that the object of the Amendment was to exempt Chancery Funds

and Bankruptcy Funds, which ought not to receive a less interest than that at which they had been originally invested, otherwise injury might be done to parties who had no means of helping themselves in the matter.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 20, after first "of," leave out to end of line 40.—(*Mr. Gregory.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, this was a point of very great importance indeed, and he trusted it would receive very careful consideration. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the view that he held—namely, that it was the duty of the State to endeavour to borrow money at the cheapest rate the market would afford; but this clause dealt with trust funds—funds of which the State was trustee—under circumstances which gave the persons really interested no option in the matter. These persons were brought into Court, and the State was in the position of guardian and protector; and it was incumbent on the Courts to be most jealous of doing anything which would be, in the slightest degree, dangerous to the funds, or calculated to decrease them. The right hon. Gentlemen the Prime Minister, in 1853, at that time Chancellor of the Exchequer, said—

"I do not propose that the Accountant General in Chancery, or the Attorney General in Bankruptcy, shall have the power to exchange. Now, the interest of the trust funds which are in Chancery is of comparatively inferior consideration; but the integrity of the capital is a matter of very great importance. It is extremely hard that the property of parties who are debarred by legal difficulties from its enjoyment should be subject to great and vital changes from circumstances entirely independent of their wills."

Under the clause, the proposal of the Government would lay the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Lord Chancellor open to the possibility of the imputation that they were dealing with trust funds for the purposes of the State, and not for the benefit of their wards. He thought it might happen—he did not say it would, but it might—that an exchange might be made from Consols to Two-and-a-Half per Cents, on the terms suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which might

Mr. Goschen

next year, or the year after, bring about a loss to the person in the exchange. The State, he thought, had no right whatever to expose this property it held to the possibility of such a loss. It had no right to deal with such property under such circumstances. If there was a compulsory conversion of Stock, then, undoubtedly, the fund in Chancery would come under the same conditions and the same misfortunes, if there were to be misfortunes, to which every other holder of Stock might be liable. But to exercise an option, and to make an exchange by reason of their position as trustees, appeared to him to be exercising a power which would possibly be injurious to the person who was interested in the exchange, and which would certainly expose them to the imputation of a breach of trust. He could not believe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Lord Chancellor together would for a moment enter into a transaction which they did not at the time believe to be for the advantage of those for whom it was carried out. They might not be open to the ordinary failings of men—they might suppose that the transaction was one that was more favourable than it really was. It was natural that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should think exceedingly well of a proposal of this kind—should believe that it would be beneficial to the fundholder and to the State—and that, therefore, it was his duty to carry it out. But there were other persons who might subsequently be affected, who might not take that view; and he (Mr. W. H. Smith) ventured to say that the doctrine laid down by the Prime Minister in 1853 was a doctrine that should be adhered to until it was plain that the conversion might be affected by reason of such a fall in the value of money that it was to the interest of all parties to accept the arrangement. Anything short of compulsory conversion would hardly be justifiable in the case of trust funds under such circumstances as those which he had referred to. He ventured to think that it would be felt, if this large fund was held by the Accountant General in Bankruptcy, or the Paymaster General, and used, as to all appearances it might be used under this clause, in order to carry out an operation, or to give effect to an operation to create a large fund of Two-and-a-Half per Cent

Stock—it would be felt by a large number of persons that that operation was effected, not in the interest of persons who might be ultimately declared to be the possessors of the property, but in the interest of the State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That would be an immoral transaction, and contrary to public policy and to the principles which were laid down by the Prime Minister in the speech he had referred to, and he thought it would also be injurious to the finances of this country. He did not think they could afford to take advantage of anybody, least of all of those who could not defend themselves, and could not express a deliberate and responsible opinion on a matter of this kind. These were the people who had no voice in the matter, who could express no opinion, and were absolutely in the hands of the Government. Their interests, he thought, should be most jealously and most carefully guarded. He thought their interests would be most carefully guarded by the acceptance of this Amendment.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he regretted that he was not in his place to move the Amendment when his name was called, and was obliged to his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Gregory) for taking charge of the proposal in his absence. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them this morning that he proposed to go into Committee at half-past 12, and then, when pressure was put upon him from both sides of the House, the right hon. Gentleman had stated that he would go into Committee about 12 o'clock, and that was the reason why he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had not been in his place.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): By 12 o'clock, I said.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Well, before 12, or about 12 o'clock. That was his apology for leaving the Amendment to his hon. Friend. The position he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had taken up on the subject was not in hostility to the financial operation the Chancellor of the Exchequer was now endeavouring to carry out. If the state of the Money Market would allow the interest on the National Debt to be reduced, it was the duty of everyone who had the interest of the State at heart to reduce that interest. But that was a tentative

operation. Everyone who had his own money in the Funds was competent to form his own opinion as to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. If he had £100 in the Funds at the present moment, he would be entitled to an interest of £3 per annum upon it; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer said to him, "if you will take £2 14s. 6d., instead of £3," and he consented, that would be a bargain, for it was a question investors, *sui juris*, were able to settle for themselves; but there was an element, if not of speculation, at least of contingency, in the whole transaction. In the event of a European War breaking out in the course of the next 12 months, or in the event of a great revival in trade, which they all hoped was not an impossible contingency, he had great doubt whether that transaction would be a financial success. At the present time, for instance, it would not be a financial success, for if he had, say, for his £100, taken the Chancellor of the Exchequer's terms, he would have found that at this moment £108 of Two-and-a-Half per Cents was worth only £99 on the English Stock Exchange. The clause dealt with a sacred trust fund, money amounting to near £100,000,000—at any rate, to between £70,000,000 and £80,000,000—belonging to widows and orphans who were not *sui juris*. That was money that had been put into the Court of Chancery on the understanding that those people should receive either £100 in money for each £100 invested, or £3 per cent. The Lord Chancellor would never discuss the soundness or the unsoundness of any other investment. For instance, he might propose to the Lord Chancellor to invest in London and North-Western Debenture Stock, which so far as they knew was about the soundest and best investment of the kind; but the Lord Chancellor, in spite of the fact that a larger interest might be safely made, would not listen to the proposal. He would run no risk, but would say—"You must have your £100 in Consols, and in nothing else, as that is absolutely safe. You shall have £3 for ever, or £100 in money." This clause, however, was to enable the Lord Chancellor, not acting judicially—because it would be impossible to put him in the exercise of a judicial function in this matter—but acting Ministerially as a

Member of the Cabinet, anxious to carry out a great financial operation—it would enable him, without the consent of, or without hearing a protest on behalf of, the persons who were interested in the money, to reduce the interest to which they were entitled by 10 per cent. It would be also possible for him to reduce the amount of the capital. No such proposition, he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) contended, had ever been submitted to Parliament before, and he trusted Parliament would not accept it now. It had never been proposed before to enable the Court of Chancery, without the option of those interested, to consent to the reduction of the capital. He supported this Amendment which had been moved for him in no hostile spirit to the Government. He was anxious the operation of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer should succeed; but if it did succeed, at any rate let it succeed *bonâ fide* by the open action of the Money Market and by the open action of people capable of taking care of themselves. One other consideration was this. In what position would the Lord Chancellor be, supposing at the end of 12 months all the funds held by the Court, on behalf of those entitled to them, were reduced 10 per cent?

MR. COURTNEY was understood to say, that no one could in the least degree complain of the extreme jealousy which had been exhibited by the Committee in favour of the State creditor. It was the duty of every hon. Member to scrutinize, with the greatest care, every proposal which in the slightest degree affected the relations between the State and its creditors; therefore the observations made by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) and of hon. Gentlemen could not be objected to on the question of principle. He should put out of question, of course, what had been said by the hon. Member for Sussex (Mr. Gregory) in relation to the commutation of funds in the hands of the Paymaster General—that was to say, the reduction of those funds from their original form to Terminable Annuities. That was beside the present question. The Paymaster General, whatever might be done under the Acts of last Session, or any other Statutes, was accountable for the exact funds that had come into his hands in the form in which they

originally stood. These accounts remained in Three per Cents, Consols, New or Reduced, as the case might be, and these funds would require to be paid, and the Paymaster General was accountable for them, as if no commutation into Terminable Annuities had been made. Turning to the immediate question whether the Bill provided a sufficient guarantee that any exchange of funds held by several State Officers would be properly guarded, he had remarked an extraordinary omission on the part of hon. Gentlemen who had spoken in the debate. They had altogether omitted to notice the particular check and control contained in the option that would be exercised. It was true that the Lord Chancellor, or in Scotland the Lord Advocate, and the Lord Chancellor in Ireland, might make arrangements for the transformation of a certain sum in Consols to Two-and-a-Half, or Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cents, or Three-and-Three-Quarters per Cents; but that transformation could only be effected by the consent of the person by whom the dividends on the Stock for the time being were received. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had not referred to that.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he had referred to the fact that infants and persons interested in a fund in Court, but under disability, could not help themselves.

MR. COURTNEY said, he had not caught the reference. He agreed with the statement quoted from a speech of the Prime Minister. He acquiesced in the importance of discriminating between changes as they affected interest and capital. In the present case everything turned on this, that the commutation was one that affected the interest payable for the time being in a prejudicial and injurious way; but if they had regard to the capital it would be increased. Therefore, as between the person entitled to the interest and the person entitled to the capital—a point specially dwelt upon by the Prime Minister in 1853—there was no danger that the person entitled to the capital would be damaged. If the person receiving interest, who would suffer a loss, acquiesced, the person entitled to the capital, who would receive an increase, might be assumed to consent. The proposition was one prejudicial to the

person receiving the interest, but beneficial to the person entitled to the capital; therefore, if they had secured the consent of the person entitled for the time being to the interest, to whose prejudice the change was effected, they must rely upon that as a sufficient guarantee that those who were to receive the capital would not be losers. He was entitled to look at what the proposition meant. The hon. Member proposed to have recourse to machinery which reminded him of the practice of the Courts of Chancery in old times. He proposed to revert, if not in form in principle, to the practice of the Leases and Sites of Settled Estates Acts, before the passing of Lord Cairns's Act, a few years ago.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he proposed nothing of the kind. That was in a subsequent Amendment, and the hon. Gentleman was quite in error. What he proposed was, that there should be no consent given whatever by the Lord Chancellor, acting on behalf of the infants, to this tentative process. If the conversion was made compulsory, he should then have nothing to say against it.

MR. COURTNEY said, that, according to the Amendment, even where a trustee had the power of exchanging at this moment to Two-and-a-Half per Cents, with or without the consent of the tenant for life, he would require, also, the consent of a great number of other persons. He submitted, with confidence, that if they considered the matter with the strictest regard for the interests of persons entitled in remainder—they being alone the persons who could be injuriously affected against their will—and to the fact that the commutation was one of a large nominal amount, which would be redeemed only by the payment of a greater sum, the guarantee was ample. On these simple grounds he could not consent to the Amendment.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had referred to two things—political complications, which might render the scheme unlikely to succeed; also to an improvement in trade, which might have the same effect. He wished to remind the Committee of what happened 30 years ago, when the present Prime Minister made and carried a similar proposition. That was a great scheme

for the reduction of the Debt similar to that now proposed. Shortly after the proposal was introduced the Crimean War broke out. In regard to the more important portion of the measure—namely, the reduction of Consols—the measure was inoperative. Money had for many years been falling to a low rate. Before 1852 and 1853 the average rate of money had been lower than in the previous five or six years. There were about £10,000,000 of Stock which, under that Act, were paid off at par. The Society of Friends were very fortunate in that transaction. The Three per Cent Stock of 1726 was their favourite Stock, because they objected to hold any Stock borrowed to carry on war, and that Stock had not been borrowed for that purpose, but to pay the Duchess of Kendal's debts; therefore, that excellent Society did not feel that they were compromising their principles by holding that Stock. Most of those excellent persons took their money at par, and invested in Consols at about 90. He hoped there would be no such complications during next year as would make this scheme as unfortunate as that was; but there were many contingencies, such as foreign complications and bad harvests, and, what he hoped was more probable, an improvement in trade. Therefore, from one cause or another, Consols might fall, and the scheme might not answer the expectations of the right hon. Gentleman. The Motion of the hon. Member was to provide that the Members of the Government should not have an opportunity of dealing with funds which they held, as trustees, in the interest of their Colleague the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That certainly seemed to him to be a most reasonable proposition under the circumstances to which he had referred. The Lord Chancellor of that day had felt bound to take the money in his charge, and reinvest it; and it seemed to him that the Lord Chancellor, or other Member of the Government, ought not to be placed in such a position. He should, therefore, support the Amendment.

MR. WHITLEY said, he also should support the Amendment; and he could not help thinking that the Secretary to the Treasury had taken a very mistaken view of the question. It was quite true that in certain cases the persons receiv-

ing the dividends might give their consent; but he held that there were many cases in which a portion only of the dividends was payable to the tenant for life, while the rest accumulated for the persons in remainder, and according to the clause, as it now stood, the Lord Chancellor would have entire control. As he understood, the view of his hon. Friend was this—and he entirely concurred in it—that the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Advocate, and the Lord Chancellor of Ireland were, to some extent, political persons, and they would not constitute that safety which Judges in Chancery constituted; therefore, if the clause remained at all, it would be safer for trustees that any political element should be expunged. He thought the Secretary to the Treasury had forgotten that to-day it was *ex-dividend*; and it was absurd to tell the Committee that the current price of Three per Cents was below par. He agreed with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that this would place trustees in a very difficult position. He himself was trustee for a large amount of these Consols; and he confessed that he should feel very great difficulty indeed if the clause passed in its present form. The Lord Chancellor could, of course, make arrangements. In some cases the consent of the persons who received their dividends was necessary; but in regard to accumulated funds, no such consent was necessary, and therefore he thought that was a very perilous clause to introduce into this Bill. It was the duty of the Opposition to criticize propositions of this kind; but it was also the duty of the whole House, for this was not a political question. It was a serious matter, affecting every Member of the House, not as politicians, and it was in that view that he should support the Amendment; and he trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he had seen the bearing which this might have on trustees, and that, while the Lord Chancellor would have control over the accumulated funds, there was no one to interfere on behalf of those who were entitled in remainder, would accept the clause. He and other hon. Members thought the whole clause should be expunged; but, at all events, he hoped the Committee would adopt the clause, in order to provide protection for infants.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he could not speak on this subject in technical language, for he had not the good fortune to be a lawyer, and so he could only use ordinary terms. First of all, he must separate the first half of the clause from the last, upon which his hon. Friend had another Amendment. He assumed that they were now dealing with estates which were in the hands of the Court of Chancery, and the question was this—Supposing £10,000 were under the control of the Court of Chancery, and the dividends were to be paid to particular persons, whether they received them for their own benefit or as trustees, under what circumstances ought those persons to be able, if they thought the commutation now proposed was a good one, to accept the proposed terms? The clause, as it stood, provided that if the dividends were payable to some person who was in the enjoyment of the dividends, or if they were payable to trustees for the benefit of other persons who would receive the dividends, then those persons should be empowered to consent to the commutation under a general rule to be laid down by the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Advocate, or the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. That was the provision of the Bill as it stood. And then the Bill said that if the dividends were not being received, but were being accumulated, the consent should be given by the Lord Chancellor. He would dismiss the latter part of the clause, because he was prepared to accept the proposal of the right hon. Member for Westminster, agreeing with the right hon. Gentleman that where dividends were accumulated, and not actually received, in the case of England or Ireland, the consent should be given by the Judge of the High Court of Justice having jurisdiction over the matter. Then the question arose as to the great mass of estates which were in Chancery, and the dividends for which were not accumulated, but actually received. The proposition of his hon. Friend, if he understood it correctly, was that under no circumstances should the commutation take place, because he proposed to strike out of the Bill altogether the power to commute with regard to an estate that was in Chancery. If there were £10,000 in Chancery, the interest of which was payable either to

those who would enjoy it, or to trustees for the benefit of someone else, then, if the proposal of his hon. Friend was accepted, the power of taking a larger amount of Stock of a lower denomination would be refused. That was not, he believed, the intention of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), nor, as far as he understood it, was that the general view of the Committee. What the Committee appeared to him to wish was, that where property of this kind was in Chancery, and those who were now receiving the interest, whether they were the persons who would enjoy it themselves, or were trustees for others, assented to a commutation to lower Stock, there ought to be, in addition to their consent, some judicial consent; and the suggestion had been made by the hon. Member for Liverpool, that the judicial consent should be that of the Judge of the Court having jurisdiction over the cause or matter relating to the estate. Having listened very carefully to the speeches of Gentlemen on both sides, he was prepared to say that he thought that proposal would be an improvement to the clause; and, therefore, if the Committee would take that view, he would undertake, with his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General, to prepare words to carry out that proposal, not only with regard to cases where the interest was accumulated, but also in respect to all other estates in Chancery. He was glad to find that the suggestion was well received, and he hoped that, under these circumstances, the controversy would now cease.

MR. WARTON said, he felt bound to express his sympathy with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton as to the breach of the engagement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the Sitting to-night. It was clearly understood, if not stated, that the House was not to go into Committee of Supply until 12 o'clock, and, therefore, the hon. Member was right in regard to the complaint he had made. He held that absolute faith should be kept with regard to all Ministerial pledges, which were often very politely made, and equally politely broken.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call upon the hon. and learned Member's attention to the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. WARTON said, he thought there was some latitude allowed in such a case

as this; but he would not pursue the subject. He did not wish the House too readily to consent to the agreement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was not a trustee; but he was one of those unfortunate people who had been in Chancery for many years. Every now and then some money had to be invested in Consols or taken out, and from time to time he received dividends. He did not like to receive only 3 per cent for his money; but he still less liked to find that, in order to make this bad scheme appear a success, the money of people who could not help themselves was to be taken. He believed this clause was brought in for the purpose of making an unsound financial scheme appear to be a success; and not only that, but it was proposed to dishonestly lay hold of money which ought to be regarded as sacred.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had very fairly met one part of the objection he had expressed to this clause; but the Secretary to the Treasury had based his argument on two ideas, which were both unsound. In the first place, he had assumed that the assent of all the parties concerned would be required; but the practical effect of the working of the Court of Chancery would be that there would be no person to give consent; and in all these cases the matter would really be in the hands of the Lord Chancellor. Then the hon. Gentleman said the amount of the commutation would be the same; but that would depend entirely on the market value of the Stock. What he understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say was, that he would strike out the clause requiring the consent of the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Advocate, and the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and substitute for their approval, the approval of the Judge to whose Court the specific cause was attached. That alteration applied to the former part of the clause; and in reference to the second part of the clause, he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he would accept the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Westminster. But there was another class of trust funds referred to in the Amendment, and to which the right hon. Gentleman had not alluded—namely, charity funds. He, himself, was at present a member of a Com-

mittee engaged in investigating the working of the Charity Commission, and that Committee had ascertained that between £11,000,000 and £12,000,000 of Consols were standing in the name of the judicial trustees of charity funds. According to the doctrine of the Charity Commissioners, the Governing Bodies of the various Charities lost all control over those funds when those funds were in the hands of trustees. Assuming that the Chancellor of the Exchequer effected or proposed a conversion from Three per Cents to Two-and-a-Half per Cents, would the trustees be entitled to consent to a commutation, not only without consulting the Governing Body of the Charity, but against the wishes of the Governing Body? He had himself put that question, and the opinion of the Charity Commissioners was that they would have that power. He hoped that, in addition to the concession which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made, he would omit from the operation of this clause any power on the part of a trustee of charitable funds to agree to a commutation without the consent of the Governing Body.

MR. DIXON - HARTLAND said, there was another class of persons besides those receiving the dividends for their own benefit, and those for whom the interest accumulated. He was a trustee for a fund, a small portion of the interest upon which was paid up, while the larger portion was left to accumulate. How would the Chancellor of the Exchequer deal with such a case as that? Would he consider it a case in which the interest would not be liable to reduction, or, that being a case in which part of the money was received by trustees, would the trustees have power to consent to the reduction of the whole of the funds?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he would endeavour to make clear what was the proposal to carry out what his hon. and learned Friend and others had been advocating. It was not exactly proposed to substitute the consent of the High Court of Justice for the approval of the Lord Chancellor. It was a matter of addition, rather than substitution, although that part of the clause would probably need some amendment in language. That did not propose to deal with cases in which conversion was to

take place, but to arrange the machinery by which the conversion would be carried out. It provided that the Lord Chancellor and others might "make arrangements," &c.; but he thought it would probably be better to say—"make regulations as to the mode in which," &c., in order to make the matter more clear. Where the person to whom the dividends were payable for the time being was the only person interested, there his consent would be quite sufficient; they could guard their own interests. But the question was really as to cases in which there were other persons interested, and in those cases the Government proposed that although the person receiving the dividends consented, the transaction should not take place without the consent of the Judge of the High Court concerned with the case; and then the same provision was proposed with regard to moneys that were being accumulated, so that in no case where there was any person interested beside the person receiving, should it take place, except by the consent of the Judge to whose Court it was attached. He quite agreed that it was not enough to have the consent of the official trustees of charity money, but there must be the consent also of the Governing Body. He would consider how that could be met in the clause.

MR. GREGORY said, there were cases, not of charitable funds, but of funds belonging to Charities of which there was no Governing Body. He hoped the Solicitor General would look into such cases.

MR. TOMLINSON wished to know how the necessary cost of these transactions were to be provided for? In the ordinary course, where the sanction of a Judge was required, an order would be necessary; but an order was not obtained without a Court fee, and, as a rule, not without the services of a skilled practitioner, which it could not be expected would be obtained gratuitously. That was a point which might be considered by the Solicitor General.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) in reply, said, that that question was easily answered. The parties interested would have to pay the expenses. Did the hon. Member expect the taxpayers to pay the expenses of the holder of Government Stock altering their investments?

MR. TOMLINSON said, that the object of making these applications was not to obtain a benefit, but to escape the prospect of a loss. It was very important that these funds, which were frequently small in amount, should not be burdened with expenses for carrying out these transactions.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he thought that, speaking generally, a very great improvement had been made in this clause in consequence of the discussion; and he also thought the Government had acted with great propriety in so arranging the matter as to do away with all suspicion even of a political element. The matter was obviously one which depended greatly on the actual wording of the clause; and what he wished to say was that he hoped that Notice would be given of the words which the Solicitor General might decide upon, so that there would be time to consider whether they fulfilled and carried out what was desired.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) said, it was intended to bring up an Amendment on Report, and the proposed words would be previously placed on the Paper.

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 32, to leave out all the words after "consent," in order to insert "in the case of England or Ireland of the Judge of the High Court of Justice having jurisdiction over the cause or matter in which such dividends are being accumulated."—(Mr. W. H. Smith.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words *inserted*.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the next Amendment was upon a matter altogether different from that which the Committee had been discussing last. They had been discussing the case of funds in Chancery; but now he wished to consider funds in the names of private trustees. He proposed that no such person should carry out a conversion without the consent of the person interested. He could quite understand it being impossible in some cases to ob-

tain such consent, and in that case he proposed to act under this clause exactly in the manner which had been suggested, and to which the Solicitor General had agreed—namely, with the consent of the Judge. A similar provision was inserted by the Prime Minister when he proposed his commutation scheme in 1853; and if that was right and just where there was compulsory power, and the parties had a chance of receiving money in place of Stock, he thought *d fortiori* it should be inserted here, where there was no compulsory power. The principle was one to which he thought the Committee should adhere, even if modifications were made in the wording of the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 8, after "section," insert—"Provided, That, in all cases in which any trustee, executor, or administrator shall hold, or be entitled to any Three per Cent. Stock upon trust for or for the benefit of any person having a limited interest or under legal disability, no such trustee, executor, or administrator shall be at liberty to exchange such stock, or any part thereof, for Two and Three Quarter per Cent. Stock or Two and a Half per Cent. Stock, without the consent in writing of all persons beneficially interested in such stock if competent and willing to consent, but if such persons shall not agree, or if any of the parties shall be under legal disability, or if the Trust be such that persons yet unborn may become interested under the same, then, and in any or either of such cases, every such trustee, executor, or administrator may exchange such stock so held by him in such manner only as a Judge of the High Court of Justice in England or Ireland, or of the Court of Session in Scotland, may direct."—(Mr. H. H. Fowler.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) thought the clause, as at present drafted, went somewhat further than the Amendment of the hon. Member, because at present in certain and many cases a trustee had power to change an investment, and to sell out Three per Cents and buy Two-and-a-Half per Cents. He did not think it was reasonable that where a trustee could take that course, a limit should be put upon him to require him to do by a process of that kind what he could do in an easier way by conversion. Therefore, he apprehended that the hon. Member would rather wish to confine this clause to cases in which, but for this clause, a trustee could not change

an investment. There, no doubt, the case was different, because the trustee had not been entrusted with the power of exercising his own judgment, and there he thought it would be reasonable, where there were persons interested, who were not *sui juris*, or not able to agree, to have this Amendment. Therefore, he would accept the clause in spirit, and would consider the exact words with the hon. Member.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he was quite satisfied with that statement, and would withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 15, leave out from "and," to end of Clause.—(Mr. W. Fowler.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) thought some such provision might be perhaps necessary hereafter, though he should be sorry to commit himself on the subject now; but the Amendment was not applicable to this Bill, which was merely a Bill to allow holders of Government funds to exchange from one to another denomination. The Amendment, however, would alter the power of trustees as to investments generally, and he could not consent to it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 9 agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

(Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.)

COMMITTEE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE].

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [13th June], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill).

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

Mr. H. H. Fowler

MOTION.

LICENSING ACT (1872) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD, Bill to extend Section forty-one of "The Licensing Act, 1872," ordered to be brought in by Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD, Mr. WHITLEY, and Mr. ARMITAGE.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 248.]

House adjourned at One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 16th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Walsall and District Tramways, &c.) * (126); Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4) (Colchester, &c.) * (127); Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Alperton and Sudbury Water, &c.) * (128).

Second Reading—Royal Military Asylum, Chelsea (Transfer) * (114).

Committee—Report—Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) * (105).

Third Reading—Commons Regulation Provisional Order * (100), and passed.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE
—THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.

QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he supposed the House might assume, from the absence of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that the Government had no announcement to make as to the progress of the negotiations with France concerning the proposed Conference on Egypt?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he had no information to give. He felt sure that his noble Friend would have been present if it were possible to make such announcement.

Subsequently,

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I understand from my noble Friend (Lord Carlingford) that the purport of the reply he made to the Question of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) concerning the communications with France, was that my noble

Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) was not in a position at this moment to make any announcement. I am sorry I was not here in time to answer the Question of the noble Marquess, in the absence of Earl Granville. I have to inform the House that the communications with France have resulted in our coming to terms with the French Government, and that this arrangement will now be immediately communicated to the other Powers. It would not be courteous to them to make any statement until they have had the opportunity of considering them; and, therefore, it is not intended to make any communication to Parliament before next Monday.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Do I understand, then, that no information can be given to Parliament until the other Powers have all expressed their opinion Aye or No upon these proposals?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I did not make any such statement. What I did say was, that it would not be courteous to the other Powers to make any statement until Monday next.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN) — RUMOURED
FALL OF BERBER.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON asked, Whether the Government had received any confirmation of the report that Berber had fallen?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): No; I should say they had not. I have seen the telegrams on the subject which are circulated among the Members of the Cabinet, and the last information of the Government — a telegram which I have seen within the last hour — is to the effect that the statement of the fall of Berber is still open to great doubt. I am unable to say more than that the statement is not finally ascertained to be true.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—
WORKING AND EFFECTS.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, in rising to call the attention of the House to the working and effects of the Irish Land Act, and to move for—

"Return of the cases in which the Land Court has disallowed an application to fix a fair rent on the grounds specified in sub-section (4.)

of section 8. of the Land Act of 1881; and of the cases in which the landlord has claimed such disallowance under the said sub-section and the Court has refused the said claim; together with any reasons given for the said decisions in each case; Return of the cases in which the Court has fixed the value of a tenancy on the application of a landlord, with a view to the purchase of the same under the 3rd sub-section of section 1. of the Land Act of 1881; Return of the number of cases of application for fixing a fair rent in which the Court has fixed the said rent higher than the 'present rent,' with the percentage in each case,"

said: My Lords, I rise, in the first place, to move for the Returns, the number and titles of which I have placed upon the Paper of your Lordships' House. I had hoped that these Returns would not be objected to by my noble Friend below me (Lord Carlingford); and, indeed, I have no positive information that they will be objected to by him; but on Saturday last I received from my noble Friend who manages these affairs a Whip urging me to attend this House to-night to vote against my own Motion. Passing from that, however, I come to the subject I desire to bring under the attention of your Lordships' House. I shall not waste the time of the House of Lords by making any formal or elaborate apology for referring to this subject, and I have only one defence to make for bringing it forward. In Ireland, for the last three years, we have been making a tremendous experiment, and, in my opinion, we are bound to watch it. There is, however, one objection which may be made to the course which I am now pursuing. Some noble Lords may say that the time has not yet come for reviewing the operations of the Irish Land Act; and it may also be said that, in so far as regards the more important effects of it, they have been discussed *usque ad nauseam* already; but I do not believe the youngest Member of this House will live to see the time when the ultimate effects of the Act will have ceased. My Lords, before I sit down, I hope I shall prove to your Lordships that already there are effects produced which it is of the highest interest and importance to us all that we should seriously consider. Before I proceed further, I wish to explain to the House the principle on which I propose to investigate this great question. Since I have put my Notice on the Paper, I have been almost overwhelmed with communications from Ire-

land with respect to the details and results of the operation of the Land Act—communications both from proprietors, agents, and occupiers, and others who are neither, with innumerable cases which, no doubt, appear to be cases in which great injustice and hardship have been inflicted. But I wish to explain to the House and the public that, to-night, I shall make no use whatever of any private information, nor shall I involve myself in difficulties about these individual cases. I know perfectly well it will be said by my noble Friend, as he has said already—"Here are men who have been into a Court of Justice and been nonsuited, and who then come to your Lordships' House." I wish to found the arguments I shall address to your Lordships upon the great general results which cannot be denied, and which are borne out by evidence which is officially before the House in the Blue Books, and in the Reports of the Courts. As I have said, I shall avoid all individual cases. I shall not even refer to the Report of your Lordships' Committee. I do not agree in the opinions expressed by my noble Friend (Lord Carlingford), last year, in regard to the character of that Report; but, considering that that Report was very much disputed, I shall endeavour to do without it, and shall dispense with all the evidence given before the Committee, except so far as it is that of the officials of the Irish Government in the Irish Courts. When I first placed a Notice on the Paper of this House, I was prepared with elaborate statistics to prove to your Lordships that this Act had destroyed the value of the ownership of land in Ireland. I have had before the unpleasant duty of explaining to the House why I was unable to agree with my noble Friends below me in proposing this measure to Parliament; and I stated then that, in a few years, it would destroy the ownership in the hands of those who now hold the land, and give nothing to the tenants. I have no statistics now to offer to the House, because, since I placed this Notice on the Paper, an ample concession has been made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland in the other House in an able and, in many respects, melancholy speech. He has confessed that the ownership of land in Ireland is practically unsaleable. My Lords, that is all I shall start from. That being ad-

mitted, much of your Lordships' time will be saved. Now, I ask the House to observe what is the significance of that confession. What does it mean? We know that the ownership of land is a great object of desire in every civilized country; and we know that, in proportion to the civilization of the country, to the wealth of its inhabitants, and to the confidence they have in the law, in that direct proportion the ownership of land is valued, and the price of it is high. My Lords, we have heard a good deal of, and we know that the fate of Governments in this country hangs upon, what are called Votes of Want of Confidence; but the fate of Governments is determined by Votes of Want of Confidence which do not affect the character or reputation of the statesmen who fall in consequence of them. Such Votes may be carried by the chance action of all Parties equally, and turn out a Ministry. In such cases there is not even a presumption against the policy and public character of the Government. But there is another kind of Vote of Want of Confidence—as there is now in the present condition of matters in Ireland—when the whole people of a country refrain from the ordinary transactions between man and man. That means a tremendous Vote of Want of Confidence. It is a Vote of Want of Confidence in the law, and in the stability of the law, or in the principles under which the law is administered; and many are the Votes of Want of Confidence of that nature that have been passed against this Government with regard to their administration in respect to Ireland. The people of Ireland now look upon the ownership of land as a thing above all others to be avoided. Occupancy of land is at its full value; but the ownership of land is destroyed. I do not know whether the House will recollect, or whether my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack will himself recollect, a passage in a speech which he delivered in this House, at the time the Irish Land Act was being discussed. It struck me very much at the time, because I know there is no Member of the House who measures his words more exactly by the meaning he intends to give to them than does my noble and learned Friend. I remember he said this—"My Lords, we cannot expect that a whole nation will remain for any lengthened time in a fit

of insanity." Well, the immediate excitement of that time has passed away. Whether Ireland is returning to a sane state of mind is another matter; but nobody would describe the present state of Ireland in the words that the noble and learned Earl used on the occasion to which I have referred. In fact, the Government have been boasting for the last year or so of an immense improvement as regards the state of Ireland in relation to crime; and yet it is under these conditions—whether owing to the Coercion Act or not I do not now inquire—that the price of land has fallen steadily, and that the ownership of land is becoming more and more unsaleable, with the results which Mr. Trevelyan has explained fully to Parliament. Remember that the unsaleability of land has arisen entirely—and I think it is indisputable—since the adoption of the Bill of 1881. It used to be the boast of the Prime Minister—and many a time has he expressed it in Parliament—that the Act of 1870, for which he was mainly responsible, did not affect the purchase value of land in Ireland; and your Lordships will see, from the statistics, that during the 10 years that elapsed between the two Acts, the price of land—I refer to the transactions in the Encumbered Estates Court—remained pretty steady, the price at which land stood before rising rather than falling. My conclusion is that the unsaleability of the ownership of land in Ireland has arisen from the construction and the disastrous working of the Act of 1881. This is the subject to the elucidation of which I shall direct my observations tonight. I attribute the unsaleability which I have mentioned to the boundlessness and lawlessness of the power which is placed in the hands of three men—the Land Commissioners. Let me draw attention to the enormous extent of their power, and to its essentially lawless character. In the first place, as regards rent, the power of this triumvirate—I say nothing against them personally; I believe that they were as good men as could be got—as regards the amount of rent, their power is absolute and unrestrained. They might, according to the Act, raise the rent to the highest value in the way of rack rent, or they might lower it to what has been called the "prairie value;" and no man, and no tribunal, could call them to ac-

count. There was a special clause in the Act providing that, as regards the fixing of rent, their decisions were to be subject to no review, to no appeal, whatever. They were thus to be absolute. They might have reduced the rent of every farm in Ireland, which came within the purview of their powers, to the "prairie value," and nobody would have had a right to interfere. Let me remind the House of one remarkable circumstance. In a very celebrated speech delivered by the Prime Minister at Leeds, when the Land Act was just being started on its way, the right hon. Gentleman said that the doctrine of reducing rent to the "prairie value" was the gospel of spoliation. Now let me point out that, by the undoubted operation of this Act, these three men were entitled to adopt the whole of this gospel of spoliation, without being subject to appeal to anybody. I ask you, is there any kind of property which would retain its value under powers so absolute? Then look at the remaining powers with which these three men were invested by Parliament, for they are equally absolute in all respects. On questions of law, an appeal was open to the litigants; but it was provided that, if the appeal in the opinion of the Commissioners was at all frivolous, these gentlemen might refuse it. They thus might render altogether nugatory the right of appeal. Then, when an appeal to law had been made, and when, perhaps, an important decision had been given by the Court of Appeal in favour of one or other of the litigants, these gentlemen had the absolute power of counteracting the effect of the appeal so far as rent was concerned. Take the Dunseath case. The whole question of rent is involved in the interpretation of the law in that case. Well, there was an appeal in the case, and an important decision was given; but we none of us know what effect that appeal has had upon the Commissioners. They have the power of preventing it from having a practical effect; and before the Committee of your Lordships' House they said openly—"You must depend upon our personal honour." Well, that is not the way in which the laws of England and the liberties of England have hitherto been moulded. Let me give an illustration of the enormous powers placed in the hands of these gentlemen. When the Land Act was proposed in the

House of Commons, the Prime Minister distinctly said that he thought that it would be unjust to apply the principles of the Act to farms managed in what is called the English fashion, farms upon which the improvements have been made by the landlord and maintained by him. Well, what does the Act do? It does not prohibit this injustice. It gives the Commissioners the power of permitting, or not permitting, this great injustice so condemned by the Prime Minister. In a decision which I have recently seen, the Commissioners distinctly state that Parliament has left even this matter in their power. I mention this to show that, when a landlord has managed his farm upon the English and Scotch principle, although it has been admitted that, in such circumstances, it would be grossly unjust that the rent should be fixed by an arbitrary Court, even, in this case, these three men are given the full power of upsetting the obvious intentions of Parliament. Let me mention another point. Your Lordships will recollect the importance which some Irish landlords attach to the principle, that excessive value given by an incoming tenant for the goodwill of the holding should not be made ground for unduly lowering the rent. That point was brought forward before the Act assumed a final shape; and, as usual, words were introduced into the measure in "another place" which left everything uncertain, left everything to the will of these three gentlemen, because it was stated that the excessive value which could be given by a tenant for his farm was not of itself to be taken as a ground for reducing rent. What guarantee was there that the Commissioners would not mix up with the question of excessive value some other considerations? The fact is, that cases have been repeatedly decided in which enormous values have been given by the incoming tenant for the tenant right, and the bargain has subsequently been rendered less heavy by a reduction of the rent. This enormous power, this exorbitant unrestrained power, in the hands of three men—were they angels from heaven—could hardly fail to affect injuriously the ownership of land in Ireland. It has accordingly tended to the ruin of that ownership; and such powers unrestrained by law would lead to a similar effect upon

all other species of property. I pass now from the boundlessness of the power to its essential lawlessness; and this is a most important matter. When the Bill was drawn in the Cabinet, of which I had the honour to be a Member, it was an admitted principle of the Government that it was the duty of Parliament to give a direction to the Courts as to what was meant by fair rent. In his great speech in introducing the measure, the Prime Minister distinctly said that the Government considered it their duty to indicate at least the general principle on which fair rent was to be estimated. What was that principle? He said that the Court was to look to what a solvent tenant would pay, on the one hand. That was, roughly speaking, the market value. My Lords, in speaking of the market value, I am not speaking of the extreme competitive value, for which many articles were going in the course of this day's sale at Christie and Manson's; but at the current value which half-a-dozen men would be willing to give for the land. My right hon. Friend said that the Court was to look for its guidance to what a solvent tenant would undertake to pay on the one hand; and, on the other, to the interest of the tenant in his tenant right, or any rights he might have under the Ulster custom, or the Act of 1870. This, however, was a very vague direction; it was impossible to give any other; but, as far as it went, it was a clear declaration of what ought to be done. As far as principle was concerned, it rested ultimately upon market value, from which was to be deducted certain other values which were indicated in the Bill. But in the passing of the Bill through the House of Commons that, which Mr. Gladstone acknowledged to be a duty, was abandoned. I will not look to the cause of that abandonment. No doubt, when the Bill was so passing, it was found convenient by my right hon. Friend to smother up, under a general colloquial phrase, the absolute power which he wished to confer upon the Commissioners. But look at the effect of it, at the results of the decisions given under it, and at the position which that power occupies as regards any precedent, so far as I know, in the legislation of any civilized country. It left the question of fair rent, as regards its settlement, to those three

men absolutely without review, without guide, without direction, and they were at liberty to give effect to their idiosyncracies and caprices. Take an instance where tremendous effects might follow from the idiosyncracies of the Commissioners, entirely irrespective of any political or improper motive. I remember, nearly 40 years ago, when we passed the law abolishing Protection on corn, there was a very able agriculturist and manager on my own property, but a strong Protectionist. He came to the conclusion that, under Free Trade, it was impossible for agriculture to flourish; and the consequence was that, if he had the power, he would have reduced rents to the prairie value. Every man has his own idea about the effect of foreign competition; and it is quite possible for these three Commissioners, or a majority of them, to come to the same absurd conclusion as to the future value of land, and, on that score alone, to allow, as regards rent in Ireland, only a prairie value. What redress have we against crotchets of that kind? I wish the House to look for a moment at the immense significance of thus striking out of the Act of Parliament all indication of principle. The words "fair rent" and the fact of leaving a fair rent to a Court is not unknown in our legislation. There was an Act passed 30 or 40 years ago, with regard to owners of limited estates in Scotland, and that adopted this very expression. The object of the Act was to enable those owners to give leases; and Parliament said they might give leases, provided they gave them at fair rents. But Parliament said that a fair rent must be tested either by open competition, or some other process that might be satisfactory. There is another very remarkable instance, in which enormous powers given with respect to the regulation of rents were given under a strict limitation and definition of powers—I refer to the Settlement Act of India. The Government has assumed the power of regulating rents, more or less, all over India. But what is the principle upon which the Legislature has universally proceeded? Has it given those lawless powers to the Revenue officers, who fix the rents in India, which it has given to the Irish Commissioners under the Land Act? No; there is not one of the Settlement Acts of India which has not clearly defined, to the Courts, as the

basis of their calculation, the market value in the district as tested by what would be given by ryots having no occupancy rights. And not only that, but the Legislature has also, under strict limitations and definitions, indicated the precise percentage which the officers were to allow to the ryots below the market value. It is, I think, clear, therefore, that the lawless powers possessed by the Land Commissioners are altogether unprecedented in the legislation of any civilized State. In their reply to your Lordships' Report, the Commissioners say that valutors have no precise rule or principle; they go by the rule of thumb. That is true; but these men are not valutors. They were not appointed as mere valutors of land; they were appointed as redistributors of land. The conclusion which I come to is this—and a very important one it is—that under the name of the revaluation of rents, their object was to secure the redistribution of property. I do not, however, so much complain of that, as I do of its not being explained to Parliament at the time; for it is my impression that, if it had been then avowed, there would have been much greater difficulty in passing the Act through both Houses than was experienced. True, it was avowed at a recent meeting in Ulster, over which a noble Lord presided, for he said that there never had been such a redistribution of property as had taken place under the Act. It was understood at the time of its passing that we were appointing men to value rents on some definite scale and basis; but the result is that, both in regard to the extent of their power and the lawlessness of their power, these men have been given an absolute discretion which represents complete dictation and control over all the property of Ireland. Under these circumstances, I submit that their decisions are not, in any proper sense, judicial decisions. It has been assumed by the Commissioners themselves that we are estopped from examining their proceedings, because they sit as Judges, not subject to your Lordships' review, and they have ventured to scold your Lordships' House for having looked into their proceedings. I say, if their proceedings are judicial, we have, at least, a right to look into their bearings and effects; but I also say this—that de-

cisions which are not pronounced in the interpretation of any law, or according to the application of any known principle, are not judicial decisions in any proper sense of the word. The history of this word "judicial," as applied to these men's decisions, is very curious. The word "Court" in the Act was originally applied to the Civil Bill Court—a purely judicial tribunal. The Civil Bill Court was originally called in the Act "the Court;" but the Act went on to say that, for the purpose of fixing fair rents, the Commissioners shall be called the Court. Parliament is in a sense omnipotent; for there is nothing Parliament cannot do in the way of binding the subjects of the Queen; but there are some things which Parliament cannot do as regards the opinions and sentiments of men. Parliament cannot change the nature of things. You cannot make a decision to be judicial which, in its nature, is not judicial. I appeal to the great lawyers whom I have the honour to address, and to the great lawyers who, in former time, built up the noble fabric of English law; and I ask them not to allow such disparagement to be passed upon the great name in which they speak, and the sacred things which it is their duty to administer. I do not say that the decisions which have been come to have no value at all; but what I do say is that they have not the *status* of judicial decisions. In proof of this, I call, as witness, Judge O'Hagan himself; for he has confessed that, in the proper and true sense of the word, in regard to the application of the known principles of the law to the duties, obligations, and the rights of man, these decisions are not to be considered as litigations, in which one party is in the right and the other in the wrong. It is merely a settling more or less a matter of opinion. In fact, as I have said, the Commissioners started with tremendous powers, which were entirely unprecedented in any civilized legislation. What was the first step they took? It was a very proper step. They had appointed a large number of Sub-Commissioners, who wanted to know on what sort of principle they were to administer the law in the Provinces to which they were appointed. The Commissioners, therefore summoned the Sub-Commissioners to meet them, and we have an account

of the conversation which took place from a very authentic source. It was quite true that they had an account of the conversation from Professor Baldwin; but that account was confirmed by Mr. Litton and Judge O'Hagan. Now, what happened? It would be a laughable matter, if the interests concerned were not so serious. The Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners held a conversation for the purpose of educating each other. That was the description which was given of it. Now, how was the education conducted? The unfortunate Sub-Commissioners asked the leading Commissioners if they had any principle of jurisprudence by which they were to be guided? The Commissioners did not answer them, but asked another question. One Sub-Commissioner suggested one thing, and another man suggested a principle upon which fair rents could be declared, while a third made a further suggestion. We are told that the first, second, and third were equally divided, and that the meeting broke up in general laughter. Under these circumstances, the description given by Professor Baldwin, who said he was frightened when he and his colleagues were let loose upon Ireland, was most accurate. When I look at the consequences which followed I think the matter is a serious one. The principle on which fair rents were to be administered was not explained by the Commissioners at the meeting which I have mentioned; but it has since been explained in a great many publications. In one of these publications, a book of considerable authority, which was placed in my hands last week, and which was drawn up by a gentleman of high legal standing in Ireland, the author takes, as the basis of fair rent, a series of letters which appeared in *The Freeman's Journal*. Those letters he quoted, and refers to them as being well worthy of consideration. One of the letters states that fair rent does not mean market value, and that it was not the value of any portion of the produce. That is one of the principles laid down, and, therefore, it is put out of view in the consideration of rent, the result being, so far as I can see, that no tenant is to pay any rent, except stupid tenants who have no skill, and very poor tenants who have no capital, the real object being to limit rent to prairie value. Such being the power

given to those men, landlords may think themselves very lucky that they have obtained any rents at all, so far as the Government is concerned, under their guidance. No security is demanded by the Government, no security is demanded by Parliament, that anything but the prairie value shall be left for the landlord. Let us look at the actual work of the Commissioners. There are some methods by which we can get at results, and I ask the attention of the House while I give them the results. We may divide the holdings in Ireland which have come under the Court into three great categories—(1), the small cottier tenants, a very small class, numbering, I think, something like 120,000 of the whole tenants of Ireland; (2), tenants under free contracts; (3), the great bulk of the middle-class farmers. With reference to the cottiers, I am glad to see that the Sub-Commissioners and the Commissioners, when they were brought face to face with the difficulty which presented itself in the matter, gave a ruling which is at least intelligible. The first case which came before them was a case in County Monaghan, in which some 14 or 15 holdings of cottier tenants were concerned. In this case the Commissioners acted wonderfully well. They said that the holdings supported the tenants for a certain portion of the year, and that portion they were not to get for nothing. Secondly, they said they were of value as homes; and, lastly—recognizing in this case the element of market value—they said the holdings were of value to the owners; for if the tenants were removed the holdings could be added to a neighbouring farm. In that way they always came back to the principle of agricultural value. On these three principles, one being that of market value, the Commissioners proceeded to adjudicate. In typical cases, say, with a rent of £5 for nine acres of land, they said they did not find that the rent was exorbitant, or that there had been oppression on the part of the landlord; and, for that reason, one would have supposed that they would have left the rents as they were; but no, they reduced them, in one case, as much as 28 per cent. In other words, they fixed what may be termed an eleemosynary rent; and, no doubt, they did so on the grounds that they thought it a charity to the poor people to

give them their holdings at the smallest possible rent. Well, as far as my own sympathy and feeling goes, I can understand that; it is very pleasant to see a poor man relieved if one only regards the matter from the point of view of personal sympathy; but there are thousands of the working classes pay more than £5 a-year for a wretched room which gives them no means of sustenance, while these people have nine acres of land, which at least gives them some means of sustenance as well as shelter. Is there any principle in this that can lead to the settlement of the question? It is all very well to be charitable to the cottier tenantry; but there are 500,000 families in Ireland that have no land at all. What you are doing is, therefore, simply the fixing of an eleemosynary rent—to give for 1s. 6d. a-week what immense numbers of others would willingly give 2s. for; you are creating a new privileged class, avowedly on the ground of charity; but you are doing nothing for the large cottier class who have no land at all. Not only that, but the Bill before the other House sanctions a charge upon them of the highest rents which competition in the market will afford; for it provides that the tenantry, whose rents you are reducing in this way, may charge what they like for conacre land. I have made a calculation on the point, and I find that the rents which are charged for conacre land stand to the rents which your Commissioners have fixed for the farmer himself, in some cases as five to one, seven to one, and even as high as ten to one. So that, throughout the whole of Ireland, while you are reducing rents, the tenants may charge the highest competitive value for a few roods of land; you are fixing eleemosynary rents to those who are extracting these higher rents from their labourers. I was surprised the other day to observe a decision of the Commissioners with respect to cottages. The Act gives them power to require the erection of cottages by the farmer. I am not sure whether it was expected to work, or how far the requirement had a merely political object. The other day, in regulating rents, the Commissioners said—"You must erect cottages." What was the rent they were to get for them? A shilling a-week. Do not suppose they are cottages such as your Lordships would erect for la-

bourers. We have it on the evidence of the Bessborough Commission, from a witness that appeared before it, that a cottage in Ireland, with all "the conveniences of life," can be raised for £14. [*Laughter.*] There is no machinery in the Act to enable you to look after these cottages. Suppose, however, the cottages cost £20; a rental of £2 12s. will give something like 17 per cent on the outlay. I wish any of your Lordships could get that for the cottages you erect. That is the boon which the Act confers upon the labouring classes in Ireland. With regard to contracts, at the passing of the Land Act of 1881 there was a discussion as to whether farms at a rent of £150 should not be exempt altogether from its provisions, as in justice they ought to have been, seeing that the occupiers of them were quite capable of making their own bargains; but the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Waterford), in that generous spirit which I believe actuated the great majority of landowners, said he did not wish to exempt farmers of that class from the benefits of the Act. It was perfectly in the power of the Commissioners, and it would have been just to have said that these men were perfectly competent to make their own bargains, and to decline to interfere with their contracts; but, so far from doing this, they have interfered in the case of a farmer of the capitalist class, who pays £880 a-year, and who is as competent to make his contract as any Member of your Lordships' House. That man has had his rent reduced from £880 to £660, for no reason whatever, and against every reason of private or public interest. A friend told me of a tenant, a farmer in Oxfordshire, at a rent of £700, who came to him in successive years and said he could pay only £600 and £500, and my friend had to submit; because, if he had got rid of the tenant, the farm would have been thrown on his hands. But, in the Irish case, the tenant went to the Commissioners, because he knew that if he gave up the farm, half-a-dozen would apply for it. What public advantage do you gain by such a reduction? What public principle is satisfied? Are not many principles outraged by such decisions? The tenant may have been a stupid man, and might have prevented a better man from coming in, who, by better management of his stock,

might have been able to give the rent. Now, my Lords, I say when Members of the Government—and I have heard many Members of the Government do so—spout in the Provinces about the education of Ireland, and say that we should give Ireland institutions which should enable them to take upon themselves the banishment of their own affairs, what kind of education is involved in such a case as this? An education by which men, who are capable of paying £800 a-year, are told that they can go to a Land Commission and get a reduction of their rents. I know very well why these men were included. It was confessed in one of the speeches in the other House. You are simply reducing the rents of men of great capital, who are perfectly able to make a bargain for themselves, because the Government wishes to give them a bribe. Is that the education which you desire to give to the Irish people? Well, now, my Lords, I have dealt with the cottier tenantry and the other extreme. Let me now say a word about the third class—the great bulk of the tenantry, the middle-class farmers. I wish, however, to say this first—that a great many arguments used in this House and put forward from time to time are arguments of no effect. The Irish landlord comes forward and says—“My estate is deeply mortgaged, and my only margin is 25 per cent, and that margin is cut off.” We are very sorry in such cases; but it is no argument from a public point of view. Such a landlord is very unfortunate. His ancestors or himself have been extravagant. But the fact that his margin is struck off is, in itself, no proof of the injustice of the decision. But, on the other hand, there are a good many arguments on the side of the Government which may equally be dismissed. For example, all the Members of the Government, all the subordinates of the Government, say—“We are very much surprised to find that Irish rents were so high as they are found to be. We never expected it. We never anticipated the amount of the reduction. We are very sorry for it.” There is a beautiful circularity about this argument. It comes to this—we think all the rents are exorbitant. This is a nice way of argument. I go into this question in this way. Is there any other than a mere eleemosynary cause that has led

to these reductions of Irish rents? My noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with whose opinions on this question I am not disposed to quarrel, has published two remarkable essays. Was it one or two essays?

THE EARL OF DERBY: One only.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: Well, one is quite enough. My noble Friend was kind enough to send this essay to me, with every word of which I agree. I am quite sure we are thoroughly at one on the merits of the Irish Land Act. But he has since had the advantage of joining the Government. My noble Friend is a wonderful philosopher. He is inclined to submit to the inevitable. I know no one to whom I should rather go to get some comfort in my distress. My noble Friend, in a speech the other day, said that, after all, those Irish landlords have not suffered at all more than the great bulk of the English and Scotch landlords have suffered.

THE EARL OF DERBY: Most true.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: Yes; it may be quite true; but still there is this distinction and this difference. In the first place, I defy my noble Friend to prove that in England or Scotland there has been a reduction all over, in all the Provinces, everywhere, at all comparable to that which has happened in Ireland. In a great many parts of England there has been no reduction at all; while in others it has been very severe. I do not think my noble Friend would be quite satisfied if a Commission went down into Lancashire and struck off 25 or 30 per cent of his rent, telling him that it was no more, if so much, as many Essex landlords had suffered. What I want to know is, have these reductions in Ireland been made on a principle—are they natural, or are they purely artificial? I wish to say this to my noble Friend. I do believe that, in a good many parts of Ireland, rents had become excessive from two causes. In the first place, there were a certain number of estates in which the old middlemen leases had fallen out; but the old middlemen rents had never been reduced. That would account for a certain number. But there is another cause. I will not say anything offensive to the poor cottier tenantry of Ireland as regards their poverty and condition. I feel much sympathy for them. But I believe in many of those cases rents have become excessive from

long-continued bad cultivation; and the rents have to be lowered, not according to the intrinsic value of the land as it would have continued had it been in good hands, but to the value of the land as it was in the comparatively poor and ignorant hands in which it then was. Professor Baldwin has allowed so much. He said—

“We dealt with the land, not as it might be in better cultivation, but as we found it in the hands of these poor people.”

The question arises—has there been in Ireland, putting aside these two causes, any general depreciation in the value of agricultural land? That is the question which we ought to have answered. I have asked some Irish land agents of great reputation, who have expressed to me the opinion that the value of the land has depreciated in Ireland. But what has happened when a landlord is able to let a farm in his own possession, on which there are no tenant claims? Is there any depreciation then? That is the test we apply in England and Scotland, and by that test, should it be applied, as we wish it might be, we abide. Can we get for our farms what we gave for them? I have conclusive evidence to quote to your Lordships that in this case there is no deficiency in the value of land. Your Lordships' Committee examined two great authorities—Mr. Lynch, the Registrar of the Encumbered Estates Court, who is thoroughly acquainted with the condition of the land in almost the whole of Ireland, and one of your own Commissioners—Mr. Litton—and their opinions were that when farms were left in the hands of the landlords, free from all tenant claims, they brought all over Ireland as high a rent as ever. Besides, the price of wheat, which has fallen so low in England, affects but a fraction of the land in Ireland. The prices of butter, barley, and oats have not diminished, but enormously increased, since Griffith's valuation. Therefore, we may take it as an ascertained fact that whatever depreciation there has been in Irish rents has been artificial, and not natural; that it has not arisen from the failure of the crops, from want of a market, or in the want of confidence on the part of the people in the agricultural prosperity of their country; that it has arisen from artificial causes which are purely in the breast of the Land Commissioners. There

is one case in which reductions may have been made—that is, the right of the tenants in their own improvements. I quite believe that great reduction has been made in that respect. But I ask this question. Is there any principle in estimating the value of these improvements? Where landlords have made the improvements the Commissioners tell us they make very little addition to the rent in respect of them. But with respect to the tenants, I wish to direct the attention of the House to a most remarkable answer given by Judge O'Hagan to your Lordships' Committee. He was asked on what principle the valuation of the tenant's goodwill had been made? He declined to answer. He folded his judicial robes around him, and said—“We are Judges—your Lordships have no right to ask us.” But he said more. He said it would be impolitic to state the principle upon which they valued tenants' interest. Impolitic to explain to men the principles on which their property is disposed of one way or the other! Why impolitic? Mr. Justice O'Hagan answered the question. He said that the Sub-Commissioners had gone on principles so utterly at variance with each other that it would be utterly impolitic that they should be known. That is the excuse given by Judge O'Hagan before your Lordships' Committee; but it is one which is plainly made for hiding the operation of the Act, and it is one in the highest degree against public policy, for men have a right to know the laws, and to know the principle on which those laws are interpreted and administered; and to keep that principle secret, although it may, by eleemosynary rents, give you a remedy, yet it will never satisfy men's minds. What has been the result of all these proceedings? The first result is that landlords' improvements are stopped in Ireland, except in the case of those comparatively few acres that they may have in their own occupation. I asked a noble Friend of mine, who has a large estate in Ireland, and who has what might be termed a “Treasury Bench mind,” which induces him to accept any excuse for the conduct of the Government on any subject, how he managed to make both ends meet now that 10 per cent of his income had been struck off? and he replied—“Oh, I have stopped the whole of my improvements.” And

the same thing has occurred all over Ireland. Is this a satisfactory result of your legislation? The rental of Ireland before the passing of the Act used to be £17,000,000; it is now reduced to probably £15,000,000. The whole of those £2,000,000 is withdrawn from the improvement of the soil of Ireland. Now, let us look at another result. It was said, when this Act was under consideration, that Irish landlords would be reduced to the position of annuitants. But their position is far worse than that. They are not only annuitants; they are, in addition, precarious annuitants. For this dreadful and arbitrary tribunal, the Land Court, acting on no law, under no control, acknowledging no principle, and thinking its duty is to conceal the principle of its working, is not acting once for all. It is a process which has to run its course perennally every 15 years. When a landlord lays out money on improvements, he expects a return in a certain period. But, under present circumstances, he can have no confidence that, in 15 years, the judicial rents will not be reduced; and therefore he will have to charge 12 or 13 per cent in order to recoup himself in the 15 years. That is an impossible burden to throw on the tenants. If a landlord lays out money, he does not know but that the next set of Commissioners will so reduce his rent as to deprive him of his return. Under those circumstances, a man would now be a fool to lay out a shilling upon improvements except upon land in his own possession. The question has been asked of the Commission—what will be the future position of the landowner? The answer given was—he will be able “to shoot, fish, and hunt.” That is the practical teaching of the Liberal Government in their legislation on the land, with regard to the duties of Irish landlords. Your excuse for these proceedings is that you wish to limit the price of land to the tenant. Have you succeeded in doing that; has land been made cheaper in Ireland for all time? No; not by a single sixpence; and you cannot, until you limit the price paid for tenant right. The most exorbitant prices are being paid for tenant right; for you have placed in the fore-front of the Bill the maxim that the tenants shall get the best price they can for their right. I saw, the other day, a case where 40 years’ purchase was given for

a farm worth £40 a-year, and then the purchaser applied to the Land Commissioners to reduce the rent. The consequence of all this is that the rents in Ireland will in future be rack-rents in the highest sense of the term. We who objected to this measure were taunted with being hard political economists. But you have not got rid of political economy and the doctrine of competitive value. It breaks through all your precautions, and the result in Ireland will be that future generations will have to pay every sixpence wrongfully taken from the landlords. I have now to ask the House and to ask the country the important question—what has been the effect of this Act on political Parties? You have established in the minds of the Irish people—and the idea has spread from the Irish people to others—that it is a function of the Executive Government to regulate the price of land to particular classes of the community. That, I believe, has been an unforeseen result of the Act of 1881, through the operation of the Sub-Commissioners, whom I, for one, had fancied would be subordinate bodies, instituted for the purpose of collecting evidence to be submitted to the principal body; and that, on such evidence so collected, men with something of a judicial or a quasi-judicial character would adjudicate. We never dreamed that the whole powers of the Commission would be delegated to a number of inferior bodies, such as those who now exercise them. It is true that there is an appeal to the Chief Commissioners; but the Chief Commissioners have power, among other things, to consider questions of policy; and we have their own admission that they did consider questions of policy, and it was almost impossible for them to reverse the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners, and deprive the tenant of that which had been given to him in open Court. I do not desire to make any personal charges against the character of the Sub-Commissioners. But the nature of their appointment was not such as to insure any very great confidence. I am quite sure that Earl Spencer has exercised his powers of selection in the most conscientious manner; but not less than 81 gentlemen were required, to whom these absolute and tremendous powers with regard to rent were given all over Ireland, and it was

not possible to get so many men of high judicial character and standing to exercise such powers. I will illustrate the composition of these inferior bodies. I take the case of Professor Baldwin; and I may say that there was no evidence given before the Bessborough Commission into which I went more carefully than his, as I was extremely interested in it. I believe him to be an impulsive, generous-minded Irishman, and a perfectly honest man; and I do not know that any Government could well have avoided appointing him to be one of these Judges. But what did my noble Friend (Lord Carlingford) tell us of him himself? I look upon my noble Friend as one of the gentlest of men, and am quite sure he would not say anything ill-natured if he did not mean it. But what did he say of Professor Baldwin in connection with a certain quotation? He said that he was liable to be influenced by the atmosphere of the circumstances by which he was surrounded. Now, my Lords, can there be a more dangerous character than that for a Judge; and yet he was one of the men to whom is committed the fortunes of thousands of his fellow-countrymen? Let me take another case; one in which I think the Government admit that they have made a mistake. There was among these 81 gentlemen one who, prior to being appointed a Sub-Commissioner, had been distinguished for the violence of his speeches against landlords, and his abuse of Judges and the judicial mind, and who had committed himself to the most absurd principles in regard to the valuation of land. He made a speech in which he said the landlords would have a great deal too much rent even under the lowest valuation. His idea was that they should take Griffith's valuation, and make a deduction from that, and then divide the result by two, and that the remainder would be ample.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL): That was a misreport.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: I am very glad to hear that the passage was misreported; but there was another passage in his speech which I confess struck me more, and I hope my noble Friend will be able to say that it also was misreported. It was a passage in which he attacked the judicial character—a violent attack upon the Judges as such. He said

the legal mind was fearfully and wonderfully made, and that he would back it against any other for making things clear as mud. That was the refined and elegant language in which that gentleman, who was appointed to the Sub-Commission, spoke of the Judges of the Irish people. Now I turn to another case, a still more remarkable illustration of the effects of the Act. I refer to the speeches of the late Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Porter, at present the Master of the Rolls in Ireland. That Gentleman, therefore, now occupies a high judicial post, and I daresay that now he is removed from the temptation of the hustings he may make a very good Judge. But the terrible thing is this—that when he was a Member of the Government, and was making a political campaign in Londonderry, he openly held out the action of the Government in reducing the rents as an inducement to the tenants in the North of Ireland to give him their votes, and he said the reductions of the Land Commissioners were altogether inadequate. Is that treating the Land Commissioners as a judicial body? Is that treating their decisions as judicial decisions? Is it not openly making their operations a matter of policy? I do not, in the least, object to the Solicitor General having said—"We are the Party who brought in this Land Act, and we are the Party to whom you owe it." That would have been fair enough. But that is not what the Solicitor General said. He said—"We are the only Party who can work it, and this Act will be worthless if it passes into other hands." In other words, he made use of it for purposes of political corruption. I complain, and I have a right to complain, of such utterances from an official of the Government. I do not, for one moment, blame my noble Friends below me. I am quite sure this thing has shocked them just as much as it has shocked me. I am sure of that, and that they think it is a tremendous mistake. But, my Lords, what I have had to complain of, on more than one occasion, is the free trade in opinion which this Government supports—opinions on the part of their subordinate Members—opinions which the majority of the Cabinet would doubtless repudiate, but as to which they are silent. In this case, instead of reproving, they even

promoted the official, the result being the steady progress towards an anarchy of opinion, at a time when, of all others, public men ought to discourage violent language against the fundamental principles on which society is founded. The last instance I will give in this connection is one which I still more regret, and that is the language which was made use of on a particular occasion by a Member of the Government, an old Friend of mine, and for whom I entertain the highest personal opinion—I mean the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Last year I ventured to express the gratitude which, I am sure, was felt by men of all Parties to Lord Spencer for undertaking the government of Ireland at the moment he did. In my opinion, the same thanks are due to all his subordinates as well, and especially to the Chief Secretary. He was the son of a distinguished father and the nephew of a brilliant uncle; and, in my opinion, he has shown much of the ability of the one, and something of the brilliancy of the other; and in his personal and political honour I place the most absolute reliance. But look what happened. A deputation came to my right hon. Friend from Ulster openly saying—"We are the representatives of the Liberal Party in Ulster. We call upon you to dismiss those valuers whom the Commissioners have appointed"—and here I may say that the Executive Government had nothing to do with the matter. "The Commissioners are not reducing the rents as they ought to reduce them. We are the supporters of your Party in Ulster." Look at Mr. Trevelyan's conduct as regards his reply. He said—"Do not talk to me of Party. This Irish Land Act was intended for all Parties, and Party has nothing to do with it." Brave words! and, so far as his intention was concerned, I doubt not true words. But what did he go on to say? He went on to say—"We will watch the operations of these Commissioners; we will see whether the interests of the tenants are properly protected—as much protected under the system of valuation as they had been before that system was adopted; and you may depend upon it that if we—the Executive Government—are not satisfied with them—a change of policy will follow." Was there ever such a fount of corruption opened; was ever

such a wanton temptation placed before the eyes of the people? Parliament is busily engaged in passing Acts against bribery and corruption, and you are establishing for the country a principle that every Member of every successive Government may appeal to the constituencies, and make it allowable for them to say that their political Party will give a larger slice of the property of others to them than another political Party. For political bribery against which you have legislated, at least this may be said—that the candidate spends his own money; but in this terrible political corruption the Government does not do so, but gives the money of others. What hope of escape have we from this terrible state of political corruption? Is it not going to be every 15 years? Mr. Trevelyan said the Act was intended to be final; but I rejoice to say that that is not the language of Mr. Gladstone. From time to time, for every 15 years, this process of political corruption will go on; and, as regards a large part of the tenantry in Ireland, its operation is not postponed for 15 years. Many tenants have not gone into Court at all, and some people imagine that their landlords are better off in consequence; but, in my opinion, these landlords are worse off than the landlords of tenants who have availed themselves of the Act, for they never know when their tenants may go into Court. By a most iniquitous provision in the Act, a landlord is not entitled to go into Court unless he raises the rent; and his tenants may lie by until a new Government is appointed, and new Commissioners are elected, from whom they may hope to gain greater advantages. Was there ever such a position as this? Are you surprised that the ownership of land should have become a *damnum hereditas*, a curse in Ireland? A friend of mine some time ago said to a tenant—"Why do you not buy your farm? The landlord will sell it, and the Government will advance you the purchase money on the best possible terms." The tenant replied—"Why should I exchange a position in which I have everything to gain for one from which I have nothing to hope?" As regards the future, when are we to come to that happy time in Ireland, or, as Mr. Gladstone says, that time of perfect freedom in land? Never, under the *régime* of the present

Government; never, under their destiny; unless, indeed, now that the Government, who are being driven from blunder to blunder, and who have brought in a Bill for the sale of Irish land, can raise a large number of new proprietors, those proprietors should kick over the traces and abolish this Act of 1881, which, I venture to say, would never have passed, if there had been 50,000 or 100,000 proprietors in Ireland. I hope that under the operation of this new Act, into which the Government have been driven, there will be a large multiplication of owners in Ireland; for I feel sure that then all the restrictions of the Land Act of 1881 must be speedily done away with. It may be a cynical observation, but it is true—that there is nothing like giving a man possession of property to make him understand its natural duties, and its natural rights. I am in hopes that a large number of the peasantry in Ireland may be persuaded to buy their farms, if they can get rid of the conviction—which, alas! is only too firmly rooted in their minds—that they may get hold of the land without paying anything; if they will consent to buy their farms, they will be free to let them; and will not they let them! The only hope of escape from the difficulties engendered by the Act is to create a body of men who will see its fallacies and its injustice, and who will rebel against it in their own interests, and not in the interests of others. Before I sit down, I wish to say a few words in regard to the answer which I have no doubt will be made, and which I know is made by certain of my noble Friends who are connected with the Government. They say that I forget, and that others forget, what is called the political situation in which they were placed—the danger of civil war of which we were within measurable distance. No; I do not forget the danger of the political situation; but what was that danger? It was, in the first place, the danger caused by the existence of a large number of very poor persons who were in actual distress. Well, nobody in Parliament would have objected to any temporary measures for their relief; and I am bound to say that towards those measures of relief it would have been perfectly fair to call for a very large contribution from the owners of land.

The Duke of Argyll

But the other danger, what does it arise from? The real danger to be faced in Ireland is the anarchy of opinion. Do you think that you have done anything to do away with that by passing a law which is so full of fallacies as this law? No; you have unsettled the minds of men; you have not settled them. The fundamental ideas of property have been uprooted from the minds of men by your legislation and your action. You will not settle men's minds by putting into your legislation ambiguous phrases, leaving to unjudicial minds to give them what interpretation they please. My conviction is, that the result of this Land Act has been to increase the political dangers which exist in Ireland; and this state of things which I have described demands the most serious consideration. I think the Government have put forward, under the name of law and justice, nothing but caprice and the pressure of political agitation. They have done much to cover the land with false guides who mislead the people in regard to the rights and property of their neighbours, and I feel sure that you have distinctly lowered and deteriorated the character of Parliament. The noble Duke concluded by moving for the Returns of which he had given Notice.

Moved, That there be laid before the House—

“Return of the cases in which the Land Court has disallowed an application to fix a fair rent on the grounds specified in subsection (4.) of section 8. of the Land Act of 1881; and of the cases in which the landlord has claimed such disallowance under the said subsection, and the Court has refused the said claim; together with any reasons given for the said decisions in each case;

“Return of the cases in which the Court has fixed the value of a tenancy, on the application of a landlord, with a view to the purchase of the same under the 3rd subsection of section 1. of the Land Act of 1881;

“Return of the number of cases of application for fixing a fair rent in which the Court has fixed the said rent higher than the ‘present rent,’ with the percentage in each case.”—*(The Duke of Argyll.)*

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): My Lords, I should feel considerable difficulty were I to attempt to travel over the ground which my noble Friend (the Duke of Argyll) has covered in his speech. It was impossible to guess the course which he would take from his Notice of Mo-

tion, which does not attack the Land Act, nor its administration. The noble Duke is a formidable man to follow, even when, as in the present case, I believe him to be absolutely in the wrong, and to have delivered a speech of great eloquence and ability, without any clear conception of the subject with which he has dealt. My conviction is, that as regards this Act, which I may be permitted to remind the House is now the irrevocable law of the land, my noble Friend has never attained to a conception of the real facts of the Irish Land Question. My noble Friend forms to himself the idea of an Ireland which is very different from the reality. In this great matter of the Land Act, he forms to himself a picture of an imaginary Ireland—it may be a logical Ireland, perhaps a Scotch Ireland; but, at all events, something absolutely unlike the true Ireland. In fact, the state of my noble Friend's mind has never allowed him, from the time the measure first came before Parliament down to the present, to give fair play to his own great powers on this subject. His speech has been a speech which would have been perfectly in place upon the second reading of the Act. It would have been an admirable speech, for his own purpose and from his own point of view, on that occasion; but it can have no application at the present time, for whatever the merits of the Irish Land Act may be, it constitutes now the unalterable tenure of land in Ireland. I rejoice in that fact; I believe the Act will be a great blessing to Ireland; and that it will prove as great an advantage to the landlords of that country as to the tenants themselves. If my noble Friend thinks he can, in any essential respect, alter the Land Act, he is entirely mistaken. He might as well propose to repeal the Irish Church Act or the Catholic Emancipation Act, as to think of undoing the Irish Land Act. Therefore, I cannot understand what the motive of my noble Friend may have been in making his able statement to the House, beyond the relief to his own mind of giving expression to the intense hatred which he feels to the Land Act. My noble Friend began by saying that he was overwhelmed by letters complaining of the decisions of the Irish Land Courts. Of course he is. From the time he proclaimed his intention of attacking the

Act, no doubt he would be overwhelmed by letters of that kind. But my noble Friend must remember that he is not the sole Court of Appeal on this subject. There is a Court of Appeal in Ireland. My noble Friend also spoke as if rent in Ireland was left absolutely at the discretion of a secret tribunal. But he knows very well, whatever else may be said on the subject, that there is a most careful and elaborate system established for the purpose of hearing and deciding these rent cases. They are to be tried in the first instance, before five gentlemen, of whom one must be a person of legal position; and if a mistake is made, there is an appeal to the Land Commission above. The words of my noble Friend were not fair towards the gentlemen composing that Commission. I say, with the utmost confidence, that it would be impossible to create in any country a tribunal more worthy of confidence than the Land Commission. The men composing it are of the highest capacity and character; and it is not to be tolerated that such a body should be accused or suspected, either of incompetence or of partiality. It is regarded, indeed, with feelings on both sides which afford in themselves very considerable evidence of its impartiality. In proof of that one need only look to the fact that it is persistently and constantly attacked by the extreme organs of the two classes, and more frequently by the representatives of the tenants than of the landlords. In point of fact, no fair man in Ireland doubts for a moment either the industry, the pains, the ability, or the impartiality of the Court of Appeal, a Court to which every Irish landlord who thinks himself aggrieved by the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners can and does constantly appeal. My noble Friend went on to speak of the absolute and dictatorial powers of the Land Commission; and, as far as I can gather, he regrets that Parliament has not laid down, for the guidance of the Commission, any rules or principles by which they could ascertain a fair rent. That question, like all the other questions my noble Friend raised, has been discussed over and over again in this House, and we, on this Bench, have endeavoured to explain how the matter stands. We have said, and I repeat it that, in our opinion, and in the opinion of most people who know anything about the matter, it would be

impossible to lay down, in an Act of Parliament, any rules or principles to govern the Irish Land Courts in the exercise of those powers of compulsory arbitration in the matter of rent which were the essence of the Act. All that could be done was to obtain competent arbitrators, who would be able to say what a fair rent was between landlord and tenant. That, I believe, has been done. And when my noble Friend talks with such unction of Professor Baldwin, I should like to remind him of what Professor Baldwin said, when he was asked by the Committee of your Lordships' House what his own principles were. He said he ascertained what a fair rent was by his own skill and his own experience—that he had a vast experience of the value of land in all parts of Ireland, and he made use of that experience to arrive at what a fair rent was. That was all that could be drawn from Professor Baldwin himself, of whose opinions the noble Duke made so much. My noble Friend talks as if the Land Commission was aiming at bringing down the land of Ireland to prairie value; or, at all events, as if it had that power if it chose to use it. I cannot conceive a more striking illustration of the prejudice of my noble Friend. To say that the Land Commission is bringing down the land to prairie value is absolutely opposed to the facts of the case, and to the knowledge of everybody in Ireland. I am astonished my noble Friend should make such a statement.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: All I said was, that under the Act you left them that power.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL): Well, then, I absolutely contradict it. It is notorious that the Act has made any such conduct on the part of the Commissioners absolutely impossible, and the idea that they can do so is really only a bugbear of my noble Friend's mind. I do not believe that there is a human being except himself who would say such a thing. My noble Friend next talked of English-managed estates, and included them in his application for Returns, which, of course, I shall be very glad to furnish. It is very right, wherever there are such estates, that they should be treated fairly; but so few are they, that during these three years there have been only half-a-dozen cases in which any landlord has appealed on this point;

Lord Carlingford

and it is a point upon which any landlord would have appealed had he felt himself wronged. The noble Duke spoke largely of the high value of the tenant right. Now, it is quite true that tenant right sells for a high and sometimes for a very excessive value. It is true that the occupation right conferred upon the tenant by the Land Act is a very valuable one in the eyes of the Irish tenants, and very often a very excessive price is given for it. But is that in itself a reason why the rent of that particular holding should not be reduced by the Land Commissioners, if they consider the rent to be excessive? The noble Duke seems to think that the simple fact of the tenant having given a large price for the occupation of the holding is a proof that his rent should not be reduced. That I am quite unable to admit. The Land Courts admit, and, I know, act upon the admission, that the payment of a high price for the occupation is a presumption in favour of the value of the farm. But beyond that it is quite impossible to go. The payment is made for the tenant's interest. There is the tenant's interest and there is the landlord's interest in the farm; in equity and morals there have always been these two interests. Until lately, however, the tenant's interest was not guarded as it is now. The protection of the law was devoted to the landlord's interest only. Now, both interests are equally guarded. I will add one word as to the supposed dictatorship of the Irish Land Courts. I entirely question and deny the description which the noble Duke has given. The noble Duke never, for a moment, referred to the fact that there are two hearings in every case. That, in itself, is an important matter. There is the first hearing before the Sub-Commissioners, and then there is the re-hearing, if any party desires it, before the Land Commission. The decisions which the noble Duke has been condemning are decisions as to the amount of rent to be paid for particular farms. They are, in my belief, judicial decisions in the sense of their being perfectly impartial, and based upon the best evidence that the Court can find; but beyond that they are not, in the ordinary sense, judicial. The system is one of compulsory arbitration in the matter of the rent of land. There are, I may point

out, two methods of obtaining a judicial rent under the Act. The power of declaring a judicial rent is not confined to the Land Commission; it is equally given to the County Courts, and I do not think my noble Friend will dispute the judicial character of those Courts. The power has been exercised by the County Courts in Ireland to a very considerable extent; and the result has been that, upon the whole, the judicial rents fixed have been somewhat lower than the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners; or rather the percentage of reductions has been somewhat higher in the case of rents fixed by County Courts than in the case of rents fixed by the Sub-Commissions. Mr. O'Connor Morris, a County Court Judge in Ireland, who has taken a very impartial view of the Land Act, has lately published in *The Contemporary Review* an article on the subject; and he gives it as his opinion that, upon the whole, the effects of the three years' working of the Act are good, and full of hope and promise for the country. I should like to refer the noble Duke to that article. My noble Friend went through, I think, two or three classes of tenants, and contended that the operation of the Land Act, in all cases, was mischievous and objectionable. In the case of the small cottier tenants, he said that the rent fixed was a mere charitable, an eleemosynary arrangement. Well, I do not know that I should so describe it; but I do not know that it is necessary to question the description. It is, of course, difficult to say what the cottier tenant ought to pay for his holding; but I would put it to the House, is it not more likely that such tenants would be fairly rented by the arbitration of a public authority than by a landlord who possesses absolute power, and may levy whatever rent he chooses to demand? Then the noble Duke said—"Why are not the larger tenants in Ireland treated as they are in England and Scotland?" The answer is, because these men have created themselves everything which constitutes a farm, except the land itself. Unless that fact is recognized, it is absolutely impossible to form any sound opinion upon these matters of Irish land or Irish legislation. And what does the noble Duke know of the facts and particulars of the cases? How can he say that the

rent was reduced in cases to which he referred without any reason?

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: The Judges refused to give reasons.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL): How is it known that, in any of the cases in which the reduction of rents is complained of, there had not been improvements made by the tenants upon which, to a great extent, the decision of the Commissioners would depend? There is no comparison to be drawn in this respect between England and Ireland. If the English tenant is dissatisfied, he can leave his farm, as so many tenants have done of late years; I am convinced the losses of English landlords during these years have been utterly underrated; and I believe that the constant discussions about Irish land have partly contributed to that result. ["Oh!"] I happen to have some experience of landowning in both countries, and I speak with personal knowledge as to the immense difficulties and losses of English landlords. Are we to be told, then, that all the present difficulties, the sufferings and privations of Irish landlords, which I know very well are severe, are the consequences of an Act passed for the very purpose of endeavouring to deal with the tremendous difficulties of the times? I utterly protest against such an idle idea; although it may commend itself to the Scotch mind of my noble Friend on the Cross Bench (the Earl of Wemyss), with his devotion to liberty and property. To my mind, the difficulties in which Irish landlords found themselves involved three or four years ago were scarcely exemplified in the agrarian history of any nation. They were the inheritors of the evils of the past; they had inherited what I believe to have been an abominable tenure of land utterly alien to Ireland, introduced simply by conquest, and unsuitable to the conditions of the country. I believe that that tenure was certain to prove as impossible an institution as was a State Church in Ireland. Dealing, however, with these two classes of tenants, my noble Friend assumed that the Land Commissioners were reducing rents all round; and it is constantly said that rents have been reduced some 19 per cent by the Commissioners, and 21 or 22 per cent by the County Courts; but what is the real fact? The Land Com-

missioners do not seek for cases; they deal only with those which are brought before them; and it is fair to assume that those tenants who incur the cost and the risk of applying to them are not those who are moderately rented. These tenants, by the latest Returns, are about 70,000 out of more than 500,000 occupiers; and the 19 per cent of reduction is upon the rents, not of Ireland generally, but of the 70,000 tenants. The appointment of valuers, referred to by my noble Friend, was not a matter of vital importance; it was a mere question of administration; it excited a good deal of prejudice against the Commissioners, which prejudice, I believe, was unfounded and mischievous; but, there being no urgent reason to continue the employment of valuers by the Sub-Commissioners, their engagements were not renewed, and since then the Assistant Commissioners have continued to go upon the land themselves. I confess I cannot see a more likely way of getting at the real facts of a case than that which is taken by the Assistant Commissioners; they hear the evidence of both parties given before a legal authority, and then they examine the holding, and if the result does not satisfy either party there is an appeal. It is not possible for the Commissioners themselves, sitting as a Court of Appeal, to go upon all the holdings; but they hear evidence and employ valuers; and, on appeal, it is only after rehearing, re-inspection, and revaluing, that the judicial rent is finally fixed. My Lords, I deeply regret that my noble Friend should apply his great powers and eloquence, and also I am bound to say his intense prejudice, to the task of discrediting the Irish Land Act. Your Lordships may depend upon it that the tenure established by it is one that will endure, and which nothing can now essentially alter; and I trust, and am confident that, as time goes on, my noble Friend himself will discover that that tenure, although unsuited to the conditions of England and Scotland, which is shown to be the opinion of the Government by the passing of the Agricultural Holdings Acts, is yet eminently suited to Ireland, whose conditions are so different from those of England and Scotland. It is this difference which, in my opinion, my noble Friend has never understood, drawing all his views, ideas, and conceptions entirely from Great Britain,

Lord Carlingford

and not seeing that the first condition for forming a fair judgment on the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland, and on the legislation proper for that country, is to forget England and Scotland, and to think, if a comparison is to be made, of some country absolutely unlike them—for instance, of the country to which the noble Duke alluded—namely, India. If he had fixed his mind upon the example of Bengal instead of Scotland, he might have formed a far sounder judgment with reference to Irish land and Irish legislation. I shall have no objection whatever to the production of the Returns moved for by my noble Friend.

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD said, that, in his opinion, the thanks of all who were interested in the true welfare of Ireland were due to the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Argyll) for the able, eloquent, and perfectly unanswerable speech he had delivered to their Lordships. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, it was so unanswerable that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Carlingford) had not attempted in any way to answer it, as, indeed, it was impossible for him to do. The noble Lord's statement that the noble Duke did not know the subject he was dealing with was most extraordinary. The noble Lord went on to say that he had declared over and over again the principles upon which fair rents were ascertained. He (the Marquess of Waterford) must say that he had attended regularly the debates on that question in their Lordships' House, and he had never heard those principles stated by the noble Lord or by anyone else. There was one point in the noble Duke's speech to which he wished specially to refer. Both the noble Duke and the noble Lord who answered him had spoken of the "prairie" value of the land; and, according to the former, as though it was something much below the present value. His (the Marquess of Waterford's) experience of Ireland was that if the landlord could get the prairie value as it was before it was reduced by the tenant's operations on the land, they would get something more than the old rents which they were receiving before the passing of the Land Act. The noble Lord (Lord Carlingford) had pointed out that the County Court Judges had reduced the rents lower than the Sub-Commissioners; but

it was only a portion of the County Court Judges to whom the tenants had gone; and they had, of course, selected those County Court Judges who were known to be favourable to a reduction of rents, and to be in sympathy with the tenants. It did not apply to the whole body of County Court Judges. It was an extraordinary thing for the noble Lord to say that the landlords had made no improvements. In saying that, he entirely ignored the fact that they had made many most valuable improvements on their property. The noble Lord had also said that the Land Laws of Ireland were so unjust that they should be swept away; but he forgot that, after the Act of 1871 was passed, they had been a great deal more favourable to the tenants than the Land Laws of England. He (the Marquess of Waterford) desired to thank the noble Duke most heartily for the speech which he had made, which, coming from a man in his high position, who was unconnected with Ireland, was sure to command the respect of all in the country. He wished particularly to call attention to a statement from a Cabinet Minister which showed clearly what had actually been done by the Land Act of 1881. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby), in speaking at Liverpool on September 6, said—

“There are some people—I do not think a great many—who would have Parliament go much further, and adopt something like the Irish system, which virtually makes the tenant owner of the soil with only a fixed payment due to the landlord.”

He (the Marquess of Waterford) would ask the noble Earl whether that was or was not confiscation? If it was not, he did not know what was. If the soil belonged to the landlord before, and had now become, owing to legislation, the property of the tenant, subject only to a fixed payment, as he stated, and such fixed payment as had been shown by the noble Duke be ascertained on no fixed principles at all, had there not been a transfer of property? And, if so, was not compensation necessary? He (the Marquess of Waterford) pointed out, at the time of the passing of the Land Act, that if large advantages were granted by it to the tenant, they must be taken from the landlord; but the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack objected to that statement, and declared

it was as great a fallacy and as great an error as could be put into words. The noble and learned Earl went on to say that, unless you could show that you directly took from the landlord something which was his and gave it to the tenant, the more advantages you conferred upon the tenant, the more benefits you also conferred upon the landlord. That was, of course, a self-evident fact. If you could confer benefits on the tenant, without taking them from the landlord, you would, no doubt, be improving the position of both. But it was not necessary to show that something had been taken from the landlord, when the noble and learned Earl admitted that the absolute property of the landlord had been taken away and given to the tenant. He should like to hear from the noble and learned Earl whether he was still of opinion that the large advantages which had been conferred upon the tenant had not been taken from the landlord? If there was any real and permanent advantage to Ireland in the passing of the Land Act it should now begin to show itself. They were told by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India (the Earl of Kimberley) the other night that rents were better paid, and that the country had become more quiet. That he (the Marquess of Waterford) would admit; but even the noble Earl did not claim those results as having been brought entirely about by the Land Act. He admitted that the Prevention of Crime Act had something to do in producing them; and if we looked at the present state of Ireland we must see that, as far as concerned an improvement in the actual condition of the country, the Land Act had had but little effect. At no time in the history of Ireland had securities of every description been so depressed, never had trade been at so low an ebb, never was class so embittered against class, or disloyalty so rampant. And this “Message of Peace” seemed, instead of stilling agitation, to have given it a stronger impetus than it had before. The good results which were predicted of the Land Act had not yet made their appearance. In fact, it had proved a total failure in Ireland, for the only people who had gained by it were the tenants who were in occupation when the Act was passed. He could not himself see that this Message of Peace had brought the slightest advantage to

any class besides; and he feared he should never see the day when any good would come to anyone else from a measure which had inflicted a cruel wrong on a large class in the country.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM said, he also wished to join with the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Waterford) in thanking the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Argyll) both for his speech and for the exhaustive manner in which he had dealt with the subject. He was not, however, disposed to allow noble Lords on the same side of the House as the noble Duke to arrogate to themselves a monopoly of interest in the tenant farmers of Ireland. At the same time, he must be allowed to differ from the noble Duke as regarded the depreciation of the value of land in Ireland. He insisted that in the part of Ireland concerning which he had personal knowledge, there had been a most decided depreciation in the value of land, caused by the operation of the Land Act. He would, however, admit that a part of the depreciation which had taken place was attributable also to the depreciation in the value of wool and other articles of agricultural produce. He hoped that if there was one point only on which he differed from the speech of the noble Duke, he did not detract in any way from its value.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he thought it would be inexpedient for him to discuss the topics that had been introduced into the noble Duke's (the Duke of Argyll's) speech on the present occasion; but he must own that he had been tempted to say one or two words by the interesting contributions to the debate made by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Waterford) and the noble Earl who had last spoken (the Earl of Leitrim) upon those points upon which they had differed from the noble Duke. Now, what had been stated by the noble Earl was really very important and very candid testimony to a fact which had a material bearing, in considering what might have been the causes of the reductions of rent which had so largely taken place in Ireland. The noble Duke had expressed great doubt whether the same causes which had generally affected the value of land in England had any corresponding operation in Ireland; but the noble Earl, speaking for his own district,

and from his own knowledge, as to arable land generally in Ireland, which was the quality of land which had most suffered in England, had given them most valuable information as to the fact that, undoubtedly, the causes which affected England had largely affected Ireland also; and that it was a mistake to suppose that upon natural principles, if they were left to them alone without the Land Act, it would be possible to let lands at a rate independent of these causes, and at their former value. The other observation came from the noble Marquess, and it was also worthy of being taken notice of, because it tended to correct a very mischievous fallacy which was abroad in some of the discussions which they heard upon this subject. He alluded to what the noble Marquess said about what was called the "prairie value," which meant, he (the Lord Chancellor) supposed—if it meant anything—the natural value of the virgin soil, independent of all artificial value which had been added to it by what were called improvements. It would be worthy of the consideration of any who might, at any time, feel themselves obliged to enter into that question, whether the noble Marquess was not right in saying that, estimated upon principles independent of the peculiar circumstances of Ireland—upon which principles he (the Lord Chancellor) protested against making any estimate at all in the matter—but that, estimated on those principles, the value of the virgin soil might sometimes be greater than the value of the soil as it was with buildings, which, though they might be necessary for the actual mode of occupation, were, perhaps, improvements of a very measurable character; while, on the other side, bad cultivation might often have exhausted a large part of the original value of the soil.

EARL FORTESCUE said, that the price of live stock, which Ireland largely exported, had risen of late years; while the price of wheat, which England chiefly grew, had fallen. Ireland did not grow much wheat, and no great decline had taken place in oats and barley, which Ireland did extensively grow. It therefore did not follow that because rents in England had had to be reduced, the Sub-Commissioners were justified in reducing all rents in Ireland. Their small salaries and precarious tenure of office

The Marquess of Waterford

precluded the Government from having the choice of candidates really fit for such important judicial offices dealing practically without appeal with such very large amounts of property. But the gross partizanship shown by the Government in the appointment of most, and the obvious unfitness of many of them, was quite inexcusable. Out of a small number of vacancies, no less than three had been filled up by members of the Solicitor General's Election Committee, in by no means one of the largest counties in Ireland. The only disqualification seemed to be Conservative politics, into which the Government, by their conduct in Ireland, had driven almost every loyal Irishman. He quite agreed that the Act must be looked upon as a permanent one; and, therefore, he thought it was very unlikely indeed that they would find tenants invest their money in purchasing the freehold of their farms, when they were expecting another Solicitor General to come before them promising further reductions of rent by some future Government.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, he did not know that it was worth while to continue the discussion in such a thin House, and, in fact, he had originally intended not to have taken any part in it; but, as he had been pointedly referred to by noble Lords several times in the course of it, he wished to offer one or two observations. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Waterford) had quoted a speech of his in September last, in which he had said that, virtually, the working of the new Irish legislation had transferred the ownership of the soil from the landlords to the tenants. Undoubtedly, he had used those words, and that was the result of the Act. When the noble Marquess went on to ask him whether he did not call it confiscation, he had to reply—"No." It was no more a confiscation than when he was compelled to sell property—as, for instance, for the purposes of a railway—at a price fixed, not by himself, but by others. That was really analogous to what was done in the present case. The matter was not worth arguing; but he did not accept the doctrine of the noble Marquess that, if the tenants gained by a transaction of that kind, it must necessarily be at the expense of the landlords. He considered that a complete fallacy. In many cases where land had been

transferred by such a transaction, it had happened that there was a largely increased value acquired by the tenant without any loss being sustained by the landlord.

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD: Has that happened in Ireland?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): Certainly it has.

THE EARL OF DERBY, continuing, said, the noble Duke behind him (the Duke of Argyll) had referred to what he (the Earl of Derby) had said about the English landlords having suffered as much as the Irish, and did not at all admit that argument; because, in one case, it occurred through natural causes; and, in the other, through the operation of the law. He had never maintained that there was a strict analogy between the two cases; but some analogy there was; because, if there was no falling-off in the market value of the land in Ireland for letting purposes, if tenants were still willing to pay as high rents as formerly, the reason was excessive competition, and it was that which caused the legislation in question. The noble Duke challenged him to say whether he did not agree with him in all his views; but he could not say whether he agreed or not, because it seemed to him that the noble Duke came to no practical conclusion at all, though he made an eloquent and effective speech, which undoubtedly contained much sound argument, and should have been directed against the second reading of the Bill; but, as against an Act that was now in force for some two years, it was useless. His (the Earl of Derby's) opinion about the Act of 1881 was, at the time it was passed, what it was now. He thought that the passing of that Act was a very disagreeable necessity. If anybody said it was a revolutionary measure, he should not be prepared to deny it; but he contended that, if it was a revolutionary measure, it was produced by a revolutionary state of things; and the main principle of the Act—that which dealt with tenure—was laid down in the Report of a Commission not issued from that side of the House. Therefore, whatever Government had been in Office, they must have dealt with the difficulties which surrounded them. He would not deny that, in one sense, the Act might be called a misfortune. It might be a

misfortune to have a leg cut off; but that was better than the alternative probability of dying at once. He had, before now, called attention to various inconveniences of the Land Act. He did so, because, in all legislation of that kind, there was the danger that it might be turned into a precedent; and, as a precedent in this country, he believed it would be mischievous. As to the working of the Act, he did not pretend to possess the requisite knowledge; and he believed there were very few men in that House, or in the country, who could do so. But there was one obvious consideration to be borne in mind—namely, that they were not to judge by exceptional cases, and that they were not to give entire credit to *ex parte* statements, especially when they came from Ireland. Considering the enormous number of cases which had to be tried—some 70,000—he thought it would be very strange if there had not been some cases of real hardship, or even of positive injustice. All those cases had been determined on; and if there was any country in which so many cases could be decided without some injustice, he did not know what country it was. In any country it would be remarkable, and especially in Ireland, to find 80 men absolutely impartial on a subject on which the passions of the people were excited. It had been said, and he thought that most people believed, that the 19 per cent average reduction was a reduction of 19 per cent upon the whole of the rents in Ireland. That, however, was not the case. It was only the average reduction in the 70,000 cases which had been decided; and it was quite clear that that was not a fair average of the whole 500,000 tenants, many of whom had settled privately, and those not the worst cases; for those who had the most cause to complain would certainly come into Court. It was an obvious inference that, if all those cases had been heard, the average reduction, on the whole, would be very much lower. As to the rest, he contended that sufficient time had not yet elapsed to allow of a fair judgment on this legislation. It was, undoubtedly, a very grave experiment—if anyone said a dangerous experiment, he should not dissent. But he believed it was a necessary experiment under the circumstances of the time. It had been tried, and they

could not now go back. What he thought was better than an expression of general hostility to the principles laid down was to watch carefully the working of the Act, to see if in any respect it was doing manifest injustice; and if that were the case, to come to Parliament, not with general complaints against the whole system of legislation, but with the specific mention of specific grievances which could be dealt with, and with practical suggestions for dealing with them.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, in reply, said, that with regard to some of the observations of his noble Friend (the Earl of Derby), which he must confess he had heard with great regret, he (the Duke of Argyll) must remind him that he joined the present Government free from all responsibility, as far as the Act under consideration was concerned, for he joined that Government after it passed; and, therefore, it was of no use for the noble Earl to put forth arguments in support of a measure which he confessed had no attractions for him. He (the Duke of Argyll) denied that there was any analogy between the powers conferred by the Land Act, and powers of compulsory purchase under Railway Bills; because, as to the Land Act, the landlords were tied hand and foot. It was not a question of the mere reduction of rents; but what they asked for was the decisions—the important decisions—given by the Commissioners under the Act of 1881, together with their reasons for pronouncing such decisions. He held that they ought to be given; for the people ought to know the laws under which they lived and the principles on which those laws were administered. The noble Earl invited him to go into specific cases. How could he do so, for the Judges had given no reasons? The noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) had reminded him that he had omitted one important point in his speech, which was, that all Courts, properly constituted, gave their reasons for their decisions. He objected to the hocus-pocus way by which was huddled up the political feeling and agitation which was brought to bear in favour of the decisions, by a refusal to give reasons for the decisions. Such a practice as that was not in accordance with the custom of this country, or, in fact, of any civilized country; and it

could only tend to demoralize still further public opinion. He did not agree with the noble Earl that there was no use in making general speeches. They had to deal with an anarchy of opinion; and it was of the highest importance to set forth the truth. The Commissioners had unsettled many minds upon these matters; and he complained of what they had done, and hoped that some good would result from the discussion which he had felt it to be his duty to raise.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he would agree to the Motion for the Returns if his noble Friend (the Duke of Argyll) would omit from it those cases in which the landlord had claimed disallowance under Sub-Section 4 of Section 8, and the cases where the Court had refused such claim. It was impossible to furnish them, as there was no information in the possession of the Land Commission which would enable them to do so.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, in thanking his noble Friend (Lord Carlingford) for his courtesy, said, he would consent to the course proposed, by striking out all after "1881" in line 3, to "case" in line 7, inclusive.

Motion amended, and agreed to.

House adjourned at half past Eight o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter past
Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 16th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBERS SWORN—Joseph Ruston, esquire, for Lincoln City; Justin Huntley McCarthy, esquire, for Athlone Borough.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee—CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART—Vote 1.

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered—First Reading—Church Patronage (No. 2)* [251].

Second Reading—Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Amendment* [245].

Select Committee—Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment* [111], nominated; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage District)* [211], nominated.

Committee—Report—National Debt (Conversion of Stock)* [186]; Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment* [208].

Committee—Report—Considered as amended—Third Reading—School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) (re-comm.)* [224], and passed.

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 2),* and passed.

QUESTIONS.

ARMY (INDIA) — MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE GRADES.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What is the proportion of officers in the Administrative grade of the Indian Medical Department to that of the Executive grade; has the number of Administrative grade appointments been diminished within the last few years; has a recent alteration been made in the limit of age for compulsory retirement; and, has this checked promotion?

MR. J. K. CROSS: My reply is as follows:—(1.) The proportion is one Administrative officer to 27 Executive officers. (2.) In 1880, as shown in the Blue Book, 2,921 of 1881, page 283, there was a reduction of one Administrative officer. (3.) In 1880, the limits of age for compulsory retirement were fixed at 55 years for the new rank of brigade-surgeons and surgeons-major, and at 60 years for surgeons-general and deputy surgeons-general, instead of at 55 and 65 years respectively. (4.) The effect of lowering the age for compulsory retirement in the higher grades must be to quicken, not to retard, promotion.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE STRABANE QUARTER SESSIONS—CRIMINAL BUSINESS—PETITION OF JUSTICES.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has received memorials from the Petty Sessions districts of Strabane, Donemana, Castlederg, and Newtonstewart, county Tyrone, signed by twenty magistrates; if His Excellency has received memorials from the Town Commissioners of Strabane, and from 150 jurors of the Strabane district, praying that, as heretofore, the Quarter Sessions at Strabane may transact criminal as well as civil business; and, if he will state the reasons why the request of the memorialists has not been granted?

MR. TREVELYAN: The memorials alluded to in the Question were received; and, according to the usual practice, were referred to a Committee of the Privy Council. The Committee found that a similar application had been before the Council in 1881, and was then refused; and, no new facts having been stated, they, after careful consideration, reported that there did not appear to be any sufficient reasons to alter the decision already arrived at. If the hon. Member, and those in whose behalf he asks this Question, desire that the matter should be reopened, I would suggest that a further memorial should be presented, setting forth as fully as possible the inconveniences stated to be caused by the present arrangements; and I am informed that the matter can then be reconsidered by the Privy Council.

ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS (SCOTLAND)
ACT—TOWN COUNCIL OF LEITH.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that, four years ago, the Town Council of Leith received a loan of £100,000 from the Imperial Exchequer under the Artizans' Dwellings (Scotland) Act; how much has been repaid in interest and instalments; and, how many artizans' dwellings have been erected, or are in course of erection, in connection with the scheme?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): Under the Leith improvement scheme the town has received from the Public Works Loan Commissioners, in 1881, £50,000; in 1883, £20,000; in 1884, £30,000—in all, £100,000. There has been repaid in instalments £6,563. Interest has been paid amounting to £6,620. No artizans' dwellings have been erected, or are in course of erection, the Town Council having failed hitherto to obtain suitable offers for the ground which they have exposed for the purpose of feuing.

INDIA (MADRAS) — OFFICIAL
ABSENTEEISM.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that Petitions to Parliament are being signed by vast numbers of Natives, and circulated throughout every district in the Madras Presidency, com-

plaining of the recent protracted Governmental absenteeism, the cost and impolicy of the same, the district official absenteeism, the lost touch of district officials with their ryots, and other allegations on the same subject; and, whether the Secretary of State will anticipate the prayers of the Petitioners by making immediate inquiries into these allegations?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The India Office has no information as to the Petitions referred to. But I gather from the newspapers that the subject of the residence of the various Governments in the Hills during the hot weather months has recently been attracting a good deal of attention in India. The Secretary of State has no present intention of taking any action in the matter.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND)
ACT, 1882—SEC. 8.—POLICE PROTECTION AT SORAN, CO. LONGFORD.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that it has been already decided to place an iron hut and eight police in the townland of Soran, parish of Killoe, Longford, for the protection of Mr. John M'Guire, whose house was burned on the morning of the 22nd of May last; and if, before taking such proceedings, the Executive have given, or will give, the ratepayers an opportunity of showing whether the burning was malicious or not?

MR. TREVELYAN: A police hut has been placed in the district mentioned; and five—not eight—men are stationed in it for Mr. M'Guire's protection. The burning of his house is only an indication of the state of feeling existing towards him in the district, as he has for some time past been subjected to persecution and "Boycotting," and requires police protection. It is the duty of the Executive, before proclaiming a district for additional police under the Prevention of Crime Act, to make inquiry, with the view of being fully satisfied as to the necessity for such a course, and this was done in this case?

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)
ACTS (IRELAND) — SALE OF CARCASSES, BY BOARDS OF GUARDIANS, OF ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED UNDER THE ACTS.

MR. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with

reference to his statement that an average of one thousand beasts per annum slaughtered by Irish Boards of Guardians as suffering from pleuropneumonia are by them sold to butchers at an average price of less than six pounds per head, and with reference to the statement of the Under Secretary to the English Local Government Board, that such a practice is unknown to them, Whether the Irish Local Government Board, which sanctions the sale of this diseased meat, informs itself whether or not the meat is ultimately retailed to the public at full price as healthy meat; and, whether, if the Board continues to permit the sale in future, it will do so under conditions which will ensure that the numbers of the public who purchase the diseased meat shall have notice of its quality, and thus be able to obtain advantages in price commensurate with the risks they run in consuming it, and proportionate to the reduced wholesale price charged to the butchers by the sanitary authorities on account of its diseased condition?

MR. TREVELYAN: The sale of carcasses, which are pronounced by the Veterinary Inspector to be fit for human food is not sanctioned nor controlled by the Irish Local Government Board. Section 30 of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, which applies equally to Great Britain and Ireland, sanctions such sales. This section does not admit of interference with what has become the private property of the purchaser of the carcass. It is not within the power of the Government to inquire into the profits which arise from the retail sale of such carcasses, or to direct that they should be marked differently from other meat. The law is the same in England and Ireland. The difference is that in the one case the matter comes before the Central Government, and in the other it does not.

MR. GRAY: Did I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Local Government Board have no power under the Public Health Act to prohibit the sale of such meat; and is there no means, if the law is the same in the two countries, to prevent in Ireland the sale of diseased meat which does not take place in England?

MR. TREVELYAN: I did not understand my hon. Friend (Mr. George Russell) to say that this meat was not

sold in England. What my hon. Friend said was that it was unknown to the Local Government Board, for the reasons I have given. The sale is carried on under sanction of statute. I have no doubt Parliament might consider whether that section could be repealed; but, so long as it remains there, the Government have no power to interfere.

MR. GRAY: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the Local Government Board in Ireland, of which he is Chairman, is not charged with the supervision of the administration of the sanitary and public health legislation, and has not absolute and peremptory control over that administration; and whether, in the capacity of Chairman of that Board, he will cause inquiry to be made as to whether quantities of diseased meat are sold by the sanitary authorities in Ireland—that is to say, the Boards of Guardians; and whether that diseased meat is not subsequently retailed at the same prices as healthy meat; and, whether he will ask competent medical men to report if such a proceeding is not dangerous to public health; and, if so, whether he will not exercise the powers vested in him to compel sanitary authorities to do their duty by seizing such meat?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that, undoubtedly, the Local Government Board had powers under the Public Health Act to direct the sanitary authorities to make the inquiries to which the hon. Gentleman referred, and he understood that they were used in these cases. He was quite ready to make inquiries as to whether there was any carelessness on the part of the Boards of Guardians in connection with this matter.

MR. GRAY gave Notice that he would call attention to the subject on the Estimates.

ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC— SAMOA.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any, and, if so, what decision has been arrived at by the Government with regard to the alleged illegal seizure and sale by Messrs. W. McArthur and Co. of Auckland, New Zealand, of 250,000 acres of land in Samoa belonging partly to Mr. Frank Cornwall and partly to the Native Princess Maudema and the Samoan people?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that the case was one in which the complainant was left to his legal remedy, and not one in which the Government could interfere.

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC—THE TORRES AND LOUISIADE GROUPS—KIDNAPPING OF NATIVES—THE LABOUR SCHOONERS "JESSIE KELLY" AND "EILEEN."

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the trial in Brisbane, Queensland, of the master and crew of the labour schooner *Jessie Kelly*, on the charge of kidnapping natives from Mantana, in the Torres Group of Islands; whether it is a fact that, although the kidnapping was clearly proved, the offenders escaped punishment, owing to the defects in the new Labour Act of Queensland; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will make any representations in the matter to the Government of that Colony?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: With reference to the case of the *Jessie Kelly*, our information does not point to the failure to convict having in any way arisen from any defect in the Labour Acts. The jury had before them all the evidence which was tendered; but they came to the conclusion that the kidnapping was not clearly proved. Although we may think that, consistently with the evidence, a different conclusion might have been arrived at, we are not prepared to question the verdict.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the following extract from the New Guinea Correspondent of the Sydney *Echo*, writing on 19th of March last, with reference to the kidnapping of natives for the sugar plantations of Queensland—

"The *Eileen* was at the Louisiade group about three months ago. They found the natives in the islands there in great trouble and consternation because of the kidnapping of almost all the men and boys. At Russel Island, at Sud Est Island, and at a number of small islands in the group it was the same story. A three-masted vessel, they say, came, and by artifice and force got the men and boys on board. They were then put down below, and

prevented from returning on shore. No attempt at an agreement seems to have been made. The white men fired their guns, in some places, to frighten and drive the natives to the boats. George saw the bullet marks on some trees and canoes, but was told no one had been killed. The firing was probably to intimidate. A number of lads belonging to one of the islands were for a long time (two years, I believe) with Captain Fryer in the brig *Julia M. Avery*, and then returned to their home. All of these have been taken. It is to be hoped they will use the little English they know to report the way in which the 'recruits' have been obtained. On one small island, my informant tells me, only four men are left. No women were taken. The natives have no idea where the vessel came from, and do not know her name, nor that of the captain, nor any one on board;"

and, whether any steps will be taken to put an end to this system of recruiting labour for a British Dependency?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The *Eileen* case, as reported by the New Guinea Correspondent of the Sydney *Echo*, we cannot identify with any reported case, and some of the details given are on their face improbable. But, whatever their degree of truth, the hon. Member is wrong in assuming that it must necessarily have been a case of British subjects recruiting for a British Dependency. Foreign vessels seek labour for French plantations in the New Hebrides, for German plantations in New Britain, and for the Sandwich Islands and other places outside Her Majesty's Dominions. Such a system as the hon. Member describes is prevented in Queensland vessels by the presence of a Government agent, who is bound to record each place visited, and the character of the recruitment. The Queensland Government are honestly desirous of remedying the abuses of the traffic, and have just adopted a set of new and more stringent regulations for the purpose.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the *Alfred Vetterly* murder case, which occupied the Supreme Court of Brisbane, Queensland, for five days; whether it transpired in the course of the trial that two Kanakas, who had been kidnapped, were shot dead in the hold of the ship by the crew, in consequence of showing "an insubordinate spirit," and a desire to escape; whether the trial ended in the acquittal of all the men except one, who was convicted of manslaughter; whether the one man so convicted was, three days later, released

upon his own recognizances; and, whether the Imperial Government regard with satisfaction the means whereby black labour is recruited from the South Sea Islands for the sugar plantations of Queensland?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: In the case of the *Alfred Vittery* the jury were locked up from 8 o'clock in the evening till the midday following. The defence was that the two Kanaka were shot to preserve the ship from being set on fire by them down below. It is difficult, within the limits of a Question, to point out the bearings of all the different details of a case like this; but I may say generally that it appears decidedly to have been a failure of justice, and the Colonial Office has so expressed itself. As to the release of the one prisoner convicted, that stands on a different footing, and his act of shooting the dead or dying Kanaka through the head as his body was being thrown overboard may very reasonably be regarded as an act prompted by innocent motives. As to the general question, of course the Government cannot but view with great dissatisfaction the abuses which undoubtedly from time to time occur. A Circular has recently been sent to the Australian Colonies, in which Her Majesty's Government propose to the Colonies that the High Commissioner's jurisdiction should be strengthened and extended, provided the Colonies will agree to bear some portion of the cost; and Her Majesty's Government also propose that this question of the labour trade should, in conjunction with the Colonial Governments, be considered anew, to see if it cannot be more efficiently regulated, or, indeed, whether it should be continued at all.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH asked whether a copy of the Circular referred to would be laid on the Table?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes. I will inquire how soon it could be produced.

LICENSING ACTS (SCOTLAND)—ILLEGAL ACTION OF THE DUMFRIES LICENSING COURT.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that, at the Dumfries Burgh Licensing Court, held on 21st April, Samuel Rodwell was refused a public-house certificate for the Ship Inn, on the ground that he was

under twenty-one years of age; whether any certificate authorising the Excise to grant a license is held by any person in respect of the Ship Inn; whether any licence has been granted by the Excise authorities in respect of the Ship Inn; and, if so, on what certificate; whether the Ship Inn is kept open for the sale of exciseable liquors as if legally licensed; and, if it is not licensed, why the Crown authorities have connived at this breach of the Law?

MR. COURTNEY, who replied, said, the facts were as stated by the hon. Member; but, on the assurance of the licensing magistrates that they would grant the necessary certificate at the next half-yearly meeting, the Commissioners of Inland Revenue had decided not to interfere. There was no legal difficulty in the matter.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, why the Crown authorities had connived at a breach of the law?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he had asked for particulars, but had not yet received them.

DR. CAMERON gave Notice that he should repeat the Question; and meantime he would ask the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he was aware of an Act of Parliament which rendered an official of the Customs who allowed persons to sell liquor without a licence liable to a heavy penalty, and to disqualification from office?

MR. COURTNEY said, what he was told was that there was no statutory penalty in the matter.

THE BOARD OF TRADE—THE ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1786.

MR. MAC IVER asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is any Statute or Order in Council which explains the existence of the Board of Trade as at present constituted; if there is any legislation on the subject of later date than 22 George 3, c. 82, and 7 George 4, c. 32; and, whether there have been any orders in Council bearing upon the subject since that of the 6th September, 1786, which appointed certain persons, all of whom are now dead, to be "a Committee of Privy Council for the consideration of all matters relating to Trade and Foreign Plantations?"

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The legal constitution of the Board of Trade is

still regulated by the Order in Council to which the hon. Member refers. There has been but one Act of Parliament referring to the Department since the statutes quoted by him—namely, 30 & 31 *Vict.* c. 72, by which the Office of Vice President was abolished, and a Parliamentary Secretaryship substituted for it. The hon. Member is scarcely correct in saying that the persons appointed to form the Committee by the Order in Council of 1786 are all now dead, as the majority of the appointments were not individual, but *ex officio*.

MR. MAC IVER wished to know whether one of the *ex officio* appointments was not that of Speaker of the House of Commons of Ireland; and who was the present Representative of that *ex officio* appointment?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot answer the Question. The hon. Member had better put it on the Paper.

MR. MAC IVER begged to repeat his Question, which he thought the right hon. Gentleman could answer then.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I decline to answer a further Question without Notice.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—PROCURATORS FISCAL—THE ISLAND OF LEWIS—PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES BY THE POLICE.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is aware that a former Procurator Fiscal of Lewis, who was also agent for the sole proprietor of the island, was removed from office because the then sheriff of the county considered the duties of the two offices incompatible; whether the present Procurator Fiscal is not also agent for the proprietor; and, whether the circumstances have changed; and, if not, whether he intends to make any representation on the subject to the proper authorities?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): The gentleman who was sheriff of the county at the time referred to—1874—is now dead; and I am, therefore, unable to obtain precise information as to the reasons which induced him to recall the appointment of the Procurator Fiscal; but I believe that one reason—I cannot say that it was the sole reason—for his doing so was the

fact that the Procurator Fiscal was also the factor upon the estate—that is, manager for the proprietor. It is necessary to distinguish between factor and law agent; and I do not think that holding the office of law agent can have been considered by the sheriff to be incompatible with the office of Procurator Fiscal, because the gentleman whom he appointed on that occasion was, as I understand, then, as now, the local law agent of the proprietor. He was not, however, and is not, factor on the estate. I may add that at the date in question Procurators Fiscal held a commission from the sheriff, which he could recall at pleasure, and without reason assigned; but by the provisions of the Sheriff Court Act, 1877, they are only removable by one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State for inability or misbehaviour, upon a report by the Lord President of the Court of Session and the Lord Justice Clerk.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Lord Advocate, If he has observed that the Committee on Public Prosecutions in England has recommended that duties analogous to those of Procurators Fiscal in Scotland should be performed by the chief constables of counties in England; and, whether he has considered how far that might be adopted in Scotland in those districts where the duties are not sufficient to warrant the payment of a salary, to secure the whole service of a Procurator Fiscal, in place of allowing the combination of duties so incompatible as those of Public Prosecutor and private landlord's agent?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): The question of the expediency of combining the duties of Procurator Fiscal and Chief Constable has been considered on several occasions, after consultation with the sheriffs of counties, during a number of years back; but the reasons against such a combination have been thought greatly to preponderate, and my own opinion on the point entirely coincides with that of my Predecessors.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SALE OF POSTAL ORDERS AT ATHENRY POST OFFICE.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is a fact that Athenry Post Office is open till nine in the evening for the sale of post office

orders and postage stamps but not for the sale of postal orders; and, if so, can he give any reason for the distinction?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, he had written to Athenry, asking for information; and directly he received it he should be very glad, indeed, to communicate with the hon. Member.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ATTEMPT BY REV. MR. M'NEECE, A PROTESTANT CLERGYMAN, TO ABDUCT HIS ORPHAN NEPHEW.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Rev. Mr. M'Neece, Protestant Rector of Ballintay, county Antrim, did recently attempt to take away by force, from the house of his uncle, an orphan child six years old, named James M'Kay; did the half brother of the child apply for police protection; what protection was given, and when; and, will he instruct the police authorities to give sufficient protection for the time to come?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that the Rev. Mr. M'Neece denies having acted in the manner alleged, or that he had the most remote idea of acting illegally in the matter. He was requested by the mother of the child, who was a Protestant, to have him educated in that faith. The half-brother of the child did apply for police protection; but, unless grounds of personal violence were shown, this would not be given; and from Reports received from the District Inspector and others at Ballycastle, the County Inspector satisfied himself that there was no danger of the child being interfered with, and consequently that no police protection was required.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—RELIGIOUS PERSUASION OF WARDERS IN MARYBOROUGH GAOL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to his reply to a Question of the honourable Member for Mallow, that the object of the Government was to equalise the number of Protestants and Catholics in the higher grades of the warders in Mountjoy Prison, Whether he will take the first opportunity of doing the same at Maryborough Gaol, where the daily

average number of Protestant prisoners is nine, and that of the Catholics fifty, and where the governor and two chief warders are Protestants?

MR. TREVELYAN: When the opportunity arises, the Prisons Board inform me that they will endeavour to equalize the numbers at Maryborough. I may mention that this is an Invalid Prison, and that the Resident Medical Officer is a Roman Catholic.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MOUNTMELICK UNION—ALLEGED ILLEGAL CLAIM TO VOTE.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, at the meeting of the Board of Guardians of Mountmellick Union on the 17th May last, the following Resolution was proposed and seconded, and that the Chairman, Colonel H. Carden, refused to receive it or put it to the Board, viz.:—

"That the attention of the Local Government Board be called to the following facts:—That Mr. Mathew S. Cassan, prior to the last election of Guardians in Mountmellick Union, lodged a claim to vote out of property situated in Kylecolmanbane electoral division as owner of said property, and voting papers were issued to him on the strength of said claim. At the scrutiny of votes, Documents lodged in the Court of Lunacy were produced and submitted to the returning officer, in which Documents Mathew S. Cassan declared that he had no right, title, or interest in said property, that he was virtually and in reality a pauper. The returning officer, on perusal of said Documents, disallowed the votes of the said M. S. Cassan; that the Statement of Claim made by Mathew S. Cassan appears to be knowingly and wilfully untrue, and in direct contravention of the Law; we call on the Local Government Board to hold a full inquiry into same, so that proceedings may be taken against Mathew S. Cassan under Section 12 of General Order dated 26th January 1852, in order that he and others may be deterred from making false claims in future, and so interfering with the purity of elections; "

whether the Chairman was acting within his right in refusing to put the Resolution; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be held by the Local Government Board into the conduct of this ex officio Guardian?

MR. TREVELYAN said, these Questions related to matters of an intricate nature, some of which occurred long ago. Inquiry would have to be made,

and perhaps the hon. Member would postpone the Question.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would repeat his Question on Thursday.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. MATHEW S. CASSAN (THE QUEEN'S COUNTY).

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will submit to the Lord Chancellor the desirability of inquiring into the following allegations with regard to Mr. Mathew S. Cassan, of Sheffield, J.P. now on the Commission of the Peace in the Queen's County:—That he induced tenants on the Sheffield Estate, in the Queen's County, to sign certain accommodation bills. That he afterwards made a declaration on oath, before the Lunacy Commissioners, in which he stated that he had no right, title, or interest in the Sheffield Estate. That the Lunacy Commissioners, acting on the declaration, issued a judgment, which has been since acted on, in the management of that estate, and which practically prevented his creditors from recovering their lawful debts. That, in consequence of such judgment of the Lunacy Commissioners, the above-mentioned tenants, John Kenna, Edward Duff, and others, had to pay the accommodation bills mentioned. That Mr. Cassan for years practically made himself a prisoner in Sheffield House, in order to evade arrest by his creditors, and (except on Sundays) has only appeared in public within the last three years, and since the expiry of the period in which he could be arrested; and, whether he will also consider Mr. Cassan's position, having regard to his late claim to vote as owner of the Sheffield Estate, and to the provisions of section 25 of the 6th and 7th Vic. c. 92, and the 12th Article of the Poor Law General Order 1852?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that, upwards of 25 years ago, three tenants on the Sheffield Estate signed bills which Mr. Cassan put into the bank. The tenants were proceeded against, and a seizure was made, but only enough to pay their rents due, and they have not otherwise been obliged to pay those bills. The Sheffield property is settled on Mrs. Cassan for her life, with remainder to Mr. Cassan for his

life. Mrs. Cassan was found a lunatic. The lunacy proceedings were not taken till 1872, and they cannot, therefore, have affected the bills, nor can they have affected any creditors of Mr. Cassan. I have been informed that any pecuniary embarrassments of Mr. Cassan were owing to debts contracted by his wife about the time she became insane. Mr. Cassan is Committee of the Estate, and he is in occupation of the mansion house and demesne, and has been always the rated occupier of it, and votes as such. As Committee he also conceived himself entitled to claim as owner. There is nothing to show that he made any false or fraudulent claim within the Statute, and there is no record in the lunacy proceedings of his having made any such declaration on oath as is referred to in the Question. No materials have been supplied to me upon which I could refer the matter to the Lord Chancellor.

IRELAND (MONEYS GRANTED OR ADVANCED).

MR. W. LOWTHER asked the Secretary to the Treasury, When a Return, ordered in 1880, "Ireland (Moneys Granted or Advanced)," will be printed and circulated?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, that the Return had been kept back because it was imperfect and misleading. If it was circulated, it must be taken with all its faults.

NAVY—ARMAMENT OF THE NAVY—63-TON BREECH-LOADING GUNS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If the design or model for the 63-ton breech-loading gun for the ships now building in the dockyards is yet approved and accepted by the Admiralty; if it is not, whether he has any information as to the period at which it will probably be submitted for approval; and, if it is approved, whether any progress has been made in the manufacture of the gun; and, when it may be expected that the gun will be completed for trial?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The general design of the 63-ton gun was approved some time ago, so far as the external dimension and ballistics of the gun are concerned. A final and detailed design has now been submitted by the Ordnance Department, and is

Mr. Trevelyan

under the consideration of the Board of Admiralty, by whom it will probably be approved in a day or two. On inquiry, I am informed by the War Office that four of these guns have been ordered and are in process of manufacture; one of them being so far advanced that if the Admiralty's approval is now given the gun will probably be finished for trial in four or five months.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—BALHAM BOARD SCHOOL.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether it is the intention of the London School Board, as announced by Mr. Whiteley, one of the Members of the Board, to build in connection with the Balham Board School, a central hall where entertainments such as the distribution of prizes and the like can be held "with much more comfort and without crowding," (to use Mr. Whiteley's words); and, whether this expenditure is one which can properly be incurred at the expense of the rates?

MR. MUNDELLA: The only school under the London School Board in Balham appears to be the Oldridge Road Board School. The School Board have not yet addressed any proposal to the Education Department for building a central hall in connection with this school, nor are we aware of any such intention.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—THE BLACKROCK TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS — DEFALCATIONS OF MR. T. D. ELLIOTT, RATE COLLECTOR.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is now the position of the question as to the defalcations of Mr. T. D. Elliott, collector to the Blackrock township, and his further employment under the Local Government Board; whether he has observed that, at a recent meeting of the Township Board, a commissioner declared that "the ratepayers were up in arms against them," and the Board rejected a motion for a public inquiry by an official commission, and also, by the casting vote of the chairman, a motion for a sworn investigation by the Local Government Board; how many members of the present Board have been co-opted,

and how many elected; whether a former collector of the township died, leaving an extensive deficit, and how was it made good; whether one secretary of the township absconded, to escape the punishment of fraud; and another falsified his accounts, and was allowed to go unpunished; whether, with regard to Mr. Elliott, the commissioners never required him to provide any guarantee; whether they allowed him to print his official receipt books, and never subjected his accounts to any regular or efficient check; and whether, against his defalcations of £2,600, they have credited him with £200 in respect of a house, already mortgaged to the full extent of its value, and also with a large sum for poundage of moneys collected, but appropriated by the collector, and never paid into the township fund; and, whether any step is proposed by the Government to protect the ratepayers of Blackrock?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have received from the Blackrock Township Commissioners a statement giving replies to the hon. Member's inquiries, which, with the permission of the hon. Member, I will communicate to him. One paragraph I will read—

"It is not true that the Commissioners never required Mr. Elliott to provide any guarantee; for, on his appointment, he lodged Stocks and Shares in the Royal Bank which have recently realized £743."

The Government, not having yet been favoured with the Report of the Committee to which I have more than once referred in the House, have determined, while fully recognizing that the Commissioners are not under any obligation to report their proceedings to the Government, to communicate with them again, asking them if they will be good enough to inform the Government of the circumstances under which a portion of Mr. Elliott's securities was realized, as mentioned in the letter which I have just read.

MR. SEXTON: I shall be glad to have the document.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he would hand it to the hon. Member.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—STATEMENT OF MR. COMMISSIONER KERR.

MR. ANDERSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he has observed the statement of Mr. Commis-

sioner Kerr, that the Bankruptcy Act (meaning the small debt part)

"Is simply a farce, and amounted to this. That if a man owed less than £50 he could be relieved by the County Court Judge on a petition for liquidation. If he owed over £300 he could avail himself of the Bankruptcy Court, in either of which cases he was relieved of the fear of prison; whereas if he owed an amount between those sums he was liable to a committal;"

and, whether the above is really the effect of the Act, and if that was his intention when he passed it?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have seen the statement referred to, and I have come to the conclusion that the learned Judge must have been misreported, because such a statement would be entirely inaccurate. It is perfectly clear to anyone acquainted with the Act that all debtors owing less than £50 can be relieved by any County Court; and if a debtor owes more than that sum it is a matter of perfect indifference, so far as his capacity of obtaining relief is concerned, whether his liabilities are under or over £300.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—EXTRA PAY FOR SUNDAY WORK.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Postmaster General, Whether there is any reason against the telegraph clerks in Edinburgh and other cities receiving extra payment for Sunday labour on the same scale as that received by the same class for similar work in London?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said: Previous to the new classification in 1881, when the position of the sorters and telegraphists generally throughout the country was considerably improved, sorters and telegraphists in the Provincial offices were not paid extra for Sunday work. By that classification, no sorter or telegraphist is ordinarily called upon to do more than eight hours' work in four Sundays; and if he is employed for a longer period than this, he is paid for overtime. Sunday work in the Post Office in London has always been an exception, and therefore all work which is done in London on Sunday is paid for as overtime.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: But Sunday labour in Scotland is an exception.

Mr. Anderson

MR. FAWCETT: It never has been in the Post Office so considered.

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any further progress, since the date of the latest published Despatches, has been made in the negotiations with the Government of the King of Portugal relating to the Congo River Treaty?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The negotiations are still in progress; but there are no further Papers to be laid on the Table.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—BERBER—M. CUZZI.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House the information furnished by M. Cuzzi, relative to the state of affairs in Berber; whether M. Cuzzi is now prisoner in the hands of the Soudanese; and, whether any steps have been taken by the British authorities to effect his release?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The latest direct information received from M. Cuzzi by Mr. Egerton was dated the 27th of April. It will be found at page 29 of Egypt, No. 18. On the 20th of May a telegram from Hassan Khalifa's son mentioned that M. Cuzzi was besieged at El Sharie, and on the 24th Mr. Egerton telegraphed that a refugee from Berber said he had been captured and threatened with death by Arabs. Major Kitchener has done all in his power to obtain intelligence as to M. Cuzzi, with a view to securing his release, and will continue to do so. Mr. Egerton has telegraphed to-day in regard to Berber that it now is almost impossible to rely on the unsupported testimony of Chermiside's messenger that Berber has not fallen, and that Sir Evelyn Wood and General Stephenson now believe the news of its fall.

MR. J. LOWTHER: May I ask if the M. Cuzzi alluded to in the Question is the same person as was described by the noble Lord some time ago as General Gordon's agent at Berber?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There is no doubt he is the same person.

MR. BOURKE: In consequence of the information that has just been re-

ceived, I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I will ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they propose to take for the protection of Upper Egypt?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: With regard to the noble Lord's statement that Berber had fallen, I beg to ask him if the telegram published this morning is correct—namely, that the defenders bravely fought for two hours, and then, their ammunition being exhausted, the rebels rushed into the town and slaughtered 1,500 of the garrison and 2,000 of the male population; and if that statement is correct, I ask the Prime Minister whether he now withdraws his statement that there is not the slightest risk of the garrison of Berber meeting with the same fate as that of Sinkat?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: When I answered the hon. Gentleman's Question I gave all the information in the hands of the Government.

MR. GLADSTONE: If the hon. Gentleman quotes me, I must ask him to cite the declaration as it was made by me.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Fortunately I am able to quote the right hon. Gentleman's exact words. On the 24th of April the right hon. Gentleman was asked if there was any danger that the garrison of Berber might share the fate of the garrison of Sinkat. His reply was—

"We have no reason to believe there is any risk at Berber of any such thing.

MR. GLADSTONE: What is the date of that?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: April 24.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY (BELFAST)—RELIGIOUS PERSUASION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will furnish a Return showing the numbers of each religious denomination in the several grades of the Constabulary in Belfast?

MR. TREVELYAN: I must refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave on the 15th of last month to a Question of a similar character asked by the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy). I then stated that, for the reasons which I fully explained, I must respectfully decline to answer

Questions from any quarter of the House relating to the religion of the Constabulary in any particular town or district.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS.

MR. MONK asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any decision has been arrived at by Her Majesty's Government as to the transfer of the duties entrusted to the Director of Public Prosecutions to the Solicitor to the Treasury?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the Government intended to carry out the recommendations of the Commission. Some portions of them would require legislative authority, and a short Bill was being accordingly prepared, and would be introduced as soon as possible.

THE DYNAMITE OUTRAGES—THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has observed that it is stated by telegram from Washington that no representations had been made to the United States Government since the recent dynamite explosions; and, if he will give the dates of the latest representations to which he said no reply had been received?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have seen the telegram referred to by the hon. Member. The Correspondence with the United States on this subject, subsequent to that contained in the Papers laid before Parliament (United States, No. 3, 1882) was resumed on May 10, 1882, and has been continued since; but I cannot enter into further details at present as to the later despatches.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. ROBERT STAPLES, OF DURROW—INFLAMMATORY LANGUAGE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been given to a letter which appeared in *The Dublin Evening Mail* of Wednesday last, signed "Robert Staples, Durrow, Queen's County," declaring that—

"Lord Spencer has failed at Newry to cement the Kilmainham Treaty with the blood of other victims like poor Giffen ;"

and asking—

"Is he to be allowed to multiply opportunities of doing so, and to destroy the peace and prosperity of Ulster," and "are the loyalists of Dublin and the South not to back up those of the North, and tell the traitors who would use the Queen's troops to stave and stab her loyal subjects, and who are about to deprive them of all civil rights in Ireland by their Franchise Bill, what they think of these men and their measures ;"

and, whether "Robert Staples" is the person of that name who holds the position of a Deputy Lieutenant for Queen's County ; and, if so, whether he will be superseded from further acting in the commission of the peace ?

MR. TREVELYAN : I have received the letter referred to, the writer of which is described as a Magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant of the Queen's County. The letter appears to be a personal and political attack on Lord Spencer, and in both aspects I think it should be treated with contempt. I can quite understand that the letter might be looked upon in another light.

MR. HEALY : May I ask the right hon. Gentleman why the Irish Government did not treat Lord Rossmore's conduct with similar contempt ?

VENEZUELA—CESSION OF THE ISLAND OF PATOS.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has received documents from Trinidad, through the Colonial Office or otherwise, expressing the alarm felt by the Colonists at the proposal of Her Majesty's Government to cede to Venezuela the island of Patos, as a consideration for abolishing an impost which Her Majesty's Government has declared to be in violation of a Treaty ; whether in these documents it is urged on Her Majesty's Government that instead of ceding anything, they should insist on the abolition of the thirty per cent. differential duty, along with compensation for losses caused by its three years' continuance ; whether it be the fact that the island of Patos, which Her Majesty's Government proposed to cede, belongs to the Borough Council of Port of Spain, and cannot be ceded without their consent ; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will either demand from the Venezuelan

Government the redress of wrongs and the rehabilitation of Treaty obligations, or the submission of all matters in dispute to the arbitration of a neutral Power ?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE : The documents referred to in the first two paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question were received at the Colonial Office on Saturday last ; but there has not yet been time to consider the representations contained in them, and I am not in a position to make any statement as to the rights of the Council of Port of Spain over the Island of Patos. A Question on that subject would be more properly addressed to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. As I stated in my answer to the hon. Member on the 29th of April, we have made proposals to the Venezuelan Government which we hope will lead to a reasonable and satisfactory solution of the questions at issue between the two Governments. No answer has yet been received to these proposals.

MR. MAC IVER asked the noble Lord if he meant to convey to the House that the Government were at present engaged in negotiations for the transfer of an Island in exchange for a reduction of duty ?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE : I explained the other day the circumstances under which the Island of Patos had become a part of these negotiations, and I would ask the hon. Member to refer to my answer.

MR. ANDERSON : Will the noble Lord tell the House if the Foreign Office and Colonial Office ascertained to whom this Island belonged before proposing to cede it ?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE : There will, I imagine, be no objection to stating the rights over this Island if my hon. Friend will give Notice of his Question to the Colonial Office.

MR. MAC IVER : I beg to give Notice that in consequence of the reply of the noble Lord, I shall, at the earliest opportunity, call attention to this subject, and move that the proposed cession of this Island, whether it belongs to us or whether it does not, is a flagrant violation of the principles of Free Trade.

EGYPT—STEAMERS ON THE NILE.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty to be good enough to

inform the House, How many steamers are now engaged in patrol duty on the Nile; whether they have been equipped with side and deck plating sufficient to resist small gun and rifle balls; and, whether new armour-clad boats, of shallow draught and suitable for being navigated as a whole or in pieces over the Cataracts, are being prepared at home, Egypt, or elsewhere, for the protection of the Nile between Assouan and Wady Halfa, and also for the purpose of aiding in the relief of Dongola, Berber, and other garrisons, directly there is sufficient water for the purpose?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Three Egyptian Nile steamers have been manned and armed by officers of the British Navy for the purpose of patrolling the Nile between Assiout and Wady Halfa. We are not aware of the particulars of the fitting of the steamers. The last Question put by my hon. Friend is, as I think he will, on reflection, see, of a kind which it is undesirable to answer.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—THE MENTO ESTATE.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If a sum of £1,800 and interest has been due by the Treasury, from the year 1848, to the Mento Estate; if this sum is due for land taken and appropriated by the Board of Works; if the Treasury at first delayed paying this sum owing to disputes between different parties interested in the estate as to the allocation of the sum; if, subsequently, the present owner, Sir Valentine Blake and his late father, opened the estate so that Sir Valentine Blake is now the sole owner; if all parties interested, who have been in communication with the Treasury on this subject, have signified their acquiescence in the payment of Sir Valentine Blake; and, if, under these circumstances, the Treasury will now discharge this long standing debt?

MR. COURTNEY: The statements in the Question are not correct. The facts are very complicated; but are shortly to the effect that, if it can be proved that certain moneys were actually paid by a defunct Drainage Company more than 40 years ago, it will be the duty of the Treasury to pay into Court a sum not exceeding £1,800, to be distributed by the Lord Chancellor; but until such

proof is supplied it is illegal for the Treasury to make such payment. The solicitors for the parties interested are aware of the position of the question. We are acting strictly under legal advice in the matter.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXTRA POLICE (LIMERICK)—CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is any objection to include in the Return ordered to be furnished of the Correspondence between the Lord Lieutenant and the Limerick Corporation, on the subject of the extra Police Tax in that city, all Correspondence between His Excellency and the Mayor or Magistrates of the city of Limerick, and all Resolutions of every class furnished to the Lord Lieutenant or Chief Secretary upon the subject?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Return referred to has already been laid on the Table. If the hon. Member desires to move for a Supplemental Return containing the additional matter he mentions, there will be no objection to it.

MR. O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Cork Examiner* of Saturday, that the Government intend to apply for an attachment against the members who voted against the payment of the tax?

MR. TREVELYAN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would give Notice of that Question?

BOARD OF TRADE—LIGHTHOUSES—LOSS OF THE "AURANIA."

MR. GRAY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is any fog signal on the rock upon which the *Aurania* struck or at the neighbouring lighthouses?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; there is no fog signal on the rock in question. The nearest fog signal appears to be at the Fastnett Lighthouse.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—NEW CIRCUIT ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he could now state any particulars of the scheme for the sittings of the Judges of the High Court of Judicature, especially with reference to Lancashire?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES): I am now in a position to answer the Question of the hon. Member, and to state the arrangements which have now been made for the purpose of effecting a saving of judicial time. We found that there was a very strong feeling both in the country and in the House against depriving any county of Assizes, and consequently we do not propose to introduce any legislation for that purpose. The Assizes will, therefore, continue in every county and also for every town as heretofore, with the exception of Kingston-on-Thames, the business of which will be transferred to Guildford and Croydon, the remaining Assize towns. The effect of this will be to provide continuous sittings in London, and to secure the better administration of justice in the counties. There are seven Circuits in England and two in Wales, and upon those Circuits there are 54 different towns at which Assizes are held. At all those towns in England two Judges have always attended, however little work there may have been to do. Under the new arrangement, to all of those towns one Judge only will be sent instead of two, with the exception of 13 towns. To those remaining 13—namely, Durham, York, Leeds, Exeter, Bristol, Winchester, Stafford, Nottingham, Lincoln, Derby, Warwick, Chester, and Swansea—two Judges will be sent. In cases where two Judges may be required in the other towns, to meet that demand an additional Judge will be sent from London. The result of this will be that in the early part of the Circuit nine Judges will be sent, and in the latter part 10, and those Judges will be taken exclusively from the Queen's Bench Division. The Courts of Appeal will thus be able to hold their sittings continuously, as also will the Chancery, Divorce, and Admiralty Courts. Special provision has been made for the county of Lancaster. There will be Assizes held at Manchester and Liverpool under exceptional circumstances, the Circuits commencing on the 15th of February, the 15th of June, the 25th of October, and also a fourth Circuit for dealing with criminal cases. Provision has been made for the sitting of the Judge until his list is disposed of, so that there shall be no remanets. Provision has also been made for a Judge—I presume he

will be an Equity Judge—attending at Manchester and Liverpool for the purpose of trying equity cases.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Will the Equity Judge form part of the Lancashire Court?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES): No; the Judge will be a Judge of the High Court. With regard to the question of local centres, great difficulty has been experienced; but arrangements have been made for Assizes to be held at Birmingham twice a year, which will be considered as partly on the Oxford and partly on the Midland Circuit. I believe the new arrangement will accomplish what was desired, and, at the same time, tend in the direction of economy.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I presume we are to understand that two Judges will go to Manchester and Liverpool. I should like also to inquire whether any further arrangement has been made for the trial of Admiralty cases in the county of Lancaster?

MR STAVELEY HILL: At what time, in relation to that held at Stafford and Warwick, is it proposed to hold the Birmingham Assize?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES): In reply to the right hon. Gentleman I may say that it is intended to send two Judges to Manchester and Liverpool. I will make inquiries with regard to the Admiralty cases in Lancashire. In answer to my hon. and learned Friend, who, I presume, asks his Question in the interest of the Oxford Circuit, I may say that it is proposed that Birmingham shall be taken as the last town after all the towns on the Oxford Circuit and all the towns on the Midland Circuit. It will be considered a town belonging to both Circuits.

MR. TOMLINSON asked whether it was proposed that the new sittings should go on concurrently with the Chancery jurisdiction of the Palatine Courts?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES): I know of no intention to deal with the jurisdiction of the Palatine Courts. As I have already said, this scheme is only one of a tentative character.

In reply to SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) stated that the time allotted to Newcastle would be eight days.

In reply to Mr. BARRAN,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said: Leeds will remain as it is at present. There is no additional jurisdiction given in respect to that town.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: My hon. and learned Friend will, I hope, lay a copy of the Order in Council upon the Table.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): It will be laid on the Table as soon as possible.

MR. HICKS inquired whether any rearrangements would be made with regard to the spring and autumn Circuits in view of a better distribution of judicial labour in the different counties?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I may remind the hon. Member that at the spring and autumn Assizes criminal cases alone are taken.

In reply to Mr. WARTON,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was not intended that in future there should be a Commission day. The necessary formalities might occupy about an hour on the first day.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART — SALE OF THE BLENHEIM PICTURES.

MR. CYRIL FLOWER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, now the High Court of Chancery has given its consent to the sale of some portion of the Blenheim Gallery, What proposals the Government have received and are prepared to recommend for the acquisition by the nation of a select portion of these pictures; and, whether the Government are sanguine that their negotiations will be carried to a successful issue?

MR. GLADSTONE: Her Majesty's Government are by no means indisposed to entertain the subject of the purchase of a portion of the Blenheim pictures; but we have not made any real progress in that matter, because no offer has yet been made to them which they think they would be justified in entertaining.

POST OFFICE—THE TELEPHONE.

MR. HOULDSWORTH asked the Postmaster General, If he is aware that

a letter has been written by the Department to the "Ellesmere" and certain other Manchester clubs supplied with telegraphic news at "press rates," intimating that when they are prepared to inform the Department that the whole of the telephones are removed, and that no members of the club have telephones in cottages or houses in the neighbourhood of the club, the Department will then consider whether to place the club on the register; whether the telegraph instruments in the "Ellesmere" Club and other clubs were removed by the postal authorities until all the telephones were taken down; and, whether any distinction is made by the Postmaster General as to the clubs to which he will allow the press news to be supplied at "press rates," without restriction as to telephonic communication?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, it was lately found that a system prevailed in Manchester whereby racing news, telegraphed at Press rates to certain clubs, was retransmitted by telephone to various other clubs and persons. This was considered to be an abuse of the privilege by which news is telegraphed at a much lower rate than is charged for ordinary telegraphic messages; and the steps referred to by the hon. Member were accordingly taken. No distinction is made in the treatment of different clubs.

MR. GRAY asked the right hon. Gentleman, if the news were transmitted by speaking tube instead of by telephone, would the Postmaster General refuse to supply news to the Press on that ground; and, what distinction he drew between telephones and speaking-tubes?

MR. FAWCETT: I will wait until that question arises, because I have to act upon the decisions of the Law Courts. The telephone has been pronounced to be a telegraph, and the telegraphs have been bought up by the general taxpayers of the country.

MR. GRAY: The right hon. Gentleman did not catch my Question. The decisions of the Law Courts have nothing to do with private telephones. Will the right hon. Gentleman take legal opinion, as to whether he has the slightest right to interfere, as he has done, with private telephones for private purposes?

MR. FAWCETT: I do not think any legal opinion has been taken.

MR. GRAY: I shall put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman on another day, asking whether he will take legal opinion.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE POLICE FORCE OF COUNTY WATERFORD.

MR. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many men of the ordinary police force of the county Waterford were off duty owing to illness or any other cause during the time the extra police force for the payment of which a presentment has just been sought, has been stationed in that county; what is the number of extra police there at present; and, why is it maintained?

MR. TREVELYAN: This Question only appeared on the Paper on Saturday. It was necessary to refer it to Ireland for inquiry, and the reply has not yet been received.

CHARGES AGAINST IRISH OFFICIALS—MR. FRENCH, &c.

MR. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has observed that Mr. George Bolton has brought an action for libel against *United Ireland*, grounded on charges which he alleges were made against him in that paper, and which the defendant denies were ever made, but has not taken any proceedings in respect of charges of fraud, and other similar malpractices, which have been frequently made against him in *United Ireland*; whether those charges of fraud have come under the notice of the Irish Government; and, whether they have been investigated, and with what result?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that Mr. George Bolton has brought an action for libel against the editor of *United Ireland*, grounded on charges of criminality made against him and certain other persons, and that the defendant has denied having made such charges. It is for the Court and jury before which that case is tried to determine whether such charges were, in fact, made. I am aware that many other attacks have been from time to time made against Mr. Bolton in that paper. I am not aware of any ground for an allegation of fraud unless it be referable to transactions

which occurred five years ago, and were investigated both by the late and present Government, and stated by both to furnish no ground for action being taken against Mr. Bolton.

EXCISE—DESTRUCTION OF SEIZED TOBACCO.

MR. JACKSON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Government intend to abolish the system of destroying tobacco seized by the Customs authorities, which system has entailed a loss to the Revenue of £27,000 in four years; and, whether the Government will order such tobacco, in future, to be sold by auction, or, if any objection exists to its being sold, whether the Government will sanction its distribution among the workhouses, for the use of the aged paupers?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): The hon. Gentleman is not quite accurate in supposing that in four years the Revenue has lost £27,000 by the destruction of tobacco seized by the Customs authorities. That sum, as stated by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury on the 15th of May, included the value of and duty on cigars seized, which were sold for the benefit of the Crown. I am not prepared to order that such tobacco should be sold or given to paupers. It would rarely fetch at auction more than the duty, and if it did, would only displace a corresponding amount regularly entered for home consumption, so that the public would gain little or nothing. There are, besides, other fiscal reasons against such a proceeding. But in time of war seized tobacco is sometimes exported for the use of our troops abroad; and this, and its use for fumigation at Kew, to the extent of about a ton a-year, are the only exceptions for which I see sufficient reason.

CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS—RETIREMENT AGE.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is intended to place all salaried Civil servants on pension at the age of sixty, without reference to their being efficient for further service; and, if so, will additional compensation beyond the ordinary pension be given to those who were in the service prior to the passing of the

Superannuation Act of 1859, and who, under the Superannuation Act of 1834, would not be retired until sixty-five, except on medical certificate or on re-organization of their office?

MR. COURTNEY: I am aware of no such intention as that assumed in the first part of the Question; and it is, therefore, unnecessary to reply to the rest of it.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS—PROMOTION.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the rate of promotion in the Indian Services compares very unfavourably with the rate of the British Service, so much so that the rank of Major in the former is often not attained until an age at which officers would be superannuated in the latter; whether he has received any information showing the existence of much dissatisfaction with and discontent at this state of things; and, whether any steps, and, if so, what, are contemplated in order to place the two Services on an equality regarding promotion?

MR. J. K. CROSS: No official communication has reached the India Office regarding any discontent or dissatisfaction at the present rate of promotion in the Indian Staff Corps. The promotion of officers of the Line has recently been very rapid. The rate, it is understood, is abnormal, and is not likely to continue. The subject, however, so far, at any rate, as the qualifying period of promotion of lieutenants is concerned, is receiving consideration. I may add, that whereas in the Line officers who are not selected for promotion at a given age are compulsorily retired, this is not the case in the Indian Army, in which officers enjoy continuous and unbroken service to the rank of full colonel.

MOROCCO—THE SHERIF OF WAZAN—ALLEGED FRENCH PROTECTORATE.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in view of the danger to British interests which would be caused by France obtaining a similar position at Tangier to that which she occupies at Tunis, he will now state what instructions, if any, have been forwarded to Her Majesty's Representative at Tangier as to the recent action of the

French Government with regard to the Sherif of Wazan; and, whether the Papers on the subject will be laid upon the Table of the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) on Friday last, when I stated that the assurances received from the French Government that they have no designs upon Morocco, and repudiate all idea of establishing a Protectorate, or of promoting troubles in the country, have been communicated to Her Majesty's Minister at Tangier, and through him to the Moorish Government. Her Majesty's Government do not consider it advisable to present any Papers at present.

THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND —INSPECTION OF OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that, on the 30th May, one of the secretaries of the Royal University of Ireland refused (on the ground of desiring to consult the second Secretary) to permit a member of the Senate to inspect the Correspondence of the secretaries of the Royal University with the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, which has been referred to in this House, and in the Letter of the President of Maynooth College to *The Freeman's Journal* of the 3rd May, as having neither been submitted to the Senate nor to the Standing Committee of the Senate; whether he is aware that the same secretary informed the member making the inquiry as to the Correspondence, that a secretary was appointed by the Lord Lieutenant and not by the Senate, and that, on the 31st May, the member of the Senate, on being informed that his application would be acceded to by the secretaries as a matter of favour, declined to inspect the Documents on such terms; whether it is competent for an official of the Senate to refuse on any pretext to permit a member of the governing body to inspect Documents referring to the University which may be in the custody of the officials; and, whether the secretaries of the Royal University are appointed by the Lord Lieutenant?

MR. TREVELYAN: I understand that the facts are as stated in the first

and second paragraphs of the Question. With regard to the inquiry contained in the first paragraph, it remains with the Senate of the University, and not with the Government, to determine whether or not each individual member of their Body is entitled to have free access to all the Correspondence. The fact of the secretaries being appointed by the Lord Lieutenant does not, in the opinion of the Government, affect the question.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government have agreed to place the finances of Egypt under International Control, and to specifically limit the term of the British occupation of Egypt; and, whether the Conference is to meet upon this basis?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not able to enter into any particulars which are embraced, or might be embraced, in the negotiations relating to Egypt. I promised the House, when we were in a position to do so, to make a full statement; and I cannot enter into any part of the subject separately.

MR. BOURKE: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will answer my Question—that is, when will he make his promised statement with respect to Egyptian affairs?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Question of the right hon. Gentleman is a sequel to what was said in the House last Monday. I stated then that great progress had been made in the communications with France, and that I hope to be able to make a statement in the course of the present week. I am now able to say that the communications with France have reached a point at which we can proceed to consult the other Powers, and can undertake to fix a time for making the statement. The day that we can fix will not be this week; it will, however, be Monday next.

After an interval,

MR. BOURKE said: Referring to the answer given just now by the right hon. Gentleman respecting the Anglo-French Agreement, I wish to make a suggestion to Her Majesty's Government, and, to put myself in Order, I shall state the point in the form of a Question. I shall

ask the Question of the right hon. Gentleman now, or postpone it until Thursday. The Question is this—As the Anglo-French Agreement is not to have any validity until it is approved by this House, will the right hon. Gentleman submit it to this House before he endeavours to obtain for it the sanction of the other Powers of Europe? I wish to put that statement on record, in order to guard myself in view of the debate which is to take place next week.

MR. GLADSTONE: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his offer to give Notice of the Question; but I do not think I need avail myself of it. I am not in a position at the present moment to explain fully the relations of Her Majesty's Government to this Agreement. But our declaration will be strictly fulfilled that the whole proceedings will fall to the ground without the consent of this House. I cannot consent to lay the negotiations with the French Government before the House before they have been submitted to the Powers.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, with regard to the order of Business, he desired to know, Whether the Government intended to proceed with the Committee on the Representation of the People Bill that evening after Supply; and, also, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer intended to take the Coinage Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, they did not know whether the Education Votes would be passed that night; but if they did pass by 11 o'clock they would go on with the Representation of the People Bill. If not, then they would take the Orders as they stood on the Paper. To-morrow they would take that Bill at 2 o'clock. In any case, he hoped they would be able to take the Report on the measure on Thursday as the first Order of the Day. The Representation of the People Bill had been so slightly changed that there was every hope of passing the Report stage on Thursday. As to Friday, he could not say what arrangements would be made.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) added that he could not name a day for the debate on

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the Coinage Bill. The Customs and Inland Revenue Bill must have the preference.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND)—REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE asked the Vice President of the Council, Why the Report of the Commissioners of Educational Endowments in Scotland had not been issued with the Evidence taken before the Commission; and when it was likely to be in the hands of Members?

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, he was afraid that the Evidence had been issued without the Report. There were two pages that had been omitted by the mistake of the stationery officers. He had no doubt it would be immediately rectified.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—NATIVE HOSTILITIES.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question of which I have given him private Notice—namely, Whether there is any truth in the statement that Usibepu has been seriously defeated in Zululand by a joint force of Boers and Zulus, and that he has retired to Ekowe; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to take any action in the matter? Perhaps he will also tell us whether there is any truth that there has been further trouble in Stellaland, and that our Resident, Mr. Mackenzie, has been assaulted there?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The right hon. Gentleman's Notice only extends to the fact contained in his Question. As to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, I must request further Notice; but as to the facts we have received telegraphic information that these things have occurred. As to Stellaland, we have no information as to disturbances; on the contrary, our last information was that things were peaceable.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA OFFICERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (for Mr. O'SHEA) asked the Secretary of State for War, The number of vacancies in the establishment of Militia officers; whether a great proportion of the subalterns are

merely qualifying for the Regular Forces; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will consider the advisability of extending the period of service of a certain number of officers whose retirement is imminent under the Militia Regulations of 1883, but whose activity and fitness may be specially reported upon by Colonels commanding districts?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: According to the latest Returns there were 792 vacancies on the establishment of Militia officers; 83 Militia subalterns have recently received commissions in the Regular Army. A large proportion of the subalterns doubtless join the Militia with a view to passing through it to the Line. Under the Regulations now in force lieutenant-colonels retire at 55, majors and captains at 50 years of age; but in all cases officers are permitted, on the recommendation of the General Officer commanding, to serve five years longer. Having regard to the efficiency of the Service and the maintenance of a fair flow of promotion, it would not, in my opinion, be desirable to suspend these Regulations.

INDIA (MADRAS)—THE SALEM RIOTS—VIJIARAGHAREA CHARIAR.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, On what grounds the Government of Madras has opposed the application made by Vijiaragharea Chariar to the High Court for permission to prosecute the Crown witnesses in the Salem Riot case for perjury; and, whether, as the High Court, having satisfied themselves that Vijiaragharea Chariar had made out a case for inquiry, and ruled that these witnesses be prosecuted for perjury, the Government of Madras was justified in opposing the investigation into such serious charges against Crown witnesses, on whose evidence he, Vijiaragharea Chariar, and so many other Hindoos, have been imprisoned, transported, and otherwise most severely dealt with by the Government of Madras?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The India Office has no information on this subject; but if the hon. Member for Cavan will produce any evidence that after the High Court had ruled that certain witnesses should be prosecuted for perjury the Government of Madras prevented such prosecution, I will cause inquiries to be made into the matter.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

MR. MUNDELLA: The first Vote in Class IV. which I have to ask from the Committee is that for education in England and Wales, and the sum required for the year 1884-5, for the first time in the history of the Education Department, exceeds the sum of £3,000,000 sterling. The amount is £3,016,167, and, as compared with the last grant of £2,938,930 for 1883-4, shows an increase of £77,237. Sir, the increase mainly arises under the head of "Annual Grants for Day and Evening Schools," which now stand at £2,680,542, being an increase of £70,069 over the Estimate for 1883-4. This is accounted for by an anticipated increase in the average attendance of children attending the public elementary schools of about 3 per cent, which brings the numbers up to 3,265,319, and an increase in the rate of grants for scholars of 2*d.* per head, which has been taken at 16*s.* 4*d.* per head for day scholars; while the grant for the scholars in the evening schools is estimated at 9*s.* 4*d.*, compared with 9*s.* 3*d.* in the previous year and 8*s.* for the year 1882-3. Since these Estimates were framed, the rate of grant per day scholar actually earned under the New Code has risen to a little over 16*s.* 5*d.* per head, and it is quite possible that this rate may be maintained throughout the year. An unusually mild winter naturally affects the Estimate by increasing the number in the average attendance, and consequently increasing the earnings of the school; and there are indications that, in consequence of the recent mild winter, the calculations of the Department may be disturbed to this or even to a larger extent. The remainder of the increase in the Estimates is accounted for under two heads—first, by an increase of £3,610 in the grants to Training Colleges caused partly by an under-Estimate in 1883-4, and partly by an increase in the number of daily students in the Training Colleges—namely, 19 men and 71 women over

the number last year; and, in the second place, by an increase of £7,350 in the cost of inspection of schools, due to the ordinary increase of salaries and to an increase of 18 Sub-Inspectors who have been promoted from the rank of assistants to full Inspectorship. Two Inspectors have retired, and 16 additional Inspectors have been appointed, together with 16 Inspectors' assistants; and the increase is also due, to some extent, to the appointment of a Directress of needle-work and her assistants. The only decrease to which I have to call the attention of the Committee is that of £2,800 under the sub-head of "Certificates for payment of Children's Fees," which are now moribund. Before commenting on these figures, the Committee will, perhaps, allow me to say what has been the expenditure for the year 1883-4. The sum granted for 1883-4 was £2,938,930. The actual expenditure was £2,938,587, leaving a saving of £343. The grant for day and night scholars was £2,610,473, and the expenditure was £2,614,069, leaving a deficiency of £3,596 in excess of the grant, which was met by savings on other sub-heads of the Vote. It was estimated that the grant to day scholars would be paid at 16*s.* 2*d.* on an average attendance of 3,208,598 children. The grants actually paid were 16*s.* 4½*d.* on an average attendance of 3,178,899 children, being 2½*d.* in excess of our calculation. There is a slight reduction in the rate of increase in the average attendance which occurred immediately after the New Code came into operation, just before the close of the year. The Old Code was in operation last year, and the New Code also, and immediately the New Code came into operation there was a slight diminution in the average attendance, which is accounted for by better registration. I am glad to say that, though the New Code has been in operation for 12 months, there has not been a single case of fraudulent registration under it; whereas there were a large number of such cases under the old system, there have been none whatever under the new. It is clear, therefore, that the old system operated but too often as a temptation to fraudulent registration. Now, Sir, I have to ask the attention of the Committee to the rate of progress during the past year. The grants for 1883-4 were paid partly under the Code

of 1881 and partly under the New Code of 1883. The payments under the New Code were at the rate of 16*s.* 5*d.* per day scholar, an increase of 4½*d.* over the rate of 1882-3; but as the normal rate of increase under the Old Code was at least 2*d.*, the increase due to changes in the Code may be taken at 2½*d.* per day scholar. The schools inspected in 1883 were 18,540, being an increase of 251 over the preceding year. Those schools afforded accommodation for 4,670,000 children, being an increase of 132,000 over the previous year. The number of scholars on the register was 4,273,000, being an increase of 84,000 over the previous year. The scholars in average attendance were 3,127,000, showing an increase of 112,000 over the preceding year; and I may call the attention of the Committee to the fact that this is a gain in excess of the increase on the Register. The number individually examined shows a still greater increase, having been 2,276,000, and showing an increase of 157,000. The classes under examination, although they were expected under the New Code to fall off considerably, have produced quite the same results, and were 289 as against 280 in the preceding year. The percentage of average attendance to the numbers on the books was 73·1, being an increase of 1·1, while the percentage of passes in Standard examinations was 82·89, or an increase of ·09. The proportion of scholars examined in Standard IV. and upwards to all scholars individually examined—a point of great interest to the Committee—was 29·3, being an increase of ·77 in the whole number examined against 28·6 in the preceding year. The number of certificated and assistant teachers was 52,706, showing an increase of 4,588 over the preceding year. The number of pupil teachers was 26,428, showing a decrease of 1,857; consequently there has been altogether a steady increase in the number of teachers; and I think the Committee will agree with me that the figures I have quoted show that we have been making steady progress all along the line. The most noticeable features are the figures indicating improvement of quality, which show a more rapid increase than they have done for some years past. The increase of scholars on the register was 84,000, being an increase of 2 per cent in the number.

There was also an increase of 3 per cent on the average attendance, or 12,000, and of 7·48 per cent in the scholars examined, or 15,000, whereas we expected a reduction. Now, the truest test of our progress in elementary education is to be found in two things—in the increase of the average attendance, and in the increase in the numbers presented for examination in the higher Standards. In regard to the increase of the average attendance, it is very remarkable what has been the operation of the Act of 1870 on the average attendance of children now at school. The highest point that had ever been touched before the passing of the Act was in the year 1870—the year it was passed—when it rose to 68·1 per cent of the number on the register. As the neglected children were forced into the schools the average attendance steadily declined, until in 1875 it reached 66·9. From that time to this there has been, notwithstanding the constant influx of large numbers on the roll, a steady increase in the average attendance. It has gone up now from the lowest point—66·9 in 1875, until this year it has reached 73·1; that is an increase of nearly 7 per cent, and the increase itself has been steady. Last year it was 72, the year before it was 70·8, and so it has steadily gone on from the year 1875 until now, when it has reached 73·1. It will be useful to compare England and Scotland in this respect. The Act for Scotland was passed two years later, and Scotland has never yet recovered its average attendance. The average attendance of the number on the register fell from 78·6 in 1873 to 75·3 in 1881. I am glad to say that in 1882 the number rose to 75·8, and in 1876 to 76·1. In all other respects it is better than England, except, perhaps, in regard to the proportion of the number on the register, in regard to which they were much higher at the time of the passing of the Education Act in 1872, and they have not yet recovered their original position, being still 2·5 below what they were in 1873. The reason of the falling-off is not, I think, difficult to account for. Scotland has had great difficulties to contend with in the changes which have been made previous to last year, and better results may be looked forward to next year. It has been suggested that the application of the attendance order to Scotland would be

productive of considerable advantage. I come now to a more remarkable test, which, after all, is the best we can possibly have as to the sort of educational work we are doing, and that is the test of the number examined in the higher Standards. I have taken three periods in order to give the Committee some indication of this work. In 1869 the number examined in Standard IV. and upwards was 173,662; but I want the Committee to understand that the Standard IV. of that day is the Standard III. of the present, so that if we had limited it to that the number passed has really been 83,114, or 11·93 of the total number examined. Now, in 1879, the number rose from 83,114 to 388,680, and in 1883 the number was 660,691—that is to say, that it rose from 11·93 per cent in 1869 to 26·08 per cent in 1879, and 29·03 per cent in 1883. That is a remarkable result, and in Scotland the numbers examined in Standard IV. and upwards were 30,881; but there also the Standard was raised one, so that the 16,222 exclusive of Standard IV., equal to Standard III. of later years, amounted to 15·07 per cent in 1869. In 1879 the number rose to 85,890, and to 121,899 in 1883, or 36·86 per cent, or practically 37 per cent of all the scholars examined in Scotland, who were examined in Standard IV. and upwards—a very satisfactory state of things indeed. I may mention that in 1882, although there was only an increase of 227 in the schools inspected, the certificated and assistant teachers increased by 3,538; while, on the other hand, the limit imposed on the number of pupil teachers employed in a school caused the number of pupil teachers to decrease by 5,354. In like manner, in 1883, although the increase in the schools was only 251, the certificated and assistant teachers increased by 4,588, and the pupil teachers decreased by 1,857. The result of the two years was an increase in the number of the certificated and assistant teachers, and a decrease of 7,211 in the number of pupil teachers. That I think is satisfactory from more points of view than one, but chiefly on the ground that the employment of pupil teachers to do so much work has been injurious to them; and also in consequence of the long hours they had to be engaged. I am glad to be able to announce that we are rapidly training teachers to supply

the waste in the pupil teachers. This enables us to dispense with the services of a considerable number of these boys every year, and I think that we are able to do better without them. Next, with reference to the school expenses. The cost of the maintenance of Board Schools per scholar in average attendance was, in 1882, £2 1s. 6½d., and last year it was £2 1s. 3½d., being a decrease of 3d. per scholar on account of Board Schools. In the Voluntary Schools, on the other hand, the cost in 1882 was £1 14s. 6¾d., and in 1883 it was £1 14s. 10¼d., being an increase of 3½d. per scholar. That includes London; but I will exclude London in order to show the difference. If we exclude London the cost of Board Schools throughout the country last year was £1 17s. 0¾d., being an increase of a farthing, while in the Voluntary Schools it was £1 14s. 3¾d., being an increase of 3¾d. But in London the Board Schools cost £2 15s. 3¼d. per head against £2 16s. 5¼d. in the preceding year, being a diminution of 1s. 2d. per head in regard to the scholars in the Board Schools. In the Voluntary Schools in London the cost was £2 1s. 5d. per head as against £2 1s. 2d. in the preceding year, being an increase of 3d. per scholar in the Voluntary Schools in London. I am glad to acknowledge this, and I am glad to know that the Voluntary Schools are doing all that they possibly can to make themselves efficient; and I may add that many of the Voluntary Schools are at the very head of the schools of the country—particularly the Wesleyan Schools. As far as I have been able to gauge them under the New Code in respect of the older scholar, they stand at the head of the schools of the country—Board Schools and all others. From the Table I have submitted to the House, it will be seen that the cost of maintaining a child in the Board Schools has diminished considerably in London and slightly decreased in the rest of the country, whereas the cost of maintaining scholars in the Voluntary Schools has increased both in London and elsewhere. There are some points revealed by the statement I have made to which I think I ought to call the attention of the Committee. The first is that there are really some weak places in our system, and especially in the lower Standard, at which children pass out of school. I am constantly receiving complaints from

managers in the country, and especially from the clergy, that they lose their best scholars earlier and earlier every year. This arises from the fact that the Standard of total exemption in nearly 9,000 parishes of England is the fourth. Of course, the children are attending better; they are being better taught by better teachers, and the result is that they sooner pass through the teachers' hands. There is another reason—namely, that we have taken specific subjects with the approval of the House generally; and the children can now pass out of school with nothing but the three R's, and one or two class subjects at 10 years of age; and unless they come under the Factories and Workshops Act, these children are put to labour at too early an age. [Mr. J. G. HUBBARD: Agricultural labour.] Yes; domestic labour of any kind, and agricultural labour which does not bring them under the Factories and Workshops Act. We have no control over this. It is a matter, for the present, entirely under the control of the local authorities. I will give an illustration by stating what actually happened last year. Nearly 40 per cent of the whole number of scholars who passed Standard IV. in 1882, and 50 per cent of those who passed Standard V., disappeared entirely from our schools in 1883, so that when there is a complaint that so many children do not pass Standard VI. the answer is obvious. Until we can raise the Standard and fix a minimum Standard, which every child should attain, we cannot hope that a larger number will pass in the higher Standards. I know it may be argued, and it is argued, that the labour of a child is required to assist the family. Very often that is so; but 10 years of age is too early for a child to be withdrawn from school. We are the only exception, and this the only country in Europe in which—what I may call and what I am sure the Committee will agree with me in calling—this very inhuman system is continued. I hope hon. Gentlemen will consult the excellent Report of the Technical Education Commissioners, where they will see what bearing this has, not only on the intelligence and the morals of the people, but also on the industrial interests of the country in future. Scotland is once more ahead of England in this respect. The minimum Standard enacted last year for

Scotland was Standard III. for half-time labour and Standard V. for full-time labour, and I see that the Commissioners strongly recommend that the same measure should be applied to England. Personally, I should be very thankful to see it, and I do trust that the time is not far distant when we shall have Standard V. fixed as the minimum Standard, under which children shall be allowed to leave school. After all, there are very few children who could not pass Standard V. after reaching 11 or 12 years of age; and that would decidedly be much earlier in point of age, and much lower in point of educational acquirement, than is passed in countries far poorer than England, and which strongly condemn the fixing of so low a limit as Standard V. No child is allowed in Germany to pass out of school until he is able to pass Standard VI.; and even then, neither in Germany nor Switzerland, he cannot be employed upon full time until he has reached 14 years of age; and he must then attend night school in order to improve his education and confirm it until he reaches 15, 16, or even 17 years of age, as the case may be. We are, I am sorry to say, in this respect far below our neighbours. The next great defect to which I must call the attention of the Committee is in the irregularity of the attendance. The Technical Education Commissioners report that when they went about Switzerland, Germany, and Austria, they found 95 per cent, and in some instances 98 per cent, of the children upon the register in average attendance. I am thankful to be able to report an average attendance of 73. Now, what does that mean? It means that there is among the children on the register an average daily absenteeism of 1,100,000 children in England and Wales. This is largely due to two things—first, no doubt, to parental indifference, and, in the second place, very largely—and even more largely—to neglect of duty on the part of the Local Authorities. The clergy have almost overwhelmed me with letters on this question, and I do not know how to answer them. I have no power to interfere with the Local Authorities. We do what we can to stir them up; but the clergy and the farmers are not altogether at one in the matter. The clergy are anxious that the children should go regu-

larly to school; but I am afraid that the Boards of Guardians are the worst authorities who could be constituted for that purpose, because all their interests and predilections are opposed to enforcing attendance. Many instances have been brought under my notice, in which Boards of Guardians have evinced a decided repugnance to enforcing attendance at school. It is often said that the children cannot attend school regularly in the rural districts, because of the bad weather, and that they are prevented from attending in the towns on account of poverty. Those are said to be the great difficulties which exist; but my own examination of the question makes it somewhat difficult to believe this, because, sometimes, I have found in some of the rural schools the very best average attendance and the very best results. I was recently spending my holidays in Hertfordshire, and I found, just on the borders of Lord Salisbury's park, one of the best schools in England, in which, I believe, the scholars earned 21s. 6d. per head last year. The school has been established for a quarter of a century, and it is managed entirely by a lady, who knows her business thoroughly. Everyone who is acquainted with Miss Franks, the lady in question, must know how thoroughly she has studied her business, and how thoroughly she is master of it. I never go into a neighbourhood without visiting the schools, and I have learnt from all classes in this neighbourhood that that school has been a perfect blessing to the whole district, and that it has done more for the immediate neighbourhood than almost any other institution in it. The population is scattered; indeed, there is no sign of any population about the neighbourhood. Hatfield is three miles off, and children do not attend the school from Hatfield, because a very good school already exists in that town. The children walk two or three miles a-day to the school. There is a little botany taught there, and the drawing which is learnt is very useful to the children. A joiner who can set out his own piece of work in consequence of the drawing he has learnt at school is of much greater use to his master than one who is unable to do so, and the study of drawing is very strongly recommended by the Technical Education Commissioners as being exceedingly valuable to English work-

men. Even an agricultural labourer, if he can set out and express with his pencil the work on which he is engaged, will find that he is much more valuable to his master, and much more capable of securing his own interests and advancement. Again, I am acquainted with a school in a parish in Buckinghamshire, where the wife of an hon. Member of this House is the manager, and where the results are excellent; and I could point to many other rural schools of a similar character. In the next place, when we come to consider the poverty in the large towns, where is there poverty such as that suffered by the poor Jews in the neighbourhood of Spitalfields? Yet they have there the largest school in the United Kingdom—I am not sure that it is not the largest in Europe. I have been told that there is one abroad capable of containing 5,000 children; but there are actually 3,500 children in this school, and the average attendance is 95 per cent. Now, these poor children are very largely composed of children of foreign origin. Of 400 or 500 of them who have come in since last February, nine-tenths are the children of Russian and Polish Jews flying from persecution, or from the miseries they have had to endure in Russia and Poland. These children make 95 per cent of average attendance, and in England they pass the very highest Standards. [Mr JESSE COLINGS: Where is the school?] It is the Jews' Free School, in Bell Lane, Spitalfields; and if the hon. Member wishes to spend an interesting hour, he cannot do better than visit it. It is a Voluntary School; and I believe that the social influences which are brought to bear upon it are great and invaluable. The children are well cared for, and are looked after by the rich. Somebody said to me the other day—"They work on the Talmud system;" and I must say I am surprised to find how France, Germany, and other countries seem to have copied all their best things from that system. I wish now for the attention of the Committee while I endeavour to show what can be done in order to improve the average attendance which is at the root of most of the mischief of over-pressure. Now, there is nothing which embarrasses the teacher so much as irregular attendance—there is nothing so difficult to contend with as

to have a child at school for a day and then staying away for a week. To bring up children who attend irregularly, and to keep them on a level with the rest of the class, it is necessary to undertake constant employment; and the greatest difficulty is experienced in fitting them for examination. Now, I have here a Report, which will shortly be in the hands of Members, from Mr. Moncrieff, who has now retired from the Education Department, and who was certainly one of the ablest men connected with it. He reports what has been done by one of his Inspectors—Mr. Groves. Mr. Groves was sent by himself from Huddersfield, in the North of England, where his health had broken down, to Somersetshire. I see my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Somersetshire (Mr. R. H. Paget) in his place, and I think he will be aware of the result. Mr. Groves, when he reached Somersetshire, went about his work very judiciously. He negotiated with nearly all the Boards of Guardians and the School Boards in his new district; and although some of the Guardians would not and have not done anything to improve the average attendance, the rest, by giving notice to the parents and pointing out to them their duty, showing the importance of sending their children regularly to school, and by following it up wherever there was neglect, has succeeded in raising the average attendance in these rural districts from 73 to 83 per cent, or 10 per cent above the average attendance of England. In one district the attendance has been raised to 86.1 per cent. If that can be accomplished by a little co-operation between the local authorities, the teachers, the managers, and the Inspectors, I think it is worthy of imitation. I hope that all who are interested in Voluntary Schools will see what can be done by such action. If the same principle were adopted by the whole of the school managers in England—if they would only follow this example tomorrow, it would lighten the next year's Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer very considerably. It does not mean the mere increase of the attendance by so much per cent; but it means, also, the raising of the educational attainments of the children; and there is a possibility that it would make a difference of £200,000 or £300,000 in the expense of conducting the schools next

year. I have thought it worth while to bring this matter before the Committee in order that the attention of hon. Members may be called to it, and that they may see what may be done. Regularity like this lightens the labour of both children and teachers, adds very much to the comfort of the family, and materially increases the income of the schools concerned. There are some subsidiary matters connected with the Education Department which I should like to mention. We have this year, for the first time, a Report from Dr. Stainer, the Musical Inspector of the Training Colleges, who has succeeded the late Mr. Hullah. With Dr. Stainer are associated two assistants, Mr. Barrett and Mr. McNaught. Mr. Hullah did much to popularize musical education in England; but he was bitterly opposed to the Tonic-Sol-Fa system. Dr. Stainer only gives his assistance in the examination of musical training, and it is his duty to inspect and examine the musical teaching given in the Training Colleges. He has nothing to do with the teaching of it in the schools. For my own part, I wish sincerely that the scope of Dr. Stainer's work could be enlarged; but at present the remuneration he receives is very small, and I am afraid that it would not be to his interests to increase his labours. At the same time, I think it is in the power of the Education Department, if not to make the English people a musical people, at all events, to make vocal music popular from one end of the country to the other; and I cannot conceive anything that would be a greater gain. There are many eminent authorities who, in speaking of the capacity of the English for music, raise them very much higher than I had imagined. I, myself, was present last July with Dr. Stainer at the Crystal Palace, when I had great pleasure in listening to 5,000 school children singing together from notes. They had never been grouped together for that purpose before; and the effect was most magnificent—almost magical. There is nothing which the children enjoy so much as their singing. They are never so joyous and so happy as when singing good poetry and good music, and it would be an immense gain if we could make music popular from one end of the country to the other. I have spoken of the appointment of a Directress of needle-

work. I am glad to say that she is a marvellous teacher, and that she has been very successful in teaching the combined system. She raised up one of the schools in the county of Leicestershire from almost the lowest point to that of one of the best in the Kingdom, and now she is conducting the inspecting staff for pupil teachers and the Training Colleges. What is wanted to be taught is good useful, plain work, not too trying for the children, but such work as will make them good and useful housewives. The Circular which was issued respecting the establishment of school savings banks has also been successful. The first bank was established in 1879, and in that year there were 848 school savings banks established. They now numbered 1,718, and it is hoped that the movement will go on increasing. Having stated to the Committee the progress which has been made during the past year, it would, perhaps, not be out of place if I were to call the attention of the Committee to the financial and to the educational growth of the country with a view to stock-taking—as to what we are spending and what we are getting for our money. It has been the duty of every Minister who has occupied my position to come down to the House every year to ask for a very considerable increased grant over that of the preceding year. I am afraid that I have been no exception to the rule, and that there will be no exception this year. The Estimate now laid before the Committee is the largest which has ever been presented to it. I do not see my hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) present; but my hon. Friend said he would never be content until the Education Estimates were as large as the Estimates for the Army and Navy. Now, although they are not as large as those for the Army and Navy, they are becoming very respectable. The demands upon the Department are constantly increasing. A short time ago my right hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) came before me with a very influential deputation to demand from us what would cause an increase of nearly 4s. per head upon all the children, and would add something like £1,000,000 a-year to the Estimates. The demand for Technical Education, Intermediate Education, Museums, Colleges, Free Libraries, and Art, all means

increased grants and largely increased expenditure, and I confess that this expenditure, which has been increasing, and is still increasing, seems to me likely to go on increasing; and if I am to be frank to the Committee, I do not for one moment regret it. All that I hope is that we shall take care that whatever we do is not done lavishly or extravagantly, but that we get full value for our money. I see no reason why this should not be the case, and if it is so, I believe it will be the most remunerative expenditure we could embark in. And now let me point out to the Committee the financial growth of the Education Estimates. Here again I take three periods, covering a period of 15 years. I take first the Estimates of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) in 1869-70, which was the year of the passing of the Act; next the Estimates of my noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) of 1879-80; and, lastly, the Estimates for the year 1884-5, which are those now before the Committee. The Estimates for Public Education in England and Wales in 1869-70 amounted to £721,000; in 1879-80 to £2,481,000; and for 1884-5 they are £3,016,000. For Scotland the Estimates were, in 1869-70, £120,000; for 1879-80, £470,000; and now, in 1884-5, they are £475,000. For the Science and Art Department, the Estimates were, for the United Kingdom, in 1869-70, £232,000; in 1879-80, £322,000; and are now, in 1884-5, £365,000. The total Estimates for Public Education, Science, and Art, for the United Kingdom, were, in Class IV., in 1869-70, £1,628,000. Those were the Estimates of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). In 1879-80 they amounted to £4,153,000, and those were the Estimates of the noble Lord opposite. And in 1884-5 they have reached £4,853,000, and they are the Estimates I am submitting to-day. They have thus grown in 15 years (from 1869-70 to 1884-5) from £1,628,000 to £4,853,000. The increase in the Votes for Public Education has been, in England and Wales, £2,295,000, or 318 per cent; and in Scotland, £355,000, or 296 per cent; while the increase in the Science and Art Department has been £133,000, or 58 per cent. For all the Votes in Class IV. the increase has been £3,225,000, or

198 per cent. During the same period the Irish Education Vote, with which I have nothing to do, increased from £374,000 to £733,000, an increase of £359,000, or 96 per cent. Having shown the Committee the natural growth of the Estimates, let me now ask the Committee to consider what we are getting for our money. I will endeavour to take a survey of the educational position, and I will take the same periods for showing the educational growth as I have taken in regard to the Estimates, in order that we may fairly see the actual results. Well, Sir, the average attendance in Great Britain in 1869-70—that is, in England, Scotland, and Wales—was, according to the number on the register, 1,797,388; in 1879 it was 4,219,355; and in 1883 it was 4,842,545. Those numbers were actually on the books. Having given the numbers, I will show the increase in the grants.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: What was the increase per cent in the average attendance?

MR. MUNDELLA: It was 73·1 in England, and 78 in Scotland. Well, having shown the numbers, let me show the increase in the grants. I have given the Committee the increase in the higher Standards in a former statement, and I now come to the grants for England and Wales. The rate of the grant earned in 1869 was 9s. 9½d.; in 1879, 15s. 5¾d.; and in 1883 it was 16s. 2¾d. For Scotland, in 1869, it was 9s. 10¾d.; in 1879, 16s. 11d.; and in 1883, 17s. 8¾d. I thought it would be desirable to ascertain the number of attendances up to the very latest date, and I have been able to obtain them within a few thousands. The Return gives the number of children on the roll in the schools to-day throughout Great Britain, and this is how it comes out. The estimated number of children on the Register at the present time in the public elementary, certified efficient, workhouse, industrial, and military schools in Great Britain is 5,080,000, or almost exactly one-sixth of the population estimated up to this date. The numbers are made up as follows:—In elementary schools in England and Wales, 4,360,000; in Scotland 580,000; in certified efficient schools, 22,000; and in workhouse, industrial, military, and other schools, 56,000; making a total of 5,018,000.

MR. J. G. TALBOT: Is that the number in attendance?

MR. MUNDELLA: No; that is the number on the register. To this must be added 62,000, attending the night schools, making a total of 5,080,000. Now, Sir, it has always been the idea of the Education Department and of educationalists generally that one-sixth of the people ought to be in attendance at school. In 1869-70, one in 14 of the population were on the register; and to-day, exclusive of all private adventure schools of all classes and of middle and higher schools, whether endowed or not, we have one in six of the population on the rolls of the schools. This is a result which I am sure everybody must be congratulated upon—the country itself most of all—and the Committee will not forget the debt it owes to my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who now sits behind me, for his share in the work. I have endeavoured now to show what is the equivalent for this great and growing expenditure, and I have made a survey as well as I am able. Notwithstanding all we have done, there are many things that still remain to be done; but, although there are many places in which the education supplied is still imperfect, one result must inevitably flow from this provision of education. The people can no longer be disqualified by illiteracy and ignorance from the higher duties of citizenship. The discipline of the school prepares the children for the duties of everyday life. The Reports of the Commissioners on Technical Education teem with evidences not only of the moral and political advantages which flow from education, but also of the industrial advantages which follow from a judicious expenditure upon education. I should like to quote very briefly one or two lines from the Report of the Commissioners, because we often, in this House, grudge this expenditure to the local authorities. When in Baden the Commissioners examined the schools there, and asked why so large an expenditure was incurred in school buildings and school furniture, because the expenditure there in that respect is one which exceeds anything we ever dreamt of. They expended about £33 per head in school buildings, and in providing class-rooms for the scholars and masters. There is a fully qualified master for every class-room.

The answer the Commissioners received was to the effect that in that free country it would require much courage to oppose any scheme for improving the education of the children, which was regarded as their most valuable inheritance. Now, I may say that the same statement runs through the Reports of the Commissioners in regard to almost every district which was visited by them. They tell us that the moral, political, and industrial advantages which follow from education are appreciated abroad quite as highly, if not more highly, than in England. Both in Germany and in Switzerland a strong feeling exists among rich and poor as to the necessity of education; and in the latter country, although the ordinary expense of education had been increased by many millions, so far from reducing the expenditure a sum of £50,000 has just been voted for providing a chemical library. There is one other point which, though not entirely within the scope of the Education Department, I hope the Committee will permit me to refer to as illustrating, at any rate, the value of the work in which we are engaged. Many Members will recollect an excellent article which lately appeared on the subject of education written by M. Emile De Laveleye. He says—

“Whence comes it that with such imperfect laws the English are such a great nation?”

And his answer is—

“It is due to their religious principles, and to the power of their religious sentiment in England.”

and he points out that this feeling makes England altogether another country as compared with any country on the Continent. He illustrates this statement by a reference to that marvellous institution—the English Sunday School. This is the religious side of the question which objectors tell us in this country our teaching neglects. They say we have introduced the secular system, which is degrading to religion, and that we are lowering the moral and religious tone of the people by our educational system. [“Hear, hear!”] An hon. Member opposite cheers. What is the evidence that he knows anything at all about it? A most superficial acquaintance with the whole subject shows just the reverse—that, just in proportion as we have increased the secular know-

ledge of the people, we have increased the amount of quality in the religion imparted to them. Never, in the history of England, has so much been given to the people of England in the shape of religious knowledge than is given to-day. Let me give the Committee one solitary illustration of it. I have taken a deep interest in the growth of Sunday School education in England from my early youth, and I will refer the Committee to the statistics which have been prepared by Mr. Fountain Hartley, the Statistical Secretary of the Sunday School Union. His Report is based on the recent Census Returns, and probably upon the most reliable source of information. Let me read his own words. He says—

“It is a matter of congratulation and thankfulness that the predictions which some persons have given utterance to—namely, that the spread of Day School education would do away with the necessity of Sunday Schools and add to their gradual decline—have not been fulfilled, but that, on the contrary, the proportion of children in the Sunday School has never advanced more rapidly than during the last few years.”

During the last few years the number of children sent to the Sunday Schools has been greater than those sent to the Day Schools. The actual number of children on the register of Sunday Schools in England and Wales, according to Mr. Hartley's calculation, is 5,200,776, and there are 593,427 teachers—the most marvellous voluntary effort in the cause of education that any country has ever seen. I want to show, if the Committee will permit me, how the Day Schools have affected the Sunday Schools. Just as children have been taken from the streets and have been placed in the Day Schools they have been able to acquire better information and better knowledge; and instead of the Sunday School teachers having to instruct ignorant children they have to deal with children who have already acquired some knowledge of the facts of religion, and who have been brought into schools with receptive minds. The consequence has been that the progress the pupils have made has been proportionately good. In the Church of England Schools there are upwards of 250,000 children on the register; and the teachers, together with those of the Sunday School Union, have been exerting themselves to the utmost to improve the training of

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these Sunday School children. The consequence has been that the Sunday School teachers have been compelled to train themselves on the week days in order that they may not be found unprepared for the work on Sunday. Then, altogether, I say, without hesitation, that the School Boards have done more for the religious education of the country than any other institution that has ever been set up. I say so deliberately. Without the action of the School Boards we never should have forced the children into the Voluntary Schools and the lower schools; and the fact that we have now nearly 17,000,000 of the population of England and Wales under the School Boards, and the whole of the population of Scotland, and that they have been steadily improving the Day School education, has resulted in a vast improvement in the religious and moral tone of the people of this country. Some of the Reports which have been received from the Inspectors show what marvellous influence our Day Schools have exercised among the poorest and most wretched of the population. When the children came to the schools in the first instance they were in a filthy condition, ragged, and covered with vermin, so as hardly to be tolerable to the teachers who had to instruct them. Their parents took little interest in them or their doings, and constantly came to the schools in order to abuse the teachers, using language of the most abominable character. Within two years everything was changed; the children themselves are hardly known as the same children, and the teachers say that the parents are really grateful for the efforts which are being made for their children. The teachers say that the mothers come to the schools to apologize for their former bad language, and send little kindly messages or a few flowers, or some token which shows they are grateful for what is being done. There are one or two other things which I will briefly refer to. Is it not worthy of note that three Royal Commissions have reported recently on this all-important question of education? The first is the Commission on Technical Education. I hardly know how to express my obligations and gratitude for the work those Commissioners have done. There never was a more important body of evidence placed before the House of Commons on any question than those

Commissioners have laid before us. It is not only a compendium of the old educational system of Europe and America; it not only deals with the higher class education of the people; but it shows the social and moral effect of religious instruction. It is an admirable Report, and my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Mr. B. Samuelson) and his Colleagues deserve the gratitude of the House and the country for it. That six Gentlemen should have done what they have done; should have worked so hard for three years; should have travelled from one end of Europe to the other again, again, and again; and should have laboured so hard in the work at all, is a matter of surprise. But these Gentlemen have also visited every part of England, Ireland, and Scotland; they have presented excellent Reports both in regard to Ireland and Scotland; and they have done all this not only at the sacrifice of their own time, but at their own expense, having had to put their hands into their own pockets to the extent of some hundreds of pounds a-year.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: It is a great shame.

MR. MUNDELLA: I cannot agree with that remark; I do not think it is a shame. There is nothing so noble in the public service as gratuitous public work. The best work which has ever been done in England has been done gratuitously, and I am sure that in regard to this particular Report it will receive the very serious consideration of Parliament. Then there is another Report from the Commission on Industrial and Reformatory Schools, which, whenever Parliament has time to consider those questions, must be carefully looked at. Scotland has more interest in the subject, and there is no doubt that the whole system of our Reformatory and Industrial Schools needs reform. In the third place, there has been the Report of another Commission—the Crofters' Commission—which is valuable from an educational point of view in regard to the teaching of English to the Gaelic-speaking population of Scotland. I will not say that I think the Education Department ought to undertake the teaching of Gaelic. I cannot imagine, however, that an English teacher should go down to Scotland among the Gaelic-speaking population, and, simply speaking his own language, train them like parrots,

without being able to give them the Gaelic equivalent for what he teaches. It would be just the same as if one of us were to employ a native of Italy to teach Italian to our children who was unable to speak the English language. I must also make some acknowledgment for the services which have been rendered to the cause of education by the Report in reference to the City and Borough Guilds. Baron Bramwell and other Members of that Commission have fully shown that the industrial training given in connection with those Guilds in Science and Art have been of the greatest advantage. In point of fact, the work which has been done has been most excellent. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of the work which has been done at the new College in South Kensington, and the examinations now taking place all over the country in connection with the grants show that excellent work is being done in bringing Art and industrial training within the reach of the working classes of the country. There is only one other matter upon which I will trespass on the patience of the Committee, and it has reference to the Society which was started some years ago for the purpose of introducing the study of Art into the schools of this country. Under their auspices decorative Art and many other matters have received a great impetus, and nothing is more advantageous to the child than being taught to appreciate and enjoy the beautiful forms. The progress which this study has made is shown in the reproduction of some of the best types of drawing, and in some of the best copies of the old masters. Not only is that so, but a number of the most beautiful designs have been supplied, and the Society complete their Report by contending that nothing but the best forms of design ought to be placed before the eye of the scholar, in order that a true artistic feeling may be promoted. Now, Sir, I have to thank the Committee for the great patience with which it has heard me. The Estimates which I have submitted have been prepared for the last time by Sir Francis Sandford, the late Secretary of the Education Department. After a long and very honourable service in that Department he has felt it incumbent upon him to retire; and I am sure that we all feel he is entitled to some reward. He has

now taken up a post in which the duties will be less arduous, but not less useful than those which he has been in the habit of performing for us. I am sure that the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) and every Member of this House who has ever transacted business with Sir Francis Sandford will feel that his retirement is a serious loss to the country. I can conceive nothing more difficult than the administration of the Education Acts if it were not for the services and able assistance of a man occupying the position which Sir Francis Sandford has filled, and which he so ably administered with tact, temper, and sound judgment. In all probability the very success of the administration of the Acts depends upon the manner in which the Department is assisted by such a man. His retirement is a great loss to us; but we cannot grudge to him the rest to which he is fairly entitled; and I can only hope that he will continue to render in his new sphere the same valuable work to the country which he has performed in his old.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £2,366,167, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for Public Education in England and Wales, including Expenses of the Education Office in London."

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON, in moving to reduce the Vote by £5,870, being the "increase of charge for salaries of Inspectors during the year ending 31st March 1885, as compared with the year ending 31st March 1884," said: The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council has congratulated us upon the fact that we are spending £3,000,000 of money, that we have 4,000,000 of school children, that we have 58,000 schoolmasters and 18,000 schools. Well, Sir, we may well be congratulated that we have so many means of doing good; and I think he put the whole point of the case when he said that the country will not grudge the money if we are sure that we are getting good value for it. We have now, however, arrived at a critical period in matters educational. Although the right hon. Gentleman addressed the Committee for an hour and a-half, during the whole of that hour and a-half

he did not say a single word on the subject which, of all others, is filling the minds of the people with anxiety—namely, whether there is or whether there is not over-pressure and over-strain in the system of education adopted in the country? As public men, we are bound to test this Vote by its results. We are bound to ask the question whether mischief and injury is being done to the health of the children? If the lives of children and teachers are endangered, and if their future health and happiness are undermined, then I say that we have no reason to congratulate ourselves, but have every reason to alter or modify, in some respects, our methods of administering the system. I shall be obliged, in the course of the remarks I have to make, to criticize the public conduct of the Vice President; and I wish, therefore, to make this acknowledgment, that privately he has always shown to me the greatest courtesy, and in everything I have to say I criticize him as a public man is justified, nay, in certain cases, bound, to criticize a public man. I may say that even he admits that there may be something wrong. Not very long ago, the right hon. Gentleman appeared before a Committee upon Education, whose business it was to find out what faults there were in our system, and, if possible, to remove them. Every one appeared to have a different remedy to suggest, and that of the right hon. Gentleman was certainly a little singular, and one which would never have occurred, I think, to any one but himself. The right hon. Gentleman gravely told the Committee that the only improvement he could suggest was that the Vice President of the Committee of Council should be made a Member of the Cabinet. The whole question really turns upon whether there is over-pressure or not, and upon that point we ought to have the fullest information. Has the Vice President given us all the information in his power? On the contrary, I charge the right hon. Gentleman with withholding information. I charge him with suppressing information which ought to have been given to this House. I contend, Sir, that we have a right, on this occasion, to have all the information which can be given to us on this vital question; and if he has in his possession the opinion of any persons who, by their

position, by their authority, and by their impartiality, stand so high that their opinions are worthy of consideration, I say that he is in duty bound to give to the House the information which those persons have supplied. Not very long ago, the right hon. Gentleman told us that he had invited Dr. Crichton Browne to report on the Elementary School system from a sanitary point of view. That Report, which came to hand six weeks ago, remains a sealed book to the majority of the Members of this House, but not to all, because the right hon. Gentleman has invited several Members on this side and upon the opposite Benches to see this Report, and I have been one of those Members. Strangely enough, no sooner had I made myself master of its contents than the right hon. Gentleman came to me and said—"This is confidential." Sir, it is not confidential. I decline to admit, when I am invited as a Member of Parliament to go to the Office of any Minister presiding over a Public Department, that the information I get there is confidential. I have taken care to ask those whose opinion on these matters is of more authority than that of the right hon. Gentleman, and they tell me that I have no reason to consider that information confidential, and, therefore, Sir, I shall take the liberty of laying some of the statements of Dr. Crichton Browne before the Committee; and in order that I may not add anything through failure of memory, I shall take care to give the exact words of his Report. I suppose everyone who knows anything of the Medical Profession is acquainted with the fact that no member of it stands higher than Dr. Crichton Browne, who is one of the Lord Chancellor's Visitors in Lunacy, and it is on that account that the right hon. Gentleman selected him to make the Report which the right hon. Gentleman now suppresses. That impartial man, acting in a *quasi-judicial* capacity, says—

"The general result of my observations on the schools which I have visited is to confirm the opinions which I ventured to state at our interview, that over-pressure exists to some extent in our Elementary Schools, that it is even now causing appreciable evil effects, and that if unchecked it will entail very serious consequences in future generations."

What does the Committee say to that, when they are about to vote £3,000,000? Dr. Crichton Browne goes on to say—

"My opinion was founded 'on statements of medical men whom I am in the habit of meeting in every district of the country, and on my own knowledge of the fact that certain educational practices pursued in Elementary Schools are at variance with great physiological laws which cannot be set at nought with impunity."

Let us see what he says about the methods of examination, the cause, above all others, of over-pressure. He says—

"The conclusion is inevitable that the examination has now reached such a pitch that it is impossible for a considerable proportion of the children to prepare for it adequately in the ordinary school hours, and without a prolongation of enforced brain activity which amounts to over-pressure."

Then with regard to home lessons, which subject has often been brought before the right hon. Gentleman, Dr. Crichton Browne reports that—

"The principle of home work is bad . . . it is a worry and sometimes a torment to a child . . . and it is one of the instruments and signs of over-pressure."

Then what does he state with regard to another matter which is also entirely overlooked by the right hon. Gentleman? His Report is that—

"In a school in Clerkenwell 40 per cent of the children sometimes come to school without breakfast, and 28 per cent go without dinner. . . . In a school of 475 children, 129 were pointed out to me as half-starved, and their faces gave doleful confirmation of the fact. . . . These children want blood, and we offer them a little brain polish; they ask for bread, and receive a problem; for milk, the tonic-sol-fa (the right hon. Gentleman thinks highly of that) is introduced to them; and in all this there is an aggravation of their sufferings and their risks. . . . To find that delicate children are working in exactly the same way and at exactly the same rate as healthy children is to have another convincing proof of the existence of over-pressure."

Now, Sir, all these facts were within the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman when he addressed the Committee for an hour and a-half. Why, then, did he avoid saying a single word about them? Next, with regard to payment by results, which question the right hon. Gentleman has continually had brought before him, Dr. Crichton Browne says—

"It is in the preparation for the annual examinations that over-pressure is brought to bear on all classes of backward, delicate, and nervous children; and it is from the system of payment by results, it must be added, that the examination takes its sting. . . . The present system is a payment by proximate and partial results, disregarding those of an ultimate and permanent character."

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Then, as to suicides, the Report is that—

"The number of children under 16 in the list of suicides, although still comparatively small, is swelling annually. . . . The mortality from nervous diseases is steadily increasing. . . . For every case of death that results directly from over-pressure in schools, there must be, if it is capable of causing death, thousands of instances of minor evils. . . . It is now certain that one-third of the children attending Elementary Schools in London suffer from habitual headache. . . . Short-sightedness is increasing rapidly among our school children, and threatens to become a national infirmity in England as it is in Germany."

Every word of that statement was known to the right hon. Gentleman weeks ago, and he now ventures to bring these Estimates before us without a single reference to it. He has suppressed that Report. Now, I ask hon. Members to consider the position which the right hon. Gentleman takes up. He assumes the same position which Mr. Robert Lowe, now Viscount Sherbrooke, assumed in 1864, and for which he was punished by a vote of this House—he assumes the right to suppress every Report in which his educational views are controverted, and to bring to our knowledge those only which support them. Whether the Reports made to the Education Department are right or not, I say that the only courageous and honourable course is to lay them before us. We are the Representatives of the people of England; we are the judges; and we have a right to say that every particle of evidence in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman should be laid before us. Let the right hon. Gentleman show that the evidence on which he founds his opinion is better than that on which we, who take the opposite view, found ours; but, at least, let official Reports which go against his opinions be laid before Parliament. But, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has not only kept from the eyes of the public this Report of Dr. Crichton Browne, but he has ventured to throw ridicule upon it in public. He has called it a—

"Tirade of ethics and vital statistics which has nothing to do with the question;"

and he has attempted to throw discredit upon the man who, at his own invitation, and at great personal trouble, has made this Report. That, I say, is not fair, and it is a course which I think the right hon. Gentleman ought to regret. Well, Sir, this is a terrible in-

dictment against the system which is being pursued. But let us see whether Dr. Crichton Browne stands in a position of isolation with regard to the charges against the system which the right hon. Gentleman is administering. I will prove that the medical opinion of the country is almost unanimous upon the subject. Dr. Forbes Winslow, who is well known as a great authority, says, in a letter to *The Morning Post*—

"The whole system (the system which the right hon. Gentleman is so proud of), as at present carried on, is rotten to its very foundation. Our Educational Department congratulates itself on its progress throughout the country, whilst the children become more stunted in intellect, and are to be found to swell the wards of our lunatic asylums and idiotic institutions."

Dr. Pridgen Teale, F.R.C.S., Surgeon to the Leeds Infirmary, President of the Health Department of the Social Science Congress, says—

"There is a consensus of skilled opinion that the educational machine of the country is at present moving on wrong lines—on lines tending not unfrequently towards injury of health."

And then he writes a pamphlet entitled—

"Hurry, Worry, and Money—the bane of Modern Education."

Dr. Edgar Browne, Surgeon to the Eye and Ear Infirmary, Liverpool, declares that—

"A large portion of the children who are passing through the educational mill will emerge with definite, marked, and obvious physical injury; one of the most frequent complaints is headache. Healthy children never have headaches. Short-sightedness is the direct result of school-work under existing conditions."

Again, Dr. Clifford Allbutt, M.A., F.R.S., says on the conditions under which pupil teachers work—

"I turn to a blot upon our system which I cannot show too dark."

He here refers, not to the teaching of the pupil teachers in the schools, but to the work which they are compelled to prepare for their own examinations. Dr. Rabagliati says, in a letter to *The Spectator*—

"I believe that our national system of education is being unduly pressed."

There certainly does seem to be a most remarkable consensus of medical opinion in support of Dr. Crichton Browne. We cannot laugh the doctors out of court. If the doctors tell us we are wrong on the lines of health, is it for

persons who are not doctors, and know nothing about the laws of health, to say that the doctors are not to be trusted, and that the system which they condemn is to go on unchecked? But I have another class of evidence to bring forward—the evidence of experts, who have nothing whatever to do with the doctors. Mr. Edwin Chadwick, C.B., late Commissioner of Inquiry into the Labour of Young Persons in Factories, Commissioner of Sanitary Inquiry, &c., says that—

"Compulsory attendance to sedentary work should be limited to three hours; and the other two hours of school attendance should be spent in physical or industrial training."

The hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Samuel Smith) would endorse this doctrine, and I know he has a Notice on the Paper to the same effect. Mr. Chadwick goes on to say—

"From the Reports of Privy Council Inspectors, sufficient evidence may be adduced of the ever continued failure of the system which they are wearily engaged in administering. . . . There is objection to the method of payment for the partial and inferior results in stages, instead of paying for the whole result—*i.e.*, the outcome."

Well, Sir, those are the views of Mr. Chadwick, an old official. I think they constitute one of the strongest condemnations of the present system. Let me now call attention to the statement of Mr. Tait, Inspector of the Huddersfield Board Schools. He says—

"Over-pressure does exist; and it is a serious evil."

Such is the evidence of experts in support of the evidence of Dr. Crichton Browne. I could multiply it indefinitely. And now let me turn to the evidence of the teachers themselves. These are the persons who are brought face to face with the children, who are conducting their daily education. At a meeting on the 24th of March last, at which the Earl of Shaftesbury presided, they unanimously passed the following resolution:—

"That a serious amount of over-pressure, injurious to the health and education of the people, exists in the public Elementary Schools. Causes:—1. Inelastic conditions of Code. 2. Irregularity of attendance. 3. Excessive demands of Code. 4. Defects of system of Inspection."

Again, the National Union of Elementary Teachers declare that—

"So long as high grants can be obtained by over-pressure, and in many cases in no other way, and so long as human nature remains as it is, managers will demand, and teachers will be compelled to obtain, high grants. The Code proceeds upon the general assumption that all scholars can progress at the same rate, irrespective of capacity or attendance; this is one of the causes of over-pressure. In no country in Europe does the grant depend upon the number of individual passes."

In their opinion, the standard is too high for the scholar of moderate ability. Well, Sir, I think we have strong evidence here, taken, first, from medical men, secondly, from experts, and, thirdly, from the teachers themselves, that over-pressure does exist in the Elementary Schools. I should like now to call the attention of the Committee to another class of evidence, which I think is as strong as it possibly can be, because it is evidence which has been procured by the request of the right hon. Gentleman. It is taken from the Registrar General's Report (Statistical Remarks), 1884, pages 14 and 15, and is as follows:—

"The question referred to this Office by the Educational Department was, whether there was any statistical proof of deterioration of health in children of school age? . . . Comparing 1861-70 with 1871-80, it would appear that while the mortality of children from all causes has considerably diminished, their mortality from diseases of the nervous system has exceptionally remained stationary. The general improvement has not affected this class of diseases. . . . These statistics doubtless tend to support the view that the strain of education produces in a certain proportion of children injurious effects upon the brain and nervous system."

Considering that this matter was referred to the Registrar General's Department by the Education Department, it is not right that it should not have been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg pardon. I stated every word of it last year.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: The Report was only in the hands of the public in March of this year, and now, and not last year, is the time to refer to it. I do not intend to refer individually to all the many cases which have been brought under our notice. I only wish to make this complaint, that when I and others have brought cases of individual over-pressure to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman, he has treated them with official recklessness—

I may almost say with official cruelty. I have brought before the right hon. Gentleman cases of suicide, cases of lunacy, cases of death, and cases of ruined health which have been supported by the verdicts of juries, by the opinions of the doctors who attended the patients, by the charges of Coroners to their juries, and by the remarks of school managers; and yet the right hon. Gentleman has in every case declared that the mischief has not been proved to be the result of over-pressure. I dare say that some of those cases might be attributable to other causes. I am sure that all were not. It is by individual cases that we are at last able to arrive at general conclusions. To-day I have chosen to appeal to other evidence than that of individual cases; and it must always be remembered, that where one case of death or lunacy occurs, there must be thousands of cases of mental and bodily injury. If all these doctors, teachers, experts—whose evidence I have quoted—are false persons, and are not to be attended to, then there is no case of over-pressure. If they are worthy of belief, then I have abundantly proved the cases which I have brought to the attention of the Committee. I feel that to-day our first business is to prove that injury is going on rather than to remedy it; and I will only touch shortly and generally upon the sort of remedies which ought to be demanded. And here I have to point out that the injury may arise, not alone from the Code itself, but from the way in which it is administered. A bad Code may be so administered that great good may come from it, and a good Code may be so administered that harm may come from it. First, then, I say that there should not be so large a payment for the partial results of individual examination. Secondly, that greater liberty should be allowed the teacher to classify children according to acquirements and abilities. My third suggestion is, that the teacher should have a greater discretion to withhold backward and nervous children from examination. My fourth suggestion is, that overtime, in the shape of home lessons, should not be insisted upon. Then, again, we ought, I think, to have our schools inspected by doctors. Such are some of the methods which I think might be tried. The

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right hon. Gentleman said something about the age at which children are allowed to leave school—at which they are not allowed to work unless they have passed a certain Standard. I think it is 14. I do not wish to give my own opinion upon such a matter—probably it is not worth anything—but I have had put into my hands to-day a very curious paper, through the agency of one of the police magistrates in London. It bears so remarkably upon this question, that I think the Committee might like me to read it. The magistrate in question says—

“As regards the children themselves the law often has a most mischievous effect. Boys between 13 and 14 are much less willing to attend school than younger boys, but the law forbids them to work unless they have passed the prescribed Standard, and not unfrequently they form bad associates and learn to steal. At one of the Police Courts lately, a boy between 13 and 14 was charged with stealing boots. The boy's father was in Court, and he said to the magistrate,—‘My boy is a very fair scholar, and was earning 10s. a-week, but the School Board won't let him work, and now he is brought here for stealing.’ I much fear that with regard to the girls the effects are still more injurious, for at the critical age in question they are, if not employed, exposed to still more temptations than the boys. A female warder at one of the principal prisons in London lately expressed to one of the magistrates a strong opinion on the subject. She said that School Boards and Music Halls together were making numbers of girls prostitutes.”

[“Name!”] I thought it was well I should read the extract to the Committee; but, of course, I only read it for what it is worth. [“Name!”] Hon. Members who are interested in this question know very well how much importance to attach to what I have read.

MR. MUNDELLA: I think the hon. Gentleman said a London magistrate. Perhaps he will tell us who it is?

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I cannot give his name. I have indicated the source from which a very grave statement emanates, and this statement itself must be taken for what it is worth. Now, Sir Arthur Otway, I wish to turn to a matter which I am very sorry to have to refer to; it is rather personal to the right hon. Gentleman, and to the manner in which he has been carrying on his Department. At the end of last Session I pressed upon the right hon. Gentleman the desirability of obtaining Reports from Inspectors and others, as to the alleged

over-pressure in schools, and he promised me publicly in this House that he would get Reports during the winter. This Session I have asked for the production of those Reports, but I have been told they are confidential. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman may excuse the non-production of the Reports on the ground that they are confidential; but I have asked him whether he had in his possession any Reports from Inspectors or others, which confirmed the opinion of Dr. Crichton Browne that over-pressure does exist in Elementary Schools? The right hon. Gentleman, in reply, said—

“The general Reports which he had would be shortly laid on the Table of the House. They were all in contradiction of Dr. Crichton Browne's conclusions;”

the conclusion being that over-pressure existed. Anyone who read that answer casually would be led to the conclusion that the right hon. Gentleman had no Reports or information from Inspectors or others in his possession which confirmed the statement of Dr. Crichton Browne; but anyone reading it very closely will find that it can be so construed that it does not answer my question at all, but is only intended to convey an idea that is not founded on fact. Now, I ask the Committee what they would think of anyone in private life who gave an answer which was so arranged as to convey an idea which was not founded on fact? I say they would not again trust the man who gave such an answer. I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has one code of morality for private life and another code of morality for public life? And I challenge him to get up in his place now and deny that he has information from Inspectors and others which confirms the statement of Dr. Crichton Browne, that over-pressure does exist in Elementary Schools. That is a challenge I hope the right hon. Gentleman will accept.

The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a sum, not exceeding £3,360,297, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for Public Education in England and Wales, including Expenses of the Education Office in London.”—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton.*)

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON asked for the indulgence of the Committee while he endeavoured to answer the somewhat excited speech to which they had just listened. He did not think it was necessary for him to endeavour to defend the conduct of his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council, who was above the insinuations which had been made by the hon. Member. As to the antagonism between the right hon. Gentleman and Dr. Crichton Browne, he (Mr. Sydney Buxton) could only say that he had read Dr. Crichton Browne's Report, and if it was a specimen of the evidence which was to be produced in support of the assertion that over-pressure existed in Elementary Schools, then he could only say the case was even weaker than he had thought it. He wished to add that, in his opinion, his right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) was quite justified in not printing Dr. Crichton Browne's Report as a State Paper, though he trusted it would be moved for by some other hon. Member in order that the Committee might see what the evidence was upon which the allegation was founded. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) that what they had to do in this matter was to inquire whether over-pressure really existed, and whether the Department had done its best in endeavouring to minimize such strain as might be shown to exist. As far as he could judge, the cry of over-pressure had been vastly exaggerated. Some people seemed to have this over-pressure on the brain, and lived in such a chronic state of indignation that they were unable to inquire into the facts of the cases brought forward. The hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) pointed to the Medical Profession, whose testimony, he said, went to show that over-pressure did really exist in their schools. With the permission of the Committee, he (Mr. Sydney Buxton) would like, in reference to the part played by the Medical Profession in this matter, to mention certain evidence which had been given, and it was the only evidence he intended to adduce in this debate. The School Board of Bradford, like other School Boards, had appointed a Committee to inquire into the question of over-pressure. A Memorial, from something like 50 medical gentlemen of Bradford, had been presented to the School Board, setting forth that

over-pressure existed, more especially in connection with home lessons. The Committee sent a Circular to the doctors, requesting them to specify cases in which they knew over-pressure had existed, and he thought the results of that Circular would somewhat astonish the Committee, especially the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton), who relied so much in this matter on medical evidence. The result was this—that while a considerable number of doctors did not answer at all, only two cases of over-pressure were given. Three doctors declined to give any cases; 13 said they had only “expressed an opinion” on the subject, and 10 that they had no cases to give; and three others distinctly said that no case of over-pressure had come under their notice. The doctors went a little further than that, because the Committee of the Bradford School Board requested them to meet the Committee in order to discuss the matter. What was the result? The doctors were so wedded to their own opinions that, as they said in their letters to the Committee—“They respectfully declined the proposal of a conference as unlikely to suit any useful purpose, or to modify the opinion already expressed in the Memorial.” If the action of the doctors of Bradford was a specimen of the action of the Medical Profession generally on this question of over-pressure—and what had occurred at Bradford had occurred at Birmingham and Leeds, and other places—the case was not so bad as the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) would make out. Nowadays, many persons were disposed to put down every ailment to which a child would be naturally subject, and which exhibited itself during school-time, to over-pressure. As a matter of fact, medical testimony went to show that the general health of the children who had passed or were passing through the schools, had positively improved. At the same time, he entirely sympathized with the hon. Member in his desire that over-strain, where it existed, should, if possible, be diminished. He very much regretted that the authority of a certain number of those who were honestly in favour of the course advocated by the hon. Member was to some extent diminished by the fact that the cry of over-pressure was raised by many who

considered that the three "R's" should be the Alpha and Omega of the education given in the public schools. No one would deny that there was a certain amount of over-strain in some of the schools. He was afraid that over-strain was in some instances a necessary state of things. They must acknowledge, however, that in any department of life, wherever they drew the line, there must be a certain amount of pressure on the borders; and he was afraid that the only result of lowering the standard of education would be, not that those who were backward or nervous would be benefited, but that the bright and capable child would be deprived of that education to which he was justly entitled. Now, there was, he regretted to say, in connection with elementary education, a great disturbing cause, to which the hon. Member referred, and which the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council also touched upon. He meant not only irregularity of attendance, which he was glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman had largely diminished during the past year, but that under-feeding which was a precursor of most of the over-pressure. He had endeavoured to show that the cry of over-pressure was greatly exaggerated. The Department, he was fully persuaded, had done their best, at all events during the past year, to diminish over-pressure as far as it was possible to do, though it was absolutely impossible to get rid of all strain in education. The hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) mentioned two or three ways in which he, as, he (Mr. Sydney Buxton) presumed, the representative of the teachers, thought that over-strain could be very much diminished. The first way was that the system of payment should no longer be, as it was now, by individual examination, or, in other words, by results. He (Mr. Sydney Buxton) confessed he did not see any other means than payment by results, whereby the real results of a school could be accurately obtained, and he could not see any other means whereby the Committee would be justified in voting the enormous sums which had been already mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council. They must remember that matters were absolutely and entirely different to what they were at the time of the adoption of the so-called

Revised Code of 1862. The amount of money voted then was a mere pittance as compared with the sum now voted, and the education given in schools at that time was often the old story of the alphabet at one end and the birch at the other. Matters were entirely different now. They were told that the system of payment by the results of individual examination was very inelastic, and did not adapt itself to the varying needs of the children and of the school; and therefore the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) asked that a greater amount of grant should be paid on the average attendance, and that the rest of the grant should be paid upon what might be called sample examinations. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that already a very considerable amount of the grant was paid for average attendance. Though, perhaps, it would not be inexpedient somewhat to increase the grant for average attendance, he (Mr. Sydney Buxton) did not believe that anyone would really propose that the greater part of the grant should be paid for that portion of the children's work. It therefore remained that a certain amount must necessarily be paid on, as it were, the assessment of the school. That system was introduced to a certain extent last year by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) in the shape of a merit grant, a grant which was to be paid, not on individual examination, but on the assessment, so far as value was concerned, of the general work of the school. The result had been that the Teaching Profession, as represented by the Association to which the hon. Member (Mr. Leighton) referred—the National Union of Teachers—had unanimously condemned the mode in which that grant was administered. Was it not certain, therefore, that if they extended the system of merit grant, the teachers who now complained of the principle of individual examination, would complain still more of the individual idiosyncrasies of the Inspectors? There was no doubt the teachers would complain, whatever way the grant was assessed. He thought that if they agreed with the proposal of the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton), they would soon find the teachers looking back with regret to the good old times when, at all events by individual effort, they were able to secure individual grants by indi-

vidual children. And, moreover, he did not see that such a system as was proposed by the hon. Gentleman and by the teachers, would in any way diminish over-pressure, because the competition between the children and between the schools, the competition between the teachers, and the desire of the parents that their children should pass through school as quickly as possible, would still remain. While, therefore, the proposed system would probably be attended by the serious evil that the backward would be neglected, it would in no way diminish over-pressure. The other proposal of the hon. Gentleman was, that it should be left to the discretion of teachers to withhold a certain number of children from examination, and by some persons the number was limited to 10 per cent. It seemed to be too largely forgotten that, after all, the children were not made for the teachers, but the teachers for the children, and that the matter the Committee had to consider was not the easiest way in which the teachers should earn their salaries, but the best way in which the ignorant and backward and neglected children should receive a proper education. Now, what would be the result of adopting the proposal of the hon. Member? Why, the result would be, as they all knew, that the fixed minimum of withdrawal would become the customary maximum, for the teacher, however the conditions of the school might vary, would think he had a right to withhold from examination 10 per cent of the children, and naturally this 10 per cent would not be the weakest children, not those who now suffered from over-pressure—because they were usually the children who were able to earn the grant—but would consist entirely of the dull and backward and neglected children—just the class of children to whom it was desirable to give the most attention. In his opinion, the right of withdrawal of children from examination ought not to be entrusted to those who had a direct and pecuniary and personal interest in the withdrawal, but it ought to be entrusted to the managers or Inspectors of the school, who, while having an interest in the matter, had not such a direct interest as the teacher. Now, these were the two proposals the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) had made, with a view of getting rid of over-pressure; and they were both, in

his (Mr. Sydney Buxton's) opinion, quite unreasonable. The hon. Gentleman made another demand, which was reasonable enough, but which—as the hon. Gentleman did not seem to be aware—had already been granted by the Department—that the classification of children should be more according to attainments, and less according to age. That was exactly the point which had been included—and, he thought, wisely included—in the present Code; and, though it was to be a general rule that children were to be presented as before in succeeding Standards each year, a very considerable amount of discretion was left to the managers and Inspectors to keep children in the same Standard for two years, at all events. Moreover, the Code provided that if a child had failed twice in one subject, or in two subjects, he need not, as a general rule, be presented the following year in a higher Standard; and it gave very considerable discretion to managers to withhold children from examination without giving any specific reason—that was to say, it left the withdrawal from examination almost absolutely in the discretion of managers. It seemed to him that these concessions were very fair and reasonable on the part of the Department, and would go a long way—at least, it was to be hoped so—to diminish the over-pressure in schools. He did not wish to detain the Committee by entering into the smaller matters in which, he believed, the Code also gave relief—such matters as needlework, arithmetic, and geography; but he thought the New Code would in other ways make an appreciable difference. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanley Leighton) that it was not time to rest and be thankful, for everything had not been done that might have been done. He believed that the Department might in some way relieve the teachers of a considerable number of red-tape Returns that they were now bound to give, and which not only absorbed their time, but gave them a great deal of worry and anxiety. [Mr. MUNDELLA: We have done so.] The right hon. Gentleman told them they had done so; therefore, it was clear that the Department were rapidly cutting the ground from under the feet of complainants against them. Managers of Voluntary Schools and School Boards in School Board dis-

Mr. Sydney Buxton

tricts might also well dispense with a certain number of Returns; and they ought most assuredly to make greater use than they did at present of the open spaces in their midst as playgrounds, because children ought to have as much physical exercise as possible. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) that home lessons ought, as far as possible, to be curtailed, and that "keeping in" ought to be absolutely prohibited. He had discussed this question that evening from the point of view of the children more than of the teacher; but he believed that by the adoption of the suggestions he had made, the teachers would benefit equally with the children. There was just this point to be considered—that if the managers of schools would always insist upon paying their teachers by fixed salaries, instead of letting them depend upon the grant, a great deal would be done to diminish the cry of over-pressure. It would not diminish the real work that was done in the school, because the teacher would always have, through his prospective rise of salary and promotion, sufficient interest to do his best; but it would not only relieve him of worry and over-strain, from which at times he necessarily suffered, but it would relieve the children of a considerable amount of over-strain where such existed. There was the pupil teacher question; but he must not detain the Committee in regard to it. He could not, however, refrain from saying that one of the most satisfactory points in his right hon. Friend's (Mr. Mundella's) statement was that the number of pupil teachers was getting smaller by degrees and beautifully less. In conclusion, he had only to say that this matter of over-pressure was really one which concerned administration rather than the Code itself; and though, of course, past Codes had considerably increased the pressure on the schools, he thought that the Education Department was now doing its best to amend the ways of the past, to give greater elasticity, and to allow managers, Inspectors, and teachers to have a considerable voice—much more than they used to have—in diminishing over-strain wherever it existed.

MR. WALTER said, he only rose to offer a few remarks in consequence of an observation made by the hon. Mem-

ber for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) reflecting upon a distinguished Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) who now occupied the position of Head of the Education Department, in reference to a transaction which occurred in the House of Commons about 20 years ago, and in which he (Mr. Walter) played an important part. His hon. Friend (Mr. Stanley Leighton), in charging, as he understood him to do, the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council with being a party to the suppression of material and important facts supplied to him by Inspectors, said that Mr. Lowe, who, at that time—1864—held the Office which was now so worthily filled by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella), was deprived of his seat in consequence of having been guilty of suppressing a Report which was adverse to his own view. It was perfectly true that in the Report of one of the Inspectors—Mr. Jones—a passage was struck out in which the Inspector bestowed great credit upon a particular school in Wales, which, he said, deserved all the more credit for having an uncertificated master. At that time there was a controversy as to whether it was necessary for a school to receive a grant that the master should have a certificate. A Motion was brought forward by the Marquess of Salisbury, who was then a Member of the House of Commons, and seconded by himself (Mr. Walter), reflecting on the conduct of the Department in suppressing the passage of the Report in question. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Lowe), he regretted to say, had not made himself acquainted with the facts of the case; but he, nevertheless, got up in his place and denied the facts alleged. He (Mr. Walter) happened to have in his pocket the original document in which the passage was expunged. He handed it to Mr. Lowe, and the consequence was that there was a majority, he believed of 7, against the Government. Thereupon a Commission was appointed to inquire into the allegations then made, and before the Committee it was proved beyond a doubt that the passage had been suppressed. He was bound to say that, in his opinion, Mr. Lowe was innocent of the charge made against him. Mr. Lowe explained to him that his eyes had never been of much use to him, and that it was solely in consequence of not being

able to read very clearly the document which came into his hands that he was unconscious of the fact that the passage had been expunged. He (Mr. Walter) regretted to say that the matter cost the right hon. Gentleman his seat. Mr. Lowe was in no way a party to the suppression of the passage, and he (Mr. Walter) had felt bound, having heard his hon. Friend's (Mr. Stanley Leighton's) speech, and having been a party to the incident referred to, to state his recollection of the facts which, he believed, would be found on inquiry to be correct.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, it afforded him great satisfaction to know that the money which the Committee voted every year for the purposes of education was well spent. There was but one consideration that mitigated the satisfaction which he felt in assenting to the Votes proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, and it was the consideration of the real difficulties which managers of Voluntary Schools had constantly to encounter under the present system. He need hardly remind the Committee that until the year 1870 there was no such thing known as a grant for the purpose of education unaccompanied by a stipulation that the education given in the schools assisted by the State should be fixed upon a religious basis—that a religious instruction should be connected with any education to which the State was a concurrent party. For reasons which it was not now of any particular utility to discuss, in 1870 the Government determined to qualify the interference of the State in the work of education, so far as to deprive it of any cognizance of the religious element, and to make the subject of religious instruction an absolutely neutral one. But that new policy was accompanied by this assurance—that, valuing most properly the immense utility of the Voluntary Schools then existing, it was not the object of the Government to supersede Voluntary Schools, or in any way to embarrass or disturb them, but simply to supplement them where the powers and opportunities of Voluntary School managers could not reach the large demands of their rising population. In the course of the discussion which accompanied the introduction of the Education Act of 1870, it was explained by the then Vice President of the Council on Education (Mr.

W. E. Forster) and by the Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone), that they could not deny the very great difficulties that Voluntary Schools would have to face in the competition or the rivalry of Board Schools, inasmuch as Board Schools were not only to share with Voluntary Schools the ordinary Government grant given according to the value of the results achieved, but Board Schools were to be supported to any extent in which that help might be required by rates which were practically unlimited. As the Government and the House in those days came to the conclusion that it would not be practicable for the Voluntary Schools to grapple with their difficulties under such a system, the Government intimated that the Voluntary Schools should receive a larger Government grant than they then received. That promise had been literally fulfilled; the Government grant had quite reached the full measure of any expected increase then held out; but, on the other hand, the advance of the education of the day and the enlarged requirements of the Education Department had been so enormous and so severe, that the additional expense now imposed on Voluntary Schools exceeded its former measure of expense by infinitely more, or at least by quite as much, as the enlarged grant received from Government. Therefore, the Committee would see that, notwithstanding the comforting and reassuring promises as to the mitigation of the difficulties of Voluntary Schools, no mitigation of the difficulties of those schools had taken place. Furthermore, upon the assurance that the Government did not wish to disturb the voluntary movement, but, on the contrary, desired it to increase and flourish, the Voluntary Schools made immense efforts in order to occupy, as far as they could, the ground of education, and they made those efforts with such success that they had absolutely between that time and this doubled their material—they had doubled their accommodation—and they received now a very considerable sum from the Government in virtue of the education which they gave to, he believed, more than 2,000,000 children. Well, that was, so far, quite satisfactory; but this very effort to which he drew the attention of the Committee had brought with it some very severe trials to the promoters of Voluntary Schools. They had enlarged areas and

Mr. Walter

enlarged numbers to deal with ; but they had had—he did not say it in any captious spirit—many practical difficulties to encounter by the rivalry, he would not say hostile, but the inevitable rivalry, of the School Boards, who, having an unlimited supply of money, were able to offer good salaries to raise the cost of education generally. School Boards, therefore, could afford to charge low fees ; and between low fees and high salaries, in which Voluntary Schools had been obliged, more or less, to follow suit, Voluntary Schools had experienced very great difficulty in making both ends meet. Practically, they had not been able to make both ends meet ; and he was not ashamed, on the part of the Voluntary School managers to say it. In this matter their zeal had outrun their capacity. He received the other day a list of 40 Voluntary Schools in the Metropolis which were in a state of chronic deficiency. The deficiency, however, was not such as to make one despair of the future, but it was quite enough to warrant the sympathy and the assistance of the Committee. The average attendance at the 40 schools was 12,500 ; the grant received was £8,700, and the deficit £2,345. When the list was put into his hand, he asked himself what was the addition to the Government grant which would put the 40 schools in question into a state of solvency. The calculation was very easily made. It was as nearly as possible one-fourth of the amount of the grant itself, or just about 4s. per head. [An hon. MEMBER: Have they no voluntary contributions?] They had voluntary contributions ; but what they amounted to he did not know. He did not know that it affected the question very much ; but he would deal with the subject of voluntary subscriptions by-and-bye. Now, if one-fourth of the present Government grant were added to the grant, it would just free these 40 schools from their aggregate deficiency. Some would still be in a state of impecuniosity, others would have a slight surplus ; but, on the whole, it would just free them. He entreated the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council and the Committee to relieve these schools from their difficulties, and place them in a position to carry on their excellent and useful work without misgivings as to the future. It was

clear that many of them must lapse if they were not assisted. Some hon. Gentleman might think that was a consummation devoutly to be wished ; but he did not believe that would be the general sense either of the House or the country. He was persuaded that the House and the country believed that a school was none the worse for being a religious school ; that a school was none the worse for being conducted on a system which enabled the teachers to speak to the children not “with bated breath and whispering humbleness,” but with full independence of Divine things. More than that, he believed that the existence of religious and Denominational Schools was a practical advantage to the Board Schools. It was the example and influence of religious schools which maintained amongst the Board Schools a very considerable leaven, to say the least, of religious tone and sentiment ; but that Board Schools could ever have the same efficacy and success as Denominational Schools in achieving that which he understood to be the main and chief purpose of education, he did not believe. The promoters of Voluntary Schools believed that an education devoid of religion was for all purposes, either of individual happiness or citizenship, almost useless. It made people sharp ; it made them clever ; but it did not teach them to control their passions ; it made them more able, but, perhaps, more dangerous citizens. He therefore thought that the religious element in the Voluntary Schools ought steadfastly to be maintained. He did not for a moment contend that religious teaching was not given in Board Schools. They knew that in some schools everything that could be wished was taught, and taught admirably ; but it must be borne in mind that as the Governing Body of a School Board was elected, there would always be in that body a certain mixture of opinion, and there would always be a jealousy which made parties hate anything in the way of religious teaching which did not conform to their own views. The consequence was that in a large majority of the Board Schools the religious teaching was of a very negative nature. He ventured, therefore, to lay great stress upon the advantage of maintaining in Voluntary Schools that principle of independence in religious

teaching which made their action more beneficial to the children and more useful to the community at large. But the position of these schools was seriously endangered by the want of adequate funds. Was it to be wondered at, seeing that, since 1870, the Voluntary Schools had been doubled in number, or very nearly so. He believed that before 1870 the then Voluntary Schools were valued at £7,000,000, while the Voluntary Schools now in existence were valued at upwards of £13,000,000. That sum had been voluntarily subscribed by the religious people of the country, who wished to promote the education of those who, by the action of the State, were forced into schools; because it must not be forgotten that the one very important feature of the Education Act of 1870 was to make education a necessity. That Act forced children into schools, imposed penalties on employers who employed children who had not passed a certain Standard, and imposed penalties on parents who did not send their children to school. In fact, the Act amounted to a system of coercion; and in this country, if a system was enforced by coercion, it could only be justified upon one plea, and that was that the work in hand was a national necessity. Now, had the nation as a nation taken its share of the cost of creating and maintaining those schools which were called Voluntary? Clearly not. Let them compare for one moment that which the nation had done with most lavish liberality in the way of extending and maintaining Board Schools, with that they had done towards the support of Voluntary Schools. At the present moment, the rates which were levied every year not only to maintain the Board Schools, but to pay the interest of loans obtained in respect of Board Schools, amounted to £1,800,000. Now, who paid that £1,800,000? It was not paid by those who were unconcerned in Voluntary Schools. On the contrary he held, and it was open to any hon. Gentleman to contradict him if he was in a position to do so, that of that £1,800,000, two-thirds, perhaps three-fourths, was paid by persons who were also interested in supporting and promoting Voluntary Schools. He asked the Committee if that was not an enormous burden to place upon those people, because, at the same time,

they were paying every year £700,000 in voluntary subscriptions? An hon. Member asked, a while ago, what was the amount of subscriptions to 80 schools to which he had specially referred. He did not know; but the contributions to Voluntary Schools in the country generally amounted, as he said, to £700,000 a-year. Was it to be wondered at that, when such heavy burdens were placed upon their supporters, so many of the Voluntary Schools should be in difficulties? The difficulties did not arise because the zeal or devotion to the cause of religious education was at all flagging on the part of those who had promoted Voluntary Schools, but it was because they were called upon from day to day to meet still heavier demands to pay the expenses of the School Boards. He received a demand only yesterday morning—he had not met it yet—for the Metropolitan rates. He looked at it to see what was the charge for the School Board, and to his horror he found it amounted to 8*d.* in the pound—8*d.* in the pound was now the charge for the School Board which they were told some years ago was never to be more than 3*d.* in the pound! When the Education Act was passed, the then Vice President of the Council (Mr. W. E. Forster) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) comforted the desponding men who were thinking that the School Board charges were to overwhelm them, by telling them that 3*d.* in the pound would be as much as they would ever have to pay. He did not mean to say that the right hon. Gentleman gave a pledge on the matter; if it had been a pledge, it would have become a matter of law, and he (Mr. Hubbard) and others would not now be here as suppliants, but as men demanding to be relieved from the burdensome tax which the School Board charges now amounted to. They believed the representations which were made to them by the Prime Minister. They attached to the word of the Prime Minister as much value as they would to an Act of Parliament, and when he told them the School Board rate would not exceed 3*d.* in the pound, they believed him. It might have been credulous on their part, but still it was very proper credulity from one Englishman towards another. As a matter of fact, the supporters of Voluntary Schools found themselves saddled with a large proportion of the rates levied

for School Boards; they found themselves bound to provide £700,000 a-year by way of subscriptions, and if they did not provide those funds, then their schools were liable to lapse. That was a position which was very cruel to those who were supporting Voluntary Schools; and what he proposed was a very simple but, nevertheless, a very effectual remedy. He proposed that 4s. per head, or one-fourth of the existing Government grant, be added to all schools—not all Voluntary Schools, but all schools. It was not only that he wanted to relieve and save the existence of the schools which depended so largely upon private liberality, but he wanted also to throw upon the wealth of the country that which Parliament had chosen to make a national duty. How were they to reach the wealth of the country except by a general tax? They did not do it by rates. Rates were heavy upon those who had to pay them; but on what a small proportion of the wealth of the country were the rates levied. Had the Committee ever thought of the difference in the amount which 1d. in the pound on the parochial assessment, and 1d. Income Tax would produce? A penny in the pound upon the assessment for the School Board rate produced as nearly as he could judge £325,000, while 1d. Income Tax produced £2,000,000, or, in other words, six times the amount of wealth was taxed through the Income Tax than through the rates. He therefore asked the Committee to equalize the burden of this great national obligation, and to do it by spreading it more largely over the Imperial finances of the country. If they did that, they would have the comfort of relieving very many struggling schools in large towns. What were the objections to the relief he suggested? He did not know of any. The other day he had the honour of accompanying a deputation to Lord Carlingford and the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, to whom they presented a humble Petition. The right hon. Gentleman received them very graciously; but Lord Carlingford answered them by reading part of the Prime Minister's letter to the National Society, published some months ago, and requiring further information, which was subsequently furnished, and met all objections. He did not think that was exactly the way in which one expected

to be met by the Lord President of the Council on Education. They wanted to have heard something of what Lord Carlingford himself thought about the questions they raised, not what he considered the Dictator of the day had laid down. He (Mr. Hubbard) now appealed from the Prime Minister and from the Lord President of the Council on Education to the House of Commons, which was superior to both of them. He appealed upon the plea of justice and expediency. It could not be to the advantage of the country that the Voluntary Schools should lapse; it could not be to the advantage of the country that they should not be maintained efficiently. He might be asked—"Where is your evidence that these schools will fail for want of funds; the accounts have been sent in, and we find them balanced?" Yes, balanced they were; but how was not shown. There were such things as delayed payments, and loans from bankers and from friends, which were sometimes resorted to in order to surmount a difficulty. The supporters of Voluntary Schools had confidence in the system they maintained, and they urged the Committee to give them that assistance which would cheer and encourage the many excellent persons whose interests were really in their hands. Supporters of Voluntary Schools were refused relief sometimes upon the plea that to help them would be equivalent to an application of Public Revenue for denominational purposes. He absolutely denied that would be the case. What did the country pay for each child educated in the Board Schools? Last year it paid £2 13s. 8d. What did the country pay for each child educated in the Voluntary Schools?—16s. 5d. He averred that the country paid three times as much for a child in a School Board School as was paid for a child in a Voluntary School. In a Voluntary School quite as good a secular education could be obtained, and there was added that religious instruction which tended to make happier men and better and more capable citizens. The amount was 16s. 5d.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, the £2 13s. 8d. included the cost of buildings which were the property of the country.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, that was perfectly true. He had carefully calculated, and included in his computation,

the cost of the palatial buildings in which the gutter children were educated. Whether for the fabrics, or the maintenance of the Board Schools, he believed his estimates and comparison to be correct, and he defied any hon. Members to justify a system under which the country paid in rates and taxes a sum amounting to £2 13s. 8d. for the education of every child in Board Schools, while the cost was only 16s. 5d. per head for every child equally, or even better, instructed who was passed through the Voluntary Schools, equally serviceable in every way, and with the additional advantage of having learnt his duty to God and man. He thanked the Committee for the patience with which they had heard him give these explanations in regard to a matter upon which he felt very deeply, because it had been one of the objects of his later life to endeavour to secure that religious education should be put upon a solid basis. In fighting this battle he was not fighting the battle of the Church of England only, but of every Religious Body from the Wesleyans to the Roman Catholics, who had each an interest in maintaining their own right to provide their own religious teaching in their own schools, just as they maintained their right to deal with such matters in their own churches and chapels.

MR. W. H. JAMES said, the debate had taken a sudden turn in reference to over-pressure on the brain and over-pressure on the purse; but he had no desire to follow the right hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the Committee in that sense. He entirely concurred in the sentiment which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council in moving the Estimate, when he stated that the cost of education in the country had increased, was increasing, and ought not to be diminished. He should be sorry, however, to find that the great cost which now fell upon the country in connection with education should take the line advocated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard), and should become merely a question of controversy as between Voluntary and Board Schools. The tendency of these discussions had always been to drift into matters of religion; and he thought it was a matter

of congratulation that they heard so very little at this moment of controversy of that kind. The point he wished to lay before his right hon. Friend the Vice President was the enormous pressure and strain in matters connected with the cost of education in what he might term the poor and populous districts of the country. That cost had increased, and would probably continue to increase. It was due entirely to the enormous growth and increase of population, and it pressed particularly upon the constituency he had the honour to represent (Gateshead). The population of the county of Durham, in the decennial period, had increased by no less than 26 per cent; and, if the Committee would bear with him for a few moments, he would give them a few remarkable facts with regard to the constituency he represented. The constituency of Gateshead had doubled within the last 20 years. In 1861 the population was 30,000; and in 1881 it had increased to 65,873. The greater portion of the children attending Elementary Schools were educated at Board Schools; and whereas in the country the percentage of the population attending Board Schools was 25 per cent, in the borough he had the honour to represent it was as high as 70 per cent, and the population consisted almost entirely of the industrious classes. In some of the Wiltshire towns they might deduct as much as one-seventh or one-sixth for children who attended other classes of Voluntary Schools; but, he believed, in his constituency an allowance of one-sixteenth would be much nearer the fact. The increase of the population was not confined merely to the county of Durham; but in Northumberland the increase had been 12 per cent in the last decennial period; in Yorkshire, 18 per cent; in Nottinghamshire, 22 per cent; and in Leicestershire, 19 per cent; and the increase in the expenditure was felt more especially in those large and populous urban districts in which the Education Acts of 1870 and 1876 had had the beneficial effects to which his right hon. Friend had referred. In those very poor and populous places, it had been over and over again admitted that they had a considerable claim for special assistance in carrying out the policy to which both Parties in the State were more or less committed.

Mr. J. G. Hubbard

He might refer to the debate which took place in 1876, at the time of the introduction of the Education Act by the noble Viscount who was a Predecessor of his right hon. Friend. These were the words of Viscount Sandon, now the Earl of Harrowby, on that occasion—

“The poorer districts have the least aid given to them. In places like Bethnal Green, where they cannot ask for large fees, and where they cannot get subscriptions, there—however well the children may do—and, happily, in Bethnal Green, as also among the agricultural districts, many children do very well—still, owing to their poverty, the Government grant is cut down. This is a matter that does not affect voluntary more than board schools. The question is one of simple justice, and our endeavour should be to remove so obvious and grievous an injustice. We have tried to find a test which should enable us to decide what is a poor district, and we have looked round to see if we had any precedent to go upon: on considering the Act of 1870, we found there that the definition of a poor district was where a 3*d.* rate on the property produced less than 7*s.* 6*d.* per child, and that in this case an extra Parliamentary grant was made to board, but not to voluntary schools. Again, on referring to the Scotch Act of 1872, we found that where the rate produced less than 7*s.* 6*d.* per child, an Imperial grant was made. Looking further into the Scotch Act we found that relief is given to voluntary as well as to board schools in every poor county—such as Inverness, Argyll, Ross, Orkney, and Shetland. We had found, therefore, in those Acts something to guide us as to what had hitherto been considered to be a poor district. We propose, then, to take a somewhat similar standard of the poverty of a district, but we do not intend to go so far as the Scotch Act. We propose that the Parliamentary grant in poor districts shall not be reduced unless it is twice as large as the income produced from local effort. I will endeavour to show the House how this would work. In an ordinary district the State gives £1 to meet £1 from the locality. In poor districts, by this proposal, £1 would be given to meet 1*s.* If a school's maintenance is £120 now, we give £60 grant to meet £60 fees, rates, or subscriptions; but in poor districts for £40 of fees, rates, and subscriptions we should hereafter grant £80. As to the poor districts, how does the Bill propose to mark them out? We propose to take London generally by Unions. In towns above 5,000 population we should take ward divisions, or areas with separate rates, or special divisions suggested by the municipal authorities, approved by the Local Government Board and the Education Department. Smaller boroughs would be dealt with as Unions, and the parishes would be the units of the whole country. This is the proposal which the Government has to make on this difficult and important question. We felt bound to try to meet a great injustice.”—(3 *Hansard*, [231], See Appendix.)

That proposal of the noble Viscount, in the discussion which took place in Committee on the Bill, was subsequently

withdrawn, and another was substituted, somewhat in the direction of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard), that special assistance should be given to Voluntary and Church Schools. That proposition also was not accepted, and a new clause moved by his hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) relating to the dissolution of Board Schools was carried. He had made these observations with a view of pointing out the strong claims which had been put forward in that House at different times in favour of poor and populous places in the matter of assistance to their schools. But the difficulty which existed in connection with the education rate was mainly in connection with the repayment of loans for buildings and advances made in connection with the building of schools. The history of this matter was a little remarkable, and he wished particularly to call the attention of his right hon. Friend the Vice President to it. It would be remembered that in 1879 the then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Northcote) took alarm at the enormous indebtedness which in particular places then existed, and he brought in a measure—the Public Works Loan Bill—which proposed to restrict the terms of interest, and to give special powers to the Public Works Loan Commissioners for restricting the power of borrowing money proposed from time to time to be exercised by Local Bodies, and especially those which related to School Board Authorities. Hon. Members would remember quite well the enormous amount of opposition which this proposal raised in the House. He did not think it was his right hon. Friend, but some Members of the Government, in opposing that proposal, sat up the whole night. He was sorry the Secretary to the Treasury was not in his place, because, although the Secretary to the Treasury did not take an active part in opposing the Bill, he seemed to have some sort of *arrière pensée* in his mind in favour of the proposal, because he suggested that the whole matter, before they proceeded further with it, should be sifted by a Select Committee. Now, the pressure upon the large towns for the repayment of these loans and interest was still very great, although the opponents of the proposal succeeded in obtaining some

modification from the House. The Public Works Loan Commissioners in 1879 laid down this stern principle—that wherever it was possible the payment of a loan should be by annual instalment, instead of by the payment by interest, and that the rate of interest should be raised by $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The burdens which, consequently, pressed upon certain localities had become almost intolerable. He would take the case of his own constituency as an illustration. He might, in the first place, point out that the total average rate for education throughout the country was *5d.*, whereas in his own constituency it was *1s.*, although the possibility of an *8d.* rate appeared to have alarmed the right hon. Gentleman. A rate of *1s. 5d.* on the rateable value of most districts in the country was sufficient to meet the repayment of loans and interest; but a rate of *5½d.* was required to meet similar charges incurred by his own School Board. He had received communications on this subject from different School Boards in the country, and from individual members of the School Boards, including Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Ipswich, Middlesbrough, Newark, Durham, and other places; and he asked his right hon. Friend whether, having taken public action with regard to the Public Works Loan Bill, he would not at the present moment be disposed to use his influence in giving some relief to the localities in the direction in which they asked for aid? There was only one other proposal he would venture to make, although he did not know whether it would be practicable. Under the 17th clause of the Act of 1870, the interest to be paid on the repayment of these loans was fixed at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and it had now been raised to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in the course of 14 years, which rendered it a matter of considerable hardship, and in many localities it was almost thought that Parliament had been guilty of a breach of faith. He would also suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the propriety of amending Clause 7 of the Act of 1870. As it now stood, it provided that where a *3d.* rate did not produce *7s. 6d.* for every child in average attendance, that school was entitled to some special aid. What he would suggest was, that *10s. 6d.* should be substituted for *7s. 6d.*, which would give some real and substantial assistance to these poor and populous dis-

tricts—places which had so strong a claim for some further aid from the Imperial funds. He hoped his right hon. Friend would not look at this as purely a monetary and financial question; and he further hoped that he would not simply refer the matter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and would not say that it was a question upon which he had to look to that right hon. Gentleman for an answer. In reality it was a question of policy. [MR. WARTON: Hear, hear!] The hon. and learned Member for Bridport cheered him, but he sincerely hoped that he had not said anything very foolish. He must, however, repeat the remark that he considered this to be a question of policy; and if they were anxious to keep at a distance this cry for economy in education, and to prevent it from taking effect—although it was all very well to come down to the House to make splendid speeches, and to ask hon. Members to read voluminous Reports; and, although it was all very well to have satisfactory Reports from the Inspectors, and to hear from his right hon. Friend the progress which had been made—at the same time, it was absolutely necessary that they should look a-head. If the population of the country was increasing, and there was a clamour for further assistance in regard to public education—not in the shape of further control and centralization, because he did not think there was any desire for that in the country—the tendency would be to play more and more into the hands of those who were known as the Economical Party; and ultimately it would merely become a pecuniary question, which most hon. Members in that House were of opinion was most undesirable.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, he thought the Committee were labouring under great disadvantage in discussing the Vote without having received full information with regard to it, and especially the Report of Dr. Crichton Browne. It did appear to him that Dr. Crichton Browne had been hardly treated; and he found from a letter which Dr. Crichton Browne had written to *The Times* the other day that he concurred in that opinion. He said, in his letter, that there was the strongest evidence of the existence of over-pressure in Elementary Schools, and he complained that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council had

dealt with the Report in disparaging terms, and yet had refused to publish it. The right hon. Gentleman said that he had quoted the Reports of the Registrar General in reply to the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) last year; but he (Lord Algernon Percy) thought the right hon. Gentleman was labouring under a mistake, because those Reports, although they referred to the year 1882, were only delivered in the month of May of this year. Therefore, he did not understand how the right hon. Gentleman could have quoted them last year.

MR. MUNDELLA said, the noble Lord was perfectly correct. He had not quoted the Blue Book last year; but he had quoted the answers which had been sent to him.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, the answer of the Registrar General had been read, and he would not trouble the Committee by reading it again; but nowhere did it appear in *Hansard* that the right hon. Gentleman had quoted these Reports. Perhaps it was a mistake, and the right hon. Gentleman had quoted them. He thought it was a matter for regret that the right hon. Gentleman should have met the question of over-pressure in the way he had done. No doubt there was a great and general feeling that over-pressure did exist; that feeling was held both by the parents and teachers and by medical men; and it was not to be met and answered by ignoring it altogether, or by treating it with contempt, or by the mere assertion of the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. Sydney Buxton) that it was exaggerated. It was a very serious matter indeed, and should be carefully inquired into. The hon. Member for North Shropshire had alluded to certain cases. Now, he (Lord Algernon Percy) had brought certain cases under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman, and he had heard the right hon. Gentleman say that not a single case had been proved. That, of course, was quite true; but he would call the attention of the Committee to this fact—that cases of over-pressure were extremely difficult to prove. It was almost impossible to prove that a particular case of sickness arose from any particular thing. Medical men might be quite certain that illness did arise in a particular case from the over-study a child had gone through,

and yet be utterly unable to prove that it was the cause of illness. There were many representations from medical men in which they said they could not absolutely state that over-pressure arose in any particular case; but, nevertheless, they had no doubt in their own minds that over-pressure really did exist. The hon. Member for Peterborough allowed this; but he complained that at Bradford certain medical men could not assert that over-pressure arose from any individual cause which had been brought under their notice. Still, that would be accounted for by what he (Lord Algernon Percy) had just stated. There was another matter which he desired to mention. When an hon. Member rose in that House and brought forward a case of over-pressure, the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council referred the case to the School Board, or to the managers of the school where the case was alleged to have arisen. He could not see that the right hon. Gentleman could take any other course; but it must be recollected that it was to the interest of the managers of the school and to the School Board to prove that no over-pressure did exist, because if it was proved the right hon. Gentleman would find fault with them, and would be perfectly justified in doing so. The right hon. Gentleman said that if the school attendance were properly looked after the average attendance would be higher than it was, and would, to a great extent, remedy this over-pressure. There was no doubt that it would remedy one of the causes of over-pressure to a certain extent, but it would not remove the evil entirely; because if they took children from all sorts of positions in life, with all sorts of home surroundings, forced them into school and pressed them forward at the same rate, totally regardless of their mental, physical, and social capacity, they must, in many cases, have over-pressure. That was exactly what was going on at the present moment, and there were many points in which the condition of life under which a child obtained his living came into play in regard to this question. The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) had read an interesting letter at the Aberdeen Congress of the Education Institute of Scotland in January, 1883, in which attention was called to cases where the social position of the

child came into play very much. The hon. Member said, speaking with regard to children of wealthy parents—

“The change (from home to school) bears less hardly upon the child of wealthy parents; but the poorer lad, when taken away from the fascinations of idleness and put in intellectual harness, brings to his task a mind utterly devoid of the most elementary training, save the sharpness acquired by early contact with the world.”

Therefore, even in elementary education, the child of poor parents commenced under different circumstances from the child of wealthier parents. The case had been differently put by the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. Sydney Buxton), who asked whether, in these cases of over-pressure, the children had not been badly fed? No doubt such children would suffer more from over-pressure than children who were well fed. Unfortunately, there were many children in Board Schools who did not receive sufficient and proper food; but these were the very children with whom they had to deal. What the State did was this—it forced parents to send their children to school whether they liked it or not. It forced those children to go through an education which in many cases was higher than that which hon. Members gave their own children at the same age. But that was not all. If hon. Members sent their children to school they could withdraw them whenever they found that the education which they were receiving was doing them harm physically; but a person who was bound to send a child to an elementary school could not withdraw that child unless in a case of serious illness. If the State took upon themselves to act in the position of parent in the matter of education, it was bound to take into consideration all the causes of over-pressure, including social condition and all those home matters which affected the child. Mr. H. B. Hewitson, Ophthalmic and Aural Surgeon to the Leeds Infirmary, said, in a Report to that Institution—

“I am led to believe, though it is difficult to prove, that although the general conditions of the actual schools themselves are as good as one would desire, yet the bad light in which children prepare their night lessons at home, especially among the poorer classes, contributes markedly to the production of defective sight.”

It was no answer to their complaint to say that over-pressure arose from the inconsiderate use of the provisions of the

Code, because as long as human nature was what it was, if a teacher was considered worth more if he could pass 95 per cent of the children through a particular Standard than if he could only pass 90 per cent, it would be to the interest of that teacher to press the children forward as much as possible, and the fact of over-pressure would still remain, however much might have been done to remove it in other ways. There was one remedy for the present state of things which he thought might be attempted, and that was an improvement in regard to classification. The hon. Member for Peterborough said that an improvement had been made in that respect; but he (Lord Algonern Percy) was informed that the improvement was more apparent than real, because the only difference was in the insertion of the words—

“Unless there is a reasonable excuse for treating him exceptionally.”

That reasonable excuse in a proved case would be given to the Inspector, and no fair Inspector would ever have objected to a child being withdrawn for a reasonable excuse; but, of course, the payment by results was really at the foundation of the whole of the present state of things, and when the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council quoted Germany and other countries of Europe, he should bear in mind the fact that in those countries payment by results did not exist. He ought also to have mentioned the fact that medical men in those countries, or many of them, were reporting against the system of education in those countries, and saying that it was producing bad results. In Germany notably, although it was one of the countries quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, he found that Dr. Treichler called attention to the increase of habitual headaches among boys and girls in that country; and although an hon. Gentleman laughed two or three days ago at the idea of headaches being considered a serious evil, it would be found that eminent medical men declared that no child could suffer from habitual headache without suffering seriously in after life. If the teachers could not be trusted to classify the pupils and to bring their schools to perfection without payment by results, he thought it only showed that the teachers were not fit to be entrusted with the care of children

Lord Algonern Percy

at all, and he failed to see what there was to justify the right hon. Gentleman in the position he had taken up. He agreed with the hon. Member for Peterborough that the teachers should have fixed salaries, as far as possible, believing that competition between school and school would be sufficient to induce the teachers to endeavour to bring up their school to perfection. He was certain that this agitation in regard to over-pressure would not cease as long as it was ignored, as it had been that night in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and as long as it was treated with contempt as being exaggerated. There was one remark of the right hon. Gentleman with which he could not agree at all, and that was that the children left school too early—namely, at the age of 10 years! That was said to be too tender an age for a child to begin agricultural labour. Perhaps it was to do some agricultural labour; but there were many things a child could do at that age to enable it to bring something home to help to keep the family. Hon. Gentlemen would find that over-pressure did not exist so much in agricultural districts as in the town districts, where children stayed to pass through Standard V. Children could pass in Standard IV. without injury; but over-pressure commenced when passing on to Standard V., as the step from the 4th Standard to the 5th was a very trying one. He wished to call attention to one other matter—namely, the difficulty that arose in schools from the conduct of some of the Inspectors; the different manner in which different Inspectors dealt with the same schools. An instance had been brought under his notice—the case of a Voluntary School, which he knew very well in the West of England, where in the first year and third year the same Inspector came, and on both occasions gave a very high Report indeed; but where, in the intermediate year, an Assistant Inspector came, and reported the school so bad that the grant had been diminished, or nearly taken away altogether. He had seen a letter from the mistress of the school, and she declared that the manner of the Assistant Inspector had been so rough and so different from what had been expected, and from what the children had been used to, that they could not answer the questions put to them.

MR. MUNDELLA: Did not the school authorities appeal to the Department, or make any representation?

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman had asked that question, because that was one of the things to which he wished to call his attention. It was perfectly true that the schools were always told that in the event of Inspectors exceeding their duty they should apply to the Department; but school managers hesitated to do that, because they knew that the pecuniary results in after years were in the hands of the same Inspectors. What was true of the managers might be more emphatically stated of the teachers. They would rather bear the evil in an aggravated form than be placed in conflict with the Inspectors and have bad Reports. These statements he merely repeated from a letter written in 1883 by the Secretary to the National Association of Elementary Teachers.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, the discussion upon the Education Estimates had run upon two lines—in the first place, upon over-pressure in Elementary Schools, and in connection with this reference had been made to the town he had the honour to represent (Bradford). He must say with some knowledge of the statements made on both sides—the statements of the medical men of Bradford, and the counter-statements made that evening—that the case presented by these medical gentlemen was far from proved. His object in rising, however, was rather to deal with the other question raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City (Mr. Hubbard). The right hon. Gentleman complained that what were called Voluntary Schools found themselves at the present moment seriously embarrassed, and declared that an additional grant of 4s. per child would make their position more satisfactory. He wanted this grant to enable the miscalled “voluntary system” to hold its own against the competition of the School Board system throughout the country. He (Mr. Illingworth) apprehended that if this 4s. per head were forthcoming, the amount of the voluntary subscriptions would be found to “grow smaller by degrees and beautifully less,” and the country would find, looking at the number of children in the Denominational

Schools—these schools being maintained mainly by the Government grant and the pence of the parents—that it was handing over the main portion of its national education to a wholly irresponsible body. What were really the facts? The private contributions and all the Voluntary Schools in 1883 amounted to about £715,000. The receipts from pence amounted to £1,200,000, which, with the £1,620,000, made a total of £2,820,000, or four times the amount of the voluntary contribution. The great majority of the people of the country would, he thought, be inclined to say that one-fifth was a very small proportion for the managers of these so-called Voluntary Schools to contribute, if they were to keep in their own hands the absolute management of half the educational system of this country which was so largely paid for out of national resources.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am unwilling to interrupt the hon. Member; but he is departing from the Rules which regulate these discussions. The Amendment before us must be disposed of before we can go into the general subject of the Estimates. There is a specific Amendment before the Committee; but the hon. Member is going into another branch of the subject. The Amendment is to reduce the Vote on account of over-pressure.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he had been traversing a statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City, and he was afraid hon. Members had been in the habit of enjoying considerable licence in these educational discussions. Further than that, he was also afraid the questions involved were so intermixed that it was almost impossible to separate them. It was almost exclusively those who were so conspicuous in their zeal for the maintenance of Voluntary Schools who advanced these charges of over-straining and over-pressure in their National Schools. The right hon. Gentleman suggested that their burden should be mitigated by this extra grant of 4s. per head, to be paid altogether out of the Consolidated Fund, and had pointed out that 1d. in the pound on rateable property only produced some £230,000 a-year, whereas 1d. on the Income Tax produced over £2,000,000 a-year. But the right hon. Gentleman did not suggest that the

burden should be placed on the Income Tax only. If the money came from the Consolidated Fund it came from the masses of the working classes of the country, who contributed so large a share—as was well known to everyone in the House—to the Excise and Customs Duties; therefore the proposal was not, in reality, to relieve the ratepayers of the country, but it was to throw the burden on the poorer classes, who were now, in many cases, heavily taxed by the mere payment of school pence. He found that in spite of the cost per child in the Church of England Schools less was being earned per head than in the Board Schools. It was urged, however, that the State received an immense advantage from the religious teaching that was given in the schools, and that there ought to be great indulgence shown towards the religious convictions of the parents of the country. He concurred in that; but there was a great difference between the manner in which Roman Catholic and Wesleyan Schools and Church of England Schools were kept and maintained. In their large towns, where there were Roman Catholic and Wesleyan Schools, the Roman Catholic and Wesleyan children were singled out and sent to them; but in the agricultural districts, such was the territorial position of those connected with Church of England Schools, that there was no option for parents whatever. Even though a large proportion of them might be Dissenters, they were obliged to send their children to Church of England Schools. There was no extreme tenderness exhibited by the managers for the religious scruples of the parents of the children. There was offered to the children either a Catechism, to many parts of which the parents took exception, or a thoroughly secular system of education. Take the agricultural districts of Wales, where the landlords maintained Church of England Schools—

THE CHAIRMAN: I must again call the attention of the hon. Member to the Rules of Debate in Committee. A new question has been raised by an Amendment to reduce the Vote; and it is necessary, for the convenience of the Committee, that that should be disposed of before the discussion on the general question is resumed. It is my duty, according to the Rules, to require that the Amendment should be disposed

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of before any general discussion goes on.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: On the point of Order, I should like to know whether, in discussing the Amendment, it is competent to allude to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council? In discussing the Amendment are we absolutely precluded from discussing the speech of the right hon. Gentleman?

THE CHAIRMAN: The matter seems to me very plain. It is competent to refer to the speech so far as it would apply to the Amendment.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: If this question is disposed of now, it will not be competent to speak on over-pressure again. ["Yes, yes!"] Then it is competent to speak on the question later on?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is well, I think, that I should read the Rule of which I have spoken. It is this—

"When a Motion is made in Committee of Supply to omit or reduce any item of the Vote, the Question shall be proposed from the Chair for omitting or reducing the item only, and Members shall speak on such Question only until such Question has been disposed of."

It is, therefore, clear what I am to do.

MR. TOMLINSON: On the point of Order. The Vote has nothing, necessarily, to do with the question of over-pressure. Is it possible to discuss that question on the question of the salaries paid to the Inspectors?

MR. MUNDELLA: I think it would be more convenient, in order that the whole question should be discussed, that we should have this question of the reduction of the Vote either withdrawn or negatived.

MR. SALT said, he would, in the absence of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton), undertake the responsibility of withdrawing the Amendment. He was afraid, however, that it would not be possible to withdraw it. If not, they could negative it.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, when interrupted, he had been venturing to draw a comparison between the manner in which Roman Catholic and Wesleyan Schools and Church of England Schools were kept and maintained, and

that such was the territorial power and exclusiveness of the Church of England party, that although the Education Act provided that when the question of school accommodation was considered that accommodation must be "efficient, sufficient, and suitable," two of these qualifications were very often ignored, especially the last one. What could suitability mean, except that children of Nonconformist parents should not be forced into Church of England Schools? For very often they were now the only schools in the parish or locality. They had offered to them either the teaching of the Church of England as such, or secular teaching. He knew there had been a doubt as to whether "suitable" had reference to the religious feelings of the parents of the children. He was glad to find his right hon. Colleague (Mr. W. E. Forster), who had charge of the Bill in 1870, in his place. In that measure there was an Interpretation Clause, throwing light on these three words—"efficient," "sufficient," and "suitable." The Interpretation Clause directly pointed to the security that was intended by the Act for the religious scruples and preferences of the parents. He knew that the Interpretation Clause was dropped from the Bill; and it was owing in a great measure to a mistake, and not from any desire on the part of his right hon. Friend. He (Mr. Illingworth) still urged that full justice was not done to the parents of a great many children in many parts of the country where the only school available for them was that of the Church of England, in spite of the fact that a large majority of the children were Nonconformists. He contended that a little moderation was necessary on the part of those who urged the great value of teaching as it was given in the Church of England Schools. They must bear in mind that four-fifths of the money for the maintenance of these Voluntary Schools came from school rates and from the national purse. The Church of England had grasped as much of the country as it could immediately after the passing of the Act of 1870. Over 3,000 applications for new schools or extensions were made during the six months that it was left open by those who wished to extend denominational education. He was aware that the extension was carried out much less than

might be supposed from the number of applications, and he did not hesitate to say that in many districts considerable embarrassment had come upon the managers of Voluntary Schools from the indiscreet action taken by them in their efforts to exclude a really national system of education. He ventured to think that there was great exaggeration in regard to the intrinsic value of the religious teaching in Elementary Schools. Before 1870 they were aware that there was no such thing as Government assistance given to any schools where there was no religious teaching. Looking at the results broadly, though he did not wish to under-value the zeal and good intention of those connected with the Voluntary Schools, yet he ventured to say that the results did not justify the encomiums passed upon religious education given in the schools. He did not for one moment say that he was less interested in religious instruction than the most zealous partizan of their so-called Voluntary Schools. In this country—in fact, it was admitted by the statement of the right hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard)—in the national system, where, on the management of schools, they had individuals of every religious denomination, and theological antagonism so active in their midst, and where they might have in the parish those who did not belong to any religious denominations, but were as true friends of public education as the best, it became very important to have separate religious instruction. If he was asked, then, whether the national educational system in this country was to drift into what was called secular teaching, he should answer—"Yes; so far as the responsibility of the State was concerned." His right hon. Friend would tell him that, at the present moment, the State was not responsible for religious teaching. Already it had freed itself from any such duty, and he only desired that ordinary subjects should be taught in their National Schools, and that religious teaching should be given otherwise. The Vice President of the Council had presided at a meeting in connection with the Sunday School Union the other day he believed. The right hon. Gentleman had done no more than justice to that great Agency in this country, which he believed was of infinitely higher value in connection with religious instruction

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and influence upon the minds of the rising generation than any mere routine teaching given either through the Catechism, or orally in the ordinary manner. Now, it was a fact, and a very edifying fact for most Members in the House, that they had in the Sunday Schools of the United Kingdom between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 children, who were taught by over 600,000 teachers. What was the character of the teaching staff? Security was taken in the selection of persons who were teachers in the Sunday Schools that they should have the religious welfare of the children at heart; but could the same security be given in regard to their Day Schools? Why, it was urged in some quarters, during the discussion which took place in 1870 and subsequently, that there ought to be some tests and safeguards to insure that the teacher himself was a religious person, and therefore, for that reason, qualified to give this instruction. The idea of the religious test was ridiculed from almost every quarter of the House. For his own part, he welcomed the change which was gradually coming over the country. The Board School system was by degrees absorbing all the feeble schools in their towns. In the administration of his Department the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council was bound, he thought, to give every facility, when called upon, for the starting of School Boards in place of the feeble Voluntary Schools which were to be found in many parts; and that, as a matter of justice and religious liberty, he could not be discharged from the obligation which rested upon him to take care that in a parish where, at present, there was only one school, and that a Church of England School, and where there were a great number of children to be educated who belonged to other denominations than the Church of England, that no effort should be spared to carry out the broad system of religious liberty which was intended under the Act. He knew very well that in their large towns there was a choice of schools; but there were thousands of parishes where there was only an educational establishment which belonged to the Church of England.

LORD BURGHLEY said, he was sorry to hear the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member who had just sat down, especially those on the subject of

Voluntary Schools, because he thought they owed a great deal to the voluntary efforts of those who maintained the Voluntary Schools throughout the country, and it was a pity that those efforts and intentions should be placed in a wrong light before the public. With reference to the question of Voluntary Schools as against Board Schools, there happened to be in his county (Northampton) an instance, on the subject of which he had already had communications with the Vice President of the Committee of Council; and he hoped he might be allowed to draw the attention of the Committee to a few facts to show how unnecessary was the School Board which had been set up by the Department in the village of Rothwell, and that the Department had, in a great measure, exceeded the authority given them by the Act. He would not at any time be induced to bring a small local question before the House; but this was a matter of large importance in the village to which he referred, and was not the only case, he believed, in which School Boards had been forced on places where there was no necessity for them, and in which, through their having been imposed upon them, the rates had enormously increased. In the parish of Rothwell, North Northamptonshire, there were two schools—one a Church of England School; and the other a British School. The Church of England or Grammar School was in a very flourishing condition, and among its pupils there were about 200 Dissenting children; whereas, on the other hand, the British School was in great distress, and the managers of that school who represented the poorer portion of the population had such difficulties in maintaining it at the standard at which the Education Department required that they were eventually compelled to give up the school altogether. That condition of affairs not only attracted the attention of the Education Department, but it also attracted the attention of the Trustees of the Grammar School, who wrote to the Education Department in March, asking to be allowed to meet the requirements of the village and to increase their school accommodation. No reply was for some time made to that application. On the 25th of April a reply came, which was to the effect that the Education Department could not take any notice of the applica-

tion, because the managers of the British School had not yet made up their minds as to the line of action they intended to pursue. It appeared, however, that shortly afterwards, and without any further communication with the managers of the Grammar School, an order for the formation of a School Board was sent down, and that order for a School Board seemed to have been made upon the representation of a few persons to the Education Department without conforming with the requirements of Section 12 of the Act, which stated that public notice should be given a week previously that application was about to be made. The order was sent down for the establishment of a School Board on the 29th of May. Again, the 8th section provided that the Department should take into consideration every school, whether elementary or not; whether there was already in existence, or would be within a certain period, sufficient accommodation for the education of the children of the district. On the 25th of March a public meeting was held to consider the proposal to establish a School Board. ["May!"] The Board was to be elected on May 29.

MR. MUNDELLA: If the noble Lord will excuse me, I think I can put him right. I think there was a meeting held with the view of passing a Resolution with regard to the school some time in March, and the question of the School Board arose on that occasion.

LORD BURGHLEY said, the right hon. Gentleman was no doubt right. There were two meetings—one to consider the proposal, and at the second there was a poll, in which a majority of 55 votes were against the establishment of a School Board. That was in March.

MR. MUNDELLA: That proposal did not emanate from the Education Department at all.

LORD BURGHLEY said, in that case the position of the right hon. Gentleman was worse than he had supposed it to be. He had been under the impression that the right hon. Gentleman acted before the poll was taken; but it seemed he was in error, and that the right hon. Gentleman knew at the time when he decided on the establishment of the School Board that the majority of the ratepayers had decided against it. The hon. Gentleman opposite said it was very hard that in any locality where

there was a large number of Nonconformists there should be but one school, and that the Dissenting children should be troubled with denominational teaching. But it appeared that there was a large number of Dissenters who did not think so, and he was moreover informed that the only religious teaching given to them at the Grammar School was that of the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. It might be urged, as an excuse for the decision arrived at by the Education Department, that the Trustees of the Grammar School were dilatory in taking action and in providing the requisite accommodation. But even that was met by the 9th section of the Act, which provided that if, after the expiration of a period not exceeding six months, the requisite school accommodation was not supplied, the Education Department should cause a School Board to be formed. But during all that time the local gentry and others had promised to give sufficient accommodation; they had promised subscriptions, and they had at the present time provided a large room for carrying on the education of the children during the alterations, so that he thought there was no necessity for the School Board which the right hon. Gentleman had forced upon the parish, even if the charge were adhered to that the Trustees of the Grammar School were slow in providing the accommodation required. Then, with regard to the Resolution which was rejected in March. Schedule 12 provided that if a Resolution were rejected it should not again be proposed until 12 months had elapsed after such rejection. But there, again, the Department had ridden over their own Act, and ordered the establishment of a School Board where a good system of education was already existing. Somehow or other, they had in this matter transgressed every rule of their own Act, and now that the School Board was in existence at Rothwell, the right hon. Gentleman would, perhaps, be able to show that it was more useful than the school accommodation already provided. But he was bound to say that the rate-payers would find it much more expensive, and would consider it a very bad return for the way in which they had carried on education in those parts for so many years.

MR. SPENCER said, he should not have ventured to trespass on the time

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of the Committee were it not that he also, with the noble Lord who had just sat down, was a Member for the same Division of the county of Northampton in which Rothwell lay. His noble Friend had not come forward to defend the action of the Education Department, as he had hoped he would, but had taken the opposite course, and opposed the action of the Department in setting up a School Board at Rothwell. He felt himself forced, not to defend the Department, as they were perfectly able to do that themselves, but to state that he cordially and entirely agreed with the lines they had followed in this matter. If the noble Lord would allow him, he would just mention one or two facts which he omitted to refer to. First, his noble Colleague said that the National School at present had 200 Dissenting children. Well, he thought that was the greater reason why there should be a School Board. Secondly, Rothwell, in 1873, had not sufficient school accommodation by about 80 places; but there were then in the place two schools; there were 229 children in the Church Schools and 146 in the British Schools. Thirdly, the Church or Grammar School was not in existence before 1870 as a school. After 1883, when the required accommodation for 80 children was found, the Department passed the schools. The accommodation having been found, the school was passed; but on the Inspector reporting to the Department that all the requirements were not carried out, the British School set about making appeals for contributions. The sum collected, although it amounted to about £200, fell short of the sum required by about £700. Again, the architect who went down in 1883 to report on the plan of a building on which it was proposed to spend the money had it been collected, said it would not do at all, owing to the imperfect arrangements for the admission of light and air, and for other sanitary reasons. The managers then came to the conclusion that they must close the schools after the 1st of July. Thus 146 children would be without the means of education had it not been for the action of the Department.

LORD BURGHEY: I quite admit that they were ready to hire a school-room. The Grammar School was ready to carry on the education of the children.

Mr. SPENCER said, he thought his noble Friend would agree with him that the Grammar School arrangements were not up to the requirements of Parliament. The Nonconformists objected to sending their children to the National Schools, and he would give three reasons why the National Schools were not at all suitable. First, it was doubtful if suitable accommodation could be got at the National Schools, as the present accommodation there was not up to the requirements of the Department, as there was no playground. Secondly, the time that would be required to build the National Schools, during which the children would be without any education; and, thirdly, because, had the National Schools been suitable, the Nonconformists' children would have been educated under the Church principles. He, of course, should not object to that, being a Churchman; but the Nonconformists naturally said, as he was credibly informed, that the children in the National Schools were taught the Church Catechism for three-quarters of an hour daily. He did not know whether his noble Friend had seen a letter which was addressed to the Vicar on the 13th of June, from the Department, in which the fact of the School Board being set up was explained, to remove the misapprehension which existed on the subject, and that it was by the 8th section, instead of by the 2nd sub-section of the 12th section, which he had by him, and would show the noble Lord if he wished it, but which he would not bore the Committee by reading. He might also add that, owing to the character of the trust, no other voluntary body could take the education of the children in hand, and hence a School Board was the body upon which it naturally fell to take in hand and direct their education. Although the noble Lord might call it sentimental, it was a good reason, to his mind, when he said that the Nonconformists felt it hard that they, who had had their own schools for 50 years, should either be compelled to leave their children without education at all, or send them to the Church of England School, where the accommodation was inadequate to the requirements of the place. He would ask the noble Lord and those who agreed with him, supposing that in his own locality there were more Roman Catholics than

Protestants, and the schools of the latter being closed, how he would like to have pressure put upon him to send his children to the schools of the former denomination? In these circumstances which he had placed before the Committee, he ventured to think that hon. Members would agree with him that the line of condemnation of the conduct of the Education Department in this case, which the noble Lord had adopted, was rather too strong, and that in this, the last quarter of the 19th century, it was too much to set about curtailing and restraining that freedom of education of which for years the nation had been so proud.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he was unwilling to intervene in the interesting duel which had just taken place between two evenly-matched combatants, but he wished to say a few words; because, although the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Spencer) had given some plausible reasons for the establishment of a School Board at Rothwell, he had not touched the essence of the question raised by the noble Lord (Lord Burghley), which was, whether the Education Department were or were not acting in accordance with the law in the course they had taken? Now, he contended, and he believed he could show, that the course pursued by the Education Department was illegal. The case to which the noble Lord had called attention was not an exceptional instance of the Department having exceeded its legal powers; it was not the first time that they had taken this mistaken course; and it was not long since a much more serious mistake occurred in his own constituency, and if the Education Department were right in the action they had taken in the particular case to which he referred, and if the arguments by which that action was sought to be justified were accepted, then the whole voluntary system of education in England was placed in absolute peril. He contended that Clause 12 of the Act was never intended to apply to the case of Willesden in Middlesex, or of Rothwell, and that the Department having made use of that clause had upset the whole compromise assented to in 1870. Clause 9, by which the Education Department could establish a School Board, prescribed a certain procedure to be followed. They were to give public notice of their deci-

sion as to the school accommodation in any district, and then, if any 10 rate-payers objected, they had the power of forcing the Education Department to hold a public inquiry. That was a very important proviso. Then, after notice had been served on the district, and if the accommodation was not supplied within six months, the Department had power to order a School Board to be formed. But Clause 12, which provided a summary mode of procedure, was not to be put in force except when there was practical unanimity between the district and the Education Department; and the only two conditions on which the Education Department could establish a School Board were—first, where the Local Authority itself made application for the establishment of a School Board; and, secondly, where the Education Department was satisfied that the managers of any Elementary School in the district were unable or unwilling any longer to maintain the school, and that, if it were discontinued, the amount of public school accommodation in such district would be insufficient. Now, it was never contemplated that a School Board should be set up if the managers of the schools were willing to maintain the existing schools. What had been the uniform practice up to the time when he left the Office was set forth in the Hand Book of the Education Department. It was, that the Department might without application order a School Board to be formed when they were satisfied that the managers were unwilling to continue a school, and when they had evidence that the amount of public school accommodation for the district was insufficient. No orders, however, were issued by the Department for the formation of a School Board on the representation of managers, until the inquiries with regard to the formation of a School Board in the district were sufficiently advanced. It was a fact that up to the date he left the Education Department, no School Board had been set up under Section 12, except where the Local Authority had requested it, or where it was conclusively proved that the discontinuance of a Voluntary School would render the school accommodation of the district insufficient. But what happened two years ago in Willesden, Middlesex? Willesden was a very peculiar parish. Its population had increased more ra-

pidly than that of any parish in the Kingdom; two years ago it was about 30,000. The ministers of all denominations made an effort to provide sufficient school accommodation. Something like 4,000 places were required, and they were provided. There was no deficiency whatever in the urban part of Kilburn and Willesden; but suddenly a small Wesleyan School in the rural district of Harlesden was closed by the manager. The accommodation at this school was only 1-66th part of the total accommodation, for the school was only attended by 120 children, of whom only 60 belonged to Willesden. Immediately there was a requisition from the Department, under Section 12, for the establishment of a School Board. The whole district rose as one man against a School Board being set up; the Earl of Carnarvon put a Question in the House of Lords upon the subject; but it was then too late. He challenged the Vice President of the Council to deny that in this matter an illegal use had been made of Section 12. What followed? A School Board was set up. An election took place. One gentleman connected with the school that had been closed was returned; but the other eight gentlemen who were elected were opposed to the establishment of a School Board. They were gentlemen who, though devoted to the cause of education, declined to build schools, because there was no deficiency. What had been the action of the Education Department during the last two years? and this was a point to which he wished to direct the attention of the Committee most particularly, because it imperilled the very existence of the voluntary system. The Education Department said, in effect—"Because we set you up to build schools you must build schools whether there is a deficiency or not." The School Board showed by a house to house visitation that there was no deficiency; but that, on the contrary, there was a surplus of accommodation amounting to 1,000 places. The Education Department contended that the accommodation was not suitable and not sufficient. A school twice the size of the one which had been closed had been opened in the vicinity; but the Education Department declined to recognize it, although the School Board recommended that it should be recognized. He did not think the right hon.

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Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) could quote a single instance in which such a recommendation had not hitherto been acted upon by the Department. In Scotland there was a School Board in every parish, and, in order to get a good attendance of Roman Catholic children, the School Boards had over and over again recommended the recognition of Roman Catholic Schools. The result was that those schools had been recognized, and that a much more satisfactory attendance than would otherwise have been secured had been obtained. If the Department acted thus in Scotland, where there was a School Board in every parish, why did they not act in the same way at Willesden in Middlesex? However, the Willesden School Board, having satisfied themselves that there was no deficiency, but that there was an actual surplus accommodation, declined to build schools. The Education Department thereupon threatened to declare them in default, enjoining them to commence building operations before the 8th of next July. In other words, the ratepayers of Kilburn and Willesden were to be taxed for schools which were not necessary, because the Education Department had made an illegal use of a certain section of the Education Act. It so happened that in the districts in question the rates were exceedingly heavy, and that, as a matter of fact, one in every five ratepayers was more or less in default. He had the honour of the acquaintance of several gentlemen connected with the School Board, and he was persuaded they would not be consenting parties to the throwing of unnecessary burdens on the ratepayers. It must be borne in mind that if the Education Department were permitted to continue to act as they had acted in the case of Willesden, they could establish a School Board in any parish they chose. If it was competent for any small sect to close their school suddenly, and to declare that there was a temporary deficiency of school accommodation, and if it was within the power of the Education Department to decline to allow the district to supply the deficiency, a School Board might be set up anywhere and everywhere. And now he came to the most serious part of the matter. In order to justify the action of the Department, the Vice President of the Council, speaking to his (Lord George Hamil-

ton's) constituents, endeavoured to justify himself by saying that he (Lord George Hamilton) had done the same thing hundreds of times. The right hon. Gentleman was reported to have said—

"The Department were only carrying out the Act, and acting on the precedent set up by their Predecessors. What had been done on this occasion had been done hundreds of times by Lord George Hamilton."

It was rather hard that that should have been said by the right hon. Gentleman, considering that he (Lord George Hamilton) never put Section 12 in operation at all. [MR. MUNDELLA: I am not responsible for that report.] Also, in order to justify their action the Education Department, made use of an altogether new argument. They said—

"It may be that there is sufficient accommodation, but it is not suitable accommodation."

He happened to have with him a copy of the instructions which were issued to Inspectors by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), when he was Vice President of the Council. They were instructions which had been systematically acted upon to ascertain what were the school requirements of each district. They were clear and distinct instructions, and they laid down what constituted "suitable." On page 4 of those Instructions it was stated that the school provision of a district would be suitable if there were some school or other under the Conscience Clause within the reach of every child whose parents wished him to have the protection of the clause; and it was further stated that the question whether the school accommodation was suitable would not arise in any case where there was sufficient public school accommodation. If they admitted that a school was not suitable because it belonged to any particular denomination, he maintained they would upset the whole principle of the Act of 1870. His hon. Friend the Member for North Northamptonshire (Mr. Spencer) had asked—"If you were resident in a district where there was nothing but a Roman Catholic School, how would you like to send your child to such school?" It would be their duty to send their child to that school; but, at the same time, it would be the duty of the Department to protect the child by the operation of the Conscience Clause. He believed that the Conscience Clause af-

forded ample protection to any child. He contended that the course which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had taken in regard to the cases in Northamptonshire and in Willesden was an entire reversal of the action of his Predecessors, and that it set up this most dangerous precedent—that if any small minority chose to create an artificial deficiency of school accommodation by temporarily closing a school, they could establish a School Board, or, in other words, a small minority could tax the whole district at will. Such action tended to turn topsy-turvy the principles of the Education Act; and, therefore, he considered his noble Friend (Lord Burghley) was amply justified in bringing his case before the Committee, though, perhaps, it was not so strong a case as the one he (Lord George Hamilton) had cited. The Committee would, perhaps, allow him to turn for a minute to one or two other topics. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) made an excellent speech, as he generally did. He spoke with enthusiasm of the general results of education during the past four years, and he did not in the least exaggerate the great improvement and growth which education had recently made. On the contrary, when he called the attention of the Committee to the fact that 27 per cent of the total number of children on the register were not in average attendance—that was to say, that only 73 per cent were in daily attendance—he hardly did justice to the country. He (Lord George Hamilton) had already asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he calculated the infants, because in England every child who was above the age of three was on the register. [Mr. MUNDSELLA: I spoke of all the children on the register.] It was hard to expect such children to attend school every day; yet they were included in the difference between the number who ought to attend and the number who actually did attend. In Scotland the attendance at school was better, in consequence of the children on the register being older. On the whole, he thought the actual results, in regard to attendance, were even more satisfactory than the Vice President of the Council made out. The right hon. Gentleman reminded them that this year the Education Department had lost the services of Sir Francis Sandford. The De-

partment had lost a remarkable servant. He doubted whether any public servant had a more difficult task than Sir Francis Sandford had to put into practical operation the Act of 1870. That gentleman, in the work he had to perform, showed consummate tact and indefatigable industry; and his knowledge of men, which was so essential in putting into operation the provisions of the Act, had been most valuable to the Education Department. It was a satisfaction to the Committee to know that the services of Sir Francis Sandford would not be lost to the State, inasmuch as in future he would serve as a Charity Commissioner. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) called attention to a very pressing matter—namely, that of over-pressure in their schools. The hon. Member produced some strong evidence in support of his opinion; and though he (Lord George Hamilton) did not blame the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council for not alluding to the subject in the course of his remarks in introducing the Education Estimates—it was better the Vice President of the Council should, when fulfilling such a duty as he had performed that night, speak as to matters of fact than go into controversial subjects—he had always felt that any complaint made with regard to over-pressure ought to be carefully considered by the House. They, Members of Parliament, had, in their corporate capacity, established a system of compulsory education. They obliged every poor man to send his child to school, and every child that went to school was brought under a hard-and-fast system. It was not a system that he very much liked; and he was not sure that it was a system of which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) approved. It made no allowance for differences which must exist between children; but it forced everyone on at the same uniform pace. [Mr. MUNDSELLA: Not now.] Well, it did so more or less. It must be borne in mind by the Committee that their own children were exempted from the operation of the system of education, the payment of which depended upon results. Everybody who took any interest in educational matters must have had brought under their notice cases where, notwithstanding all the advantages which wealth

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conferred, children were overworked. The remedy was very simple, because it really amounted to a little relaxation or change of air. But that was not available to the poor man's child. He admitted it might be said that the doctors who stated their opinion that over-pressure existed were specialists; but the same thing might, with equal truth, be said of the people who expressed an opposite opinion. He thought that when so many doctors held such strong opinions as to the existence of over-pressure in their schools, and when it was well known that many of the children did not get sufficient food, the Committee ought carefully to investigate the allegations with respect to over-pressure. Of course, it was easy to find fault with a system; the difficulty was to suggest a remedy. He was very glad the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council had so far relaxed the system of individual inspection as to give a merit grant to classes. He believed the teachers were in favour of abolishing, as far as possible, individual inspection. Now, the facts of the specific complaint which the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) made with regard to over-pressure were contained in a letter in to-day's *Times* from a very distinguished authority on the subject—Dr. Crichton Browne. Dr. Crichton Browne's statement was to the effect that he was requested by the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to make an inspection with regard to the alleged presence of over-pressure; that he devoted all his spare time to the inspection; and that when he made his Report, the right hon. Gentleman, who described it as a farrago of nonsense, declined to publish it. [MR. MUNDELLA: Oh, oh!] Well, that he used strong language in respect of the Report. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Shropshire alluded to what happened to Mr. Lowe some years ago, in order that from that allusion the Vice President of the Council should see that, if any gentleman was specially requested by him to report upon so delicate a matter as over-pressure, the Report presented ought to be published. Suppose Dr. Crichton Browne's Report had been favourable to the view of the right hon. Gentleman, would it not have been published? Why, when it was unfavour-

able to his view, should the right hon. Gentleman suppress it?

MR. MUNDELLA: If the noble Lord will move for the Report I will give it at once; but I will not give it on my own responsibility.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that, after the concession the Vice President of the Council had made, he would not press the right hon. Gentleman further upon the point; of course, when the Report was in their hands, the Committee would be able to estimate its value. The Vice President of the Council had paid a very eloquent tribute to the value of Voluntary Schools, and he had quoted the evidence of a distinguished Belgian as to the most beneficent influences of English religious sentiment. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the large number of children who attended Sunday Schools, and he oddly enough connected this great attendance with School Boards. But School Boards had nothing to do with Sunday Schools; indeed, his (Lord George Hamilton's) opinion was that if the attendance at Sunday Schools were analyzed, it would be found that an enormous majority of the children attended on the week days Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Gentleman admitted—he always had admitted—that Voluntary Schools formed an essential part of their educational system. There were, of course, some persons who objected to Voluntary Schools; but he (Lord George Hamilton) thought they did so because they believed that Voluntary Schools strengthened and fortified the Established Church, which they wished to overthrow. The Vice President of the Council must recollect that for some years past there had been great depression of trade and agriculture, and that that depression had unfavourably affected Voluntary Schools. They had been deprived of that annual increment which otherwise they would have obtained, while year by year additional pressure had been put upon them. If the voluntary system be tottering from want of support, he put it to the Committee whether it would not be well that some additional support should be given by Parliament? That, of course, was a delicate matter, and he did not want to introduce so controversial a subject into the discussion of the Educational Vote. Looking, however, at the matter simply

from an economical point of view, he asked what would be the result if the voluntary system were to collapse? In London the School Board rate was very high; he did not think he was exaggerating when he said that a collapse of the voluntary system would be the cause of a doubling, at least, of the rate. He thought, therefore, they might all admit that it was worth while to attempt to support the Voluntary Schools of the country, and prevent them from collapsing. He had detained the Committee longer than he had intended to do; and in conclusion he would only say that, in reference to the operation of the 12th section of the Act in the two cases which had been cited, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council had been misled, and that he had acted illegally. Of course, any man might be misled by his officials; but the right hon. Gentleman must bear in mind that if he got the credit when his officials did right he must take the blame when they did wrong.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he could not pretend to possess the same acquaintance of the facts surrounding the establishment of a School Board at Willesden as the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) possessed, nor did he know what the exact facts of the Northamptonshire case were, except in so far as they had been brought before the Committee. He thought, however, that his hon. Friend (Mr. Spencer) made a very satisfactory reply to the noble Lord (Lord Burghley) with regard to the case in Northampton. Now, he (Mr. W. E. Forster) would not have risen to speak in the present debate if it had not been for certain remarks which fell from the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). The noble Lord referred to his own action when he occupied the position of Vice President of the Council; and he seemed to think that he (Mr. W. E. Forster) had never taken action under Sub-section 2 of Section 12 of the Education Act in the manner in which his right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) appeared to have taken action with regard to the setting up of a School Board at Willesden. So far as he could remember, he did several times exactly what the Vice President of the Council had done, and he found it absolutely necessary to do so.

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LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: When the district was ready to supply the deficiency?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Yes; and if his noble Friend would permit him, he would explain why the section was put into operation. His (Mr. W. E. Forster's) great object, and, he believed, the object of the majority of the Members of the House of Commons, was to get the children into school. Great difficulties were encountered, especially the religious difficulty, which he observed was now again exhibiting itself; but it was determined that the interests of education should not suffer, and that nothing should prevent the education of the children. That object it was necessary to secure in this special way. Although steps were taken to prevent Voluntary Schools being destroyed, it was represented to him that the managers and supporters of Voluntary Schools might themselves wish to get rid of a school. It was quite clear that if a Voluntary School were closed, and if, therefore, a real deficiency in school accommodation were created, an injustice would be done to the children. It was unfair to them that they should have to wait until all the formula which was necessary in the formation of a School Board were carried out; and, therefore, it was desirable that a School Board should be established at once. His noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton) made a mistake in supposing it was considered necessary, while he (Mr. W. E. Forster) was at the Education Department, that the authorities of a district should be in favour of a School Board before a School Board was established. He could mention several cases in which School Boards had been established in opposition to the wish of the ratepayers. One case occurred in Essex. On the 8th of February, 1871, a meeting of ratepayers of a parish in which it was proposed to set up a School Board was held, and the Resolution in favour of the formation of a School Board was negatived. A poll was demanded, but it was subsequently withdrawn, so that it was quite clear that the majority of the people of the district did not wish for a School Board. Notwithstanding that, the School Board was ordered by the Department in consequence of the deficiency caused by the closing of a Voluntary School. A similar case occurred on

December 23, 1871, and again on January 13, 1872. His right hon. Friend, as far as he (Mr. W. E. Forster) knew, had simply continued the exact action of the Department at the time when he (Mr. W. E. Forster) was responsible for its management; and it appeared to him that if the noble Lord would read the sub-sections of the Rules, he would see that the consent of the district was not in the slightest degree required. It was simply this—where the Education Department were satisfied that the managers of an Elementary School in any school district were unwilling or unable any longer to manage a school, the school was discontinued if the schools were no larger. It all depended on whether the accommodation was insufficient.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: There should be inquiry.

MR. MUNDELLA: It was made before.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he should be surprised to find that his right hon. Friend had not made an inquiry. It would have been straining the Act to order a School Board where there was a very small deficiency. Now, a good deal had been said about the question of suitability. He always felt, from the passing of the Act, that the difficulty of working it would depend very much on the interpretation of "suitability;" and this was one of those cases in which—if either party chose to go on their exact legal rights—the Act would be almost unworkable; but his hon. Friend and Colleague (Mr. Illingworth), with whom he did not exactly agree in this matter, used an expression well worthy of consideration. He said this matter must be worked with "toleration." If they tried to administer the law upon a strict interpretation by the law of the word "suitability," he (Mr. W. E. Forster) believed they would bring the whole thing to a standstill; and they would find that some legislation would follow very different from what they wished. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hubbard) had made a suggestion as to increased grants; but he (Mr. W. E. Forster) did not think that Parliament would agree with the right hon. Gentleman. The sum they now gave was very large, and his right hon. Friend congratulated them upon its being so large. In so far as it was a sign of real pro-

gress of education, they were all at one; but they did not wish to throw away money. He remembered that in 1870 he said he thought there would come a time of trial for Voluntary Schools, for many people would not be willing to pay twice over; and the extent to which Voluntary Schools would be carried on would depend very much on the zeal of the voluntary subscribers, and on the willingness of parents to pay larger fees than were paid at Board Schools. In many cases they were willing to do so; but he was inclined to think that part of the distress which was now felt by some of the Voluntary School managers arose from the fact that they made a greater effort immediately after the passing of the Act than they were able to keep up afterwards. He was sorry for them; but he confessed that, looking at the matter in what they would consider a hard-hearted way—from the educational point of view—he was glad they made the effort, and he believed that one reason why they had had this quick increase of schools in 15 years had been the rivalry between the School Board system and the Voluntary system; and he thought those who had suffered from it might be congratulated on having helped to get children educated much more quickly than they otherwise would have been. There was an argument he might use to some of his hon. Friends, who would still say it would have been so much better if they had paid no attention to Voluntary Schools, and simply established a great system of State schools. In time England would have had those schools, but it would have been a long time; and although it might be said that, first or last, they would have had the schools, there was a very great difference between first and last. It made an enormous difference to the children who came last; and it would make an immense difference to the country to lose all the advantages of their education. He did not wish to put it solely upon this result; but he candidly confessed that another reason he had was, that they ought not to lose sight of the advantages education had derived from the zeal and energy and practical knowledge of those who promoted it. [An hon. MEMBER: Which?] The education in Voluntary Schools. Therefore, he thought they ought to work the Act

fairly; but, on the other hand, if those persons overstrained their zeal, and tried to make Dissenters send their children to their schools, they would hasten the passing of measures which he should much regret. Much was said about over-pressure. That complaint had arisen since he was at the Education Department, and he supposed it very much arose from their having got into the school so many of the poorest children, and also from the fact that those children were very untutored—indeed, had no previous education at all. They were so unprepared that it was difficult to pull them up to the level of the majority of children who came from homes in which they had had better training. That made a great difficulty, and it seemed to him that they ought to encourage managers and masters to make allowance for those children, and to see that there should be as much relaxation as possible in special cases. He thought his right hon. Friend had adopted those relaxation rules far more than his Predecessors did, and certainly much more than he (Mr. W. E. Forster), or the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton), did. It seemed to him (Mr. W. E. Forster) that his right hon. Friend had tried to do that as much as he possibly could; but they must remember that in so acting they must not do great injury to the general average of children. They would, in that case, be doing great harm to the country. With regard to payment by results, hon. Members who could look back to the time when Viscount Sherbrooke was Vice President of the Council would remember that he (Mr. W. E. Forster) was not an advocate of the noble Viscount's mode of working payment by results; but he confessed that to do away with that system altogether would be a most dangerous step. What was the state of things which required, in the noble Viscount's opinion, such a marked change? The reason was that schoolmasters gave way to the almost irresistible temptation to look after the clever children rather than to the average children, and they found that there were thousands of children in their schools who scarcely knew how to read. And they must also remember this, and the doctors must bear it in mind—the miserable condition of a large proportion of their population. He dared say most hon.

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Members had been impressed by the enormous proportion of the children in their schools who came from one-roomed houses. It was a most sorrowful fact that there was this condition of things; but when they had to deal with those children, they must expect some of those things to show themselves. He thought there was a proportion of from 50 to 80 per cent of those children; but it was a mistake to suppose that those children were, as a rule, more unhealthy because they went to those schools. That he knew was not the fact; but it was the fact that in some of the schools in London the children had longed for the holidays to come to an end, so that they might get away from their homes and back to the schools. That was a proof that they were not doing much harm to the health of the children, and it must not be forgotten that it was more and more the case every year, that it was a great injury to a child not to see that it could read and write. Years ago that was not the case, because then those who could read and write were comparatively the minority. Now, however, it would very soon be exceptional for people not to have that amount of learning, and they might well feel that it would be cruel not to enable a child to get hold at least of reading and writing. He could not let this discussion pass over without bearing his testimony also to the great services of Sir Francis Sandford. In some respects he was, perhaps, much better able to speak upon that point than any other hon. Member present, because he (Mr. W. E. Forster) and Sir Francis Sandford were together when the Education Acts were being first started; and he could say that if it had not been for Sir Francis Sandford's untiring industry and his extraordinary tact and temper, and for his wisdom in meeting difficulties, he (Mr. W. E. Forster) did not know how they would have got through what certainly was the very difficult work of getting the Acts started in face of the opposition of those who were in favour of religious education and religious teaching, and also of those who were opposed to religious teaching in day schools, unless they had had a man of his wonderful tact and temper.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, he and his hon. Friends felt that if the Act was worked fairly, they would have no right to complain, and he was bound to say

that when the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. E. Forster) was in the Department, the Act was worked fairly; but the question was whether there had been any departure since then from the policy of the right hon. Gentleman. He would not enter into the details of the matter now; but with regard to the case to which the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) called attention, it was, he thought, only right to mention these facts. On the 19th of May, an Order was issued for the formation of a School Board, although the figures showed that there was no deficiency; and he thought the case was so bad that there must be some reason for it that could be given. His noble Friend had been assured that that action was illegal; and when he said that there was accommodation in the schools for 4,500, and that Mr. Willis's estimate of the requirements was only 3,900, and there was, therefore, a surplus of accommodation, it was difficult to understand the principles upon which the Department had acted in that case. All they could suppose was that there had been some pressure used to induce the right hon. Gentleman to pursue that course, instead of following the line of his Predecessors. This debate had, he thought, begun in an unsatisfactory manner, because it commenced under the disadvantage of certain documents not being produced. It was always unsatisfactory if documents were referred to in debate to which access could not be obtained, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would do well to lay on the Table in future all the documents which might be referred to in the debates on the Education Estimates. There were three documents which were essential to the discussion. The first was that referred to that night, and he must congratulate his hon. Friend (Mr. Stanley Leighton) on having extorted a concession from the Government; but he thought it would have been better if the right hon. Gentleman had laid the Paper on the Table before being constrained to do so by the appeal of his hon. Friend. That document was not a document sent up by Dr. Crichton Browne, as any other gentleman might have sent it, and which might have been asked for from the Department, but it was a document upon which the right hon. Gentleman had

founded his defence. On Tuesday, the 19th of February, the right hon. Gentleman said—

“I have invited Dr. Crichton Browne to visit some of the public Elementary Schools of London, in company with one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and to favour me with his opinion of their work from a sanitary point of view. I am glad to say he has agreed to do so. I am instituting the most careful and searching inquiries into these allegations of ‘over-pressure,’ and when they are completed the substance of them shall be laid before Parliament.”—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 1331.)

If the right hon. Gentleman had invited Dr. Crichton Browne to do work for him, he could hardly say afterwards that that work was suggested to him by the gentleman in question, for surely a Minister who invited an opinion from a competent gentleman was bound to submit his opinion to Parliament when he had received it. He himself happened to know a school of 600 children in average attendance, which Dr. Crichton Browne had on two separate occasions investigated especially with regard to the sanitary condition of the school and the health of the children. He went into the school, determined to investigate whether over-pressure existed; and he spent some five or six hours on the two occasions in that inquiry. He thought it was a great pity that the Report of that investigation had not been laid on the Table before this discussion took place. Then there were two other documents that ought to have been produced. Some weeks ago there was an interesting discussion on the subject of pensions, and the House was promised a Treasury Minute. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Here it is.] There it was now; but why was it not there when the debate began? Why should the Committee be left to extort it from the Government?

Mr. MUNDELLA: There is no extortion in the case. It is a matter which has been considered by the Treasury, and I brought the Minute down as soon as possible. I was not sure that it would be discussed this evening.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT replied, that the right hon. Gentleman had been appealed to frequently; and he must now repeat that it was much better to have these documents on the Table when they came to discuss these matters. There was one other document that ought to have been produced, and that was a copy of the

Instructions issued to the Inspectors with regard to over-pressure. A great deal depended upon what those Instructions were. He had asked a Question on the subject, and the right hon. Gentleman had stated that he was going to give proper Instructions to the Inspectors, and that there would be no fear of this over-pressure of which some were afraid. But where was that document? It was not produced, and they on the Opposition side were placed at a great disadvantage in consequence. The right hon. Gentleman, of course, knew what the Instructions were, but they could not; and he did not think that was very favourable to the progress of Business. On the question of over-pressure, he wished to say it was not a question which depended only on the statements of enthusiastic philanthropists. He had Reports which had been presented in January of the present year, which had been drawn up by Professor Stokes, on the subject of over-pressure in London. One of those Reports stated that—

“The head mistress of Holland Street (Blackfriars) Board School, girls’ department, which I am inspecting this week, is absent with low fever, brought on, in her doctor’s opinion, by overwork in school. This case is by no means a solitary instance.”

In another case, he said the head mistress of Hunter Street (Southwark) Board School, girls’ department, had been absent for several weeks. She had literally worked until she dropped, and most serious consequences were apprehended. Again, the head mistress of Westcott Street (Southwark) School had suffered in the winter from a dangerous attack, and three of her assistants had been absent through ill-health. The Report went on to say—

“In the Webb Street, Bermondsey New Road, Board School, girls’ department, an assistant of more than usual strength has lost her voice through over-exertion in school, and is recommended a six months’ rest, with a voyage to Australia.”

Further on, Mr. Stokes said, under date January 18th, 1884—

“Hunter Street Board School—Mrs. Warner, certificated assistant, lately in charge of the babies’ room, died this week, aged 32. Miss B. Dallimore, head girls’ mistress, is still absent. Her sister, Miss A. Dallimore, certificated assistant, looks fitter to be patient in an hospital than teacher of a large school. Hearing from the head infants’ mistress that Miss B. Dallimore was desirous of seeing me, I called at her

house. She is still suffering from low fever, which her doctors, both in London and Brighton, attribute to overwork in school. Before leaving Brighton, last Monday, she told her physician that she wished to return to her school, and he replied that, should she do so, she would not live for a week. Miss Helen Taylor, of the London School Board, has visited Miss Dallimore, and shown much kind sympathy in the case. Webb Street Board School—In the infants’ department, Miss Mirley, certificated assistant, was absent with a bad throat, through over-exertion. In the girls’ department, Miss Seymour, certificated assistant, is permanently incapacitated by a chronic affection of the same kind; and a pupil teacher, formerly of much use, has gradually lost her eyesight till she is now unfit to teach. Of the Westcott Street Board School, which I did not visit, I heard that yesterday three certificated assistants in the girls’ school (Mrs. Rigby, Mrs. Cross, and Miss Willis) were absent through illness; while a fourth certificated assistant, just returned, after sickness, was scarcely fit for work; and the head mistress appeared to be so much over-taxed that, in her case, a relapse is feared.”

These were cases not of overworked children, but over-strained teachers.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY: These cases were answered weeks ago.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, the cases might have been answered weeks ago; but whatever the answer was, these were statements made on good authority, and had been laid before the London School Board. He only mentioned them that the Committee might know the nature of the complaints. It had been said, and very justly, that having established a system of compulsory education it was incumbent upon them to be very careful that they attended to all complaints. There was an impression outside that these cases, as a general rule, were brought forward by hon. Members interested in the localities in which they occurred. There was also a general feeling that they were exaggerated; in fact, they were looked on as the crotchets of a few. He (Mr. Talbot) wished to show that, if hon. Gentlemen would take the trouble to investigate the matter, they would find that these cases of over-pressure really were not imaginary. At any rate, there was a strong *prima facie* case for the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to take pains to investigate the subject. Looking at the fact which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had so well drawn their attention to, that in the condition of the children, and he was afraid he must also say in the condition of so

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many of their teachers, there was so much predisposing cause to break down, he thought it was only right that everybody concerned in these matters should be assured that when they came to Parliament to make a complaint they would have a patient and attentive hearing, and a full and explicit reply. He had just one word to say as to pensions. That matter had been very ably and exhaustively brought before the House by the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodric) a few weeks ago. Several hon. Members had endeavoured to pin the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to the exact condition of these pensions. He (Mr. Talbot) wished they had the document before them giving the exact condition of the pensions. He wished to make one more appeal to the Government on this question, and it was that while they were dealing with pensions they should do so generously. He had heard of a case which had occurred before the present relaxation of the Rule. The father of a well-known gentleman connected with education, whose name he was not going to mention, but a certificated teacher, left one situation in order to go to another, and there unfortunately happened to be a certain number of weeks between one appointment and the other. What he meant to say was, that this gentleman was a certain time out of occupation. He had "broken his residence"—to use a Poor Law expression—and it would hardly be credible to the Committee, but it nevertheless was a fact, that because of this break in the teacher's employment his application for a pension was refused—that was to say, a gentleman who had been many years under the Department, and had grown old in the Public Service, because of an accidental break between the two engagements, the arguments of the Treasury prevailed, he was sure, over the good nature of the Vice President, and the pension was refused.

MR. MUNDELLA: What is the date of that application?

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, he had not provided himself with the date, but he could give the right hon. Gentleman the facts of the case privately, if he desired them. He should not like to mention them publicly. He mentioned this circumstance, because he was anxious that when pensions were given they should

be given in the spirit in which he was sure it was intended that they should be given, and not according to a harsh literal interpretation of the Rule. If they did not adopt this course incalculable hardships might be inflicted upon deserving persons. Some of the aged teachers were in great distress, and were looking forward to what they conceived to be their absolute right. Whether it was a legal right or not, it had been admitted by the Secretary to the Treasury; and he (Mr. Talbot), therefore, trusted that he might appeal to that hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to deal with the matter on a liberal scale. He had spoken just now about Inspectors, and the instructions given to them, and he was sorry to say that, whilst there were noble exceptions, all Inspectors were not what they ought to be. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council was familiar with the case which he was about to mention, but probably he was—it was the case of one of Her Majesty's Inspectors for the Spalding district in the county of Lincoln. A report had appeared on the subject in the public newspaper to which he had been referring. It appeared that a public meeting had been held in Spalding to consider the action of the Inspector in that district. He would rather not mention this gentleman's name unless it was asked for, because it was not pleasant to mention in that House officials who were unable to reply to any charges brought against them. He had been told that the Inspector had acted harshly with the schools with which he was connected, and that a great number of teachers had remonstrated with his action, as their bread almost depended upon the results of his inspection. This Inspector's Reports were conceived in the most hostile spirit to them, and they asked that their schools might be re-inspected. He believed from what he had heard—and he was speaking of course in the presence of the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, who would be able to correct him if he were wrong—but he believed that the Inspector was summoned to London, and requested to give an explanation of his conduct, being then sent back to the district with a strong intimation that he had better carry on his work in a different spirit. He (Mr. Talbot) had been told, but of

this he could not give a positive assertion, that this gentleman had returned to the district, and was carrying on his operations again, but not in a very much improved spirit; in fact, that some teachers in the county of Lincoln were suffering under this gentleman, who took a very different view of what their duties ought to be from that which was ordinarily taken by Inspectors. This only illustrated what he had said a few minutes ago—namely, that everything depended upon the individual conduct of individual Inspectors. He had nothing to say against the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council personally in this matter, but the right hon. Gentleman and his Predecessors had established a different system of inspection to that which used to exist in the country. They had given away to a mistaken and foolish prejudice which prevailed in certain quarters, and refused to appoint clergymen of high character and large parochial experience, who knew what schools were, such as used to be appointed, and in their places selected young gentlemen fresh from the Universities, who probably had no personal acquaintance with the inside of an Elementary School—young gentlemen whose knowledge of young children probably was confined to their knowledge of their juvenile relatives. Some of these Inspectors seemed to take a delight in puzzling the minds of young children, and he (Mr. Talbot) had heard quite piteous stories of the confusion and consternation which young children suffered in the hands of these Inspectors. Speaking of his own recollection of examinations at Oxford, he could enter fully into the feelings of these unhappy children. But it was not merely that the feelings of the children were at the mercy of these Inspectors, but the salaries of the teachers were also dependent upon them. Not only were the Inspectors required to report as they always had been, but now the grants entirely depended upon their *ipse dixit*. It was entirely in the discretion of the Inspector to say whether a school was “excellent,” “good,” or “fair.” He was supposed to be under the guidance of his superior officer, the Head Inspector, and that made it all the more desirable that they should know what were the Instructions given to the Inspectors. Without the exact terms of the Instructions they would

have hardships occasionally arising, and if they were not given it was obvious that great injustice would be done to them. He hoped he had not stated the case too strongly, and that the right hon. Gentleman would bear it in mind. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee that the matter was strongly felt in a great many Elementary Schools in the country, and he was perfectly convinced that any attention that might be given to it would be attention well bestowed. There was a point connected with the subject he had already referred to, which he wished to bring before the notice of the Committee, as to the merit grant. There were some facts which illustrated the curiously erratic tendency of Her Majesty's Inspectors. He had in his hand a statement as to the difference in the awards and grants in different parts of the Metropolis. It was difficult to account in any rational way for the fact that out of 46 departments in Lambeth only three received the highest reward, seven being marked “fair;” whereas out of 37 in the Tower Hamlets, 13 were marked “excellent” and nine “fair.” A still more remarkable contrast was shown between the 27 departments in Greenwich, three of which were marked “excellent” and nine “fair;” and the 26 in Finsbury, where no less than 19 were marked “excellent” and one “fair.” Of course, there might be an explanation of this strange discrepancy; but he was sure of one thing, that the right hon. Gentleman would not say that it was not fair to give the wealthier districts a higher mark than the poorer districts, because what he understood, and what he was sure the House understood, was that it was the intention of Parliament, in sanctioning the arrangement of the marks upon which the fortune of the school so much depended, that some attention should be given to the circumstances under which the schools were placed. It could not be expected that the schools in the poorest localities, attended by children of the poorest class, could attain such results as schools more favourably situated, although they might be doing as good or even better work. A school that had intellectual merit of the lowest quality to operate upon might be doing much better work than a school which had much higher intellectual merit to devote its labours to, although it might

not have such high intellectual results to show. There was nothing to be objected to in the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. They all subscribed to the satisfaction with which he regarded the progress of education—the increased average attendance, and the increased average of passes. He (Mr. Talbot) could not help thinking, when he heard the right hon. Gentleman say that children left school earlier and earlier every year, and when he had described how hard it was upon these young children that they should have to be put to manual labour—he could not help thinking that, perhaps, some of the children might prefer the physical labour of the fields to the mental pressure and overstraining in the School Board establishments. He did not think it at all followed that children were inhumanly treated because they were taken from school at an early age and put to work in the fields. The right hon. Gentleman must feel the pressing necessity of the conditions—that a supply of manual labour was a great necessity in the present state of things. There was too great a tendency in the present day to look disparagingly on manual labour, and to raise to unnatural heights intellectual labour. Almost everybody was desiring some kind of intellectual labour in preference to manual work; the position of intellectual labour was elevated, whilst the labour of tilling the ground, which was quite as honourable, if not more honourable, was now looked upon with something like contempt. There was a desire to keep children to school as long as it could be managed, and their agriculturists were left with a scanty supply of manual labour for agriculture. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would not desire that; but it was constantly being spoken of in the agricultural districts. It was constantly complained that there was great difficulty in getting labour for the operation of tilling the ground. He did not think it necessary to educate the children up to the full stretch of their abilities, and up to a somewhat advanced age, and then send them out to labour in the fields. On this point he might say that to his mind the organization of night schools had not received sufficient attention in their educational system. He did not know whose fault it was, but there certainly was some fault somewhere. In Scotland there

was a great deal of education given in the evening to children employed in agriculture, much more than was given in this country. He was not speaking of home lessons done after school work, as he believed that to be a very doubtful experiment; but he meant keeping up the education which children had received in day schools in the evenings, when their work was done. Any instruction that could be given in that way must be a most valuable contribution to the real social and intellectual improvement of the children, and everything that could well be done in that direction should be done. They must all agree that the progress the right hon. Gentleman and his Predecessors had made in this work was very considerable; but it was a progress which should go on more and more in proportion as they worked, not in forcing the people, but in operating with them.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, an appeal had been made to him by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down in reference to the case of the person referred to in Mr. Stokes's Report in connection with the Southwark School. He was sorry the hon. Gentleman had brought the case forward without taking the pains to fortify himself with the particulars, because he (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) could assure him that when these cases were sent down to the London School Board for investigation, and were inquired into, they proved to be a mass of hearsay statements. So much was this the case that, in one instance, where it was stated that the mistress was dead, it turned out that she was really alive. If the hon. Member wished for information on these points, and would apply for it to the clerk of the School Board, no doubt it would be given to him without difficulty. Whatever illness had taken place amongst teachers of the schools was not due to the exaggerated character of the curriculum in the schools, or the deficient supply of teachers, but through natural causes. He should like to say a word on this question of over-pressure. He did not agree with the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton), who had brought forward this question; he did not believe that there was so much suffering from over-pressure in the schools; but, on the contrary, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Brad-

ford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had said, he believed that as a rule the children of the poorest parents in London, miserable and half-fed, passed their happiest hours in the schools and playgrounds of the London School Board. He knew it was a fact that the children often came back to the schools eagerly and gladly from their wretched homes in the courts and alleys of the Metropolis. He certainly agreed that over-pressure existed in the schools of England to some extent; but that over-pressure fell mainly on the teachers and not on the children, and especially on the pupil teachers. He was very glad to hear the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) drop a remark to the effect that he was in favour, as far as possible, of the substitution of adult teachers on the teaching staffs for pupil teachers, for he was sure that not only was the kind of education given unsatisfactory when children were sent to teach children, but also that the strain on the child who taught by working them in the day and instructing them at night, was so injurious that it was time a stop should be put to the system. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council had introduced into the Code a restriction in the hours of labour of pupil teachers; but he was sorry to say that the right hon. Gentleman got very little support from the hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Talbot) and hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, because deputation after deputation had waited upon him stating that if the schools were deprived of this amount of child's labour, they would not be able to make ends meet. The time, however, had come when the Department should insist on the pupil teachers at no time being more than half-timers, so that they should have half the working hours for work, and the rest for study. But he said, further, that he thought the Education Department was answerable for the pressure on the adult teachers as well, because whilst they had largely widened the curriculum—and they could give as liberal teaching now through the class subjects as they did before in specific subjects—the staff required was almost exactly what it was originally. There was one certificated teacher to every 80 children, which everyone knew was not adequate. But the state of things

was worse than that, because the Education Department not only put in a minimum which was treated as a maximum, but in two other Articles of the Code treated this minimum as a maximum. Whilst he admitted that the teachers, especially the women teachers, were subject to the strain of being required to teach large schools of irregular children who were only making 73 per cent of the necessary attendances, he also said that the Department were themselves to blame, though he knew they were acting under pressure from hon. Gentlemen opposite who had raised the cry of over-pressure on the question of an increase of grant to Voluntary Schools. Of course, if this increase of grant was given to that class of schools it would have to be given to the Board Schools also. He would point out that if the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) were accepted, and an increased grant to the extent of 4s. per head was given to the Voluntary Schools, it would be given all round; and this increase of grant would be putting money into the pockets of many managers of schools. No doubt many hon. Members, particularly those interested in education, were aware that many schools now made a profit. In Manchester, the School Board did so in two of their schools, and he did not begrudge it them; but he did not think that a proposal to add 4s. a-head all round, which would mean an increase of expenditure from the Treasury of £700,000 a-year at once, should be adopted. The Education rate was bound to go up, and would never come down. The object of the proposal to increase the Government grant was that this money should be given to relieve the subscriptions of voluntary subscribers, and it was not proposed that the schools should be 4s. per head better staffed and better supplied with appliances. The increased amount to be raised from taxation was not to be given for the education of the people, but for the relief of those managers who were struggling to maintain—chiefly at the expense of the State—their own denominational tenets. He was sure Parliament would never sanction in these days such a thing as that. For his own part, he should not mind the time coming when there would be much more money spent on education; but he certainly

Mr. Lyulph Stanley

should be sorry to see the money spent on keeping alive a system which had not sufficient vitality in itself to keep itself in existence—namely, the voluntary system. The right hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) had given them an illustration of the hardship of which he complained. With regard to 40 schools in London, he (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) had worked out a simple sum by which he found that each child was earning, on an average, 14s. per head. He was certain that if the noble Lord went to those schools he would find them in a bad state. One of these struggling Voluntary Schools had had to be closed by the sanitary authority on account of its condition, which was such as to nullify all the good it might do. Another was conducted under two railway arches, and was in such a condition that if the School Board were to attempt to keep it open permanently, they would be called upon peremptorily to close it. With regard to the subject of the formation of Willesden School Board, which had raised several most important questions, he would like, in conclusion, to make a few remarks; and, first of all, say a word or two as to the meaning of “suitable” accommodation, because a great deal depended upon that. The noble Lord had mentioned the Instructions issued in connection with the Education Act by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), in which Instructions he stated that *prima facie* any school receiving a Government grant, and having a Conscience Clause, was suitable. As the right hon. Gentleman had expressed it, that was, no doubt, correct. But it was a case which might be rebutted. He came now to other utterances of the right hon. Gentleman, in which he laid down that regard was to be had to the religious convictions of a large proportion of the population, thereby placing a more liberal construction upon the term “suitable.” But he would point out that when the noble Lord was at the head of the Department, he, and before him Lord Sandon, assented repeatedly to the proposition that the religious denomination of a school receiving a Government grant might make it unsuitable. They had, therefore, the uninterrupted prac-

tice recognized that if they were to have denominational education, it would not be politic to force Protestant children, for instance, into Roman Catholic Schools, or the reverse. In that spirit the London School Board had always acted towards the Roman Catholics. He would ask the noble Lord whether he bore in mind this fact about Willesden? He thought the noble Lord must know that in the accommodation of Willesden two schools were reckoned, with 2,300 places—which were inside London—and one of them, St. Augustine’s, Kilburn, with 1,700 places, had 300 or 400 vacant places which were not available, both because of the high fee, which ranged up to 1s., and because of the extreme ecclesiastical character of the clerical managers, which was as distasteful to many persons as Roman Catholicism would be. It was contended that no school was needed at Willesden; but quite lately, in that part of it called Harlesden, a school had been built and opened, and the managers had applied for annual grants, which refuted the statement that no school was needed; and of that there could be no doubt, having regard to the rapidity with which Willesden had increased. He had listened with interest to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, and he wished he could take as sanguine and rosy a view as the right hon. Gentleman did of the situation. He confessed that the standard of education in this country was miserably low as compared with other countries, and the Report of the Commissioners on Technical Education showed that we were very much behind in that respect. This was due to the Denominational Schools, which were many of them admittedly in a bankrupt condition, and he looked forward to the time when the question with regard to them would be re-opened.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley), with the compulsory rate behind him, could draw upon it to any extent to gratify his extravagant ideas with regard to Board Schools. He seemed to delight in casting suspicion on the exertions of the Voluntary Schools; but he entirely forgot that the instincts of the country were in favour of those schools—that at that moment two-thirds of the whole of

their children were educated in those schools. Now, in dealing with the so-called Voluntary Schools, as the hon. Member styled them, and speaking in terms, which were far from satisfactory, of the voluntary system, the hon. Member ignored what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) did not ignore—namely, that Voluntary Schools had been kept alive by persons who, in addition to the cost of them, paid the School Board rates. They paid double, in fact. It was not the 3s. or 4s. per head which the hon. Member spoke of; but it was a heavy burden which the supporters of Voluntary Schools paid out of their own pocket in order to keep up the Board Schools, and they did so because their religious feelings dictated to them what was their duty in this matter. He had listened to the speech of the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education with great interest, and he would congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on being able to state to the Committee that he had succeeded in continuing the work which began in 1874, and had gone on year by year with increased educational advantage to the whole of the nation. One remark of the right hon. Gentleman, he thought, was worthy of attention. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the irregularity of the attendance at the schools; but that irregularity was diminishing yearly, for two reasons—first, because they were now in full possession of that compulsory system of attendance which had been extended to the Voluntary Schools, as well as others, by the late Government; and the other reason was, that they had at last reached a period when they had succeeded in educating the people of the country to the fact that there was a necessity for educating their children. It had taken some time to bring that home to the great mass of the people of the poorer classes in the country; but it had reached their minds at last, and it had already begun to have a considerable effect in increasing the attendance at schools. He was glad to find the right hon. Gentleman paying a tribute to the Voluntary Schools, which he thought they very well deserved. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to recognize the merits of those schools, for the school which he especially singled out for the admiration of the Committee, was that of Miss

Franks, at Hatfield, and of which he said he could not speak in terms too high. Why was it that the Voluntary Schools presented such satisfactory results? It was, as the right hon. Gentleman had said, because in the Voluntary Schools the children were cared for. That was exactly the point. The children were cared for—they were not the mere units of the Board School system; their bodies and souls were the care of the managers, the teachers, and the supporters of the schools. He was much struck by another remark of the right hon. Gentleman, who appeared to have been very much interested in the saying of a great Belgian statesman, who attributed the greatness of England to the religious sentiment implanted in the breast of Englishmen. The right hon. Gentleman, in some remarkable way, seemed to give the School Boards credit for all this; for he said that the religious sentiment was the outcome of Sunday Schools, Sunday Schools were the outcome of Board Schools, and, therefore, School Boards were the cause of the greatness of England. That was the line of argument adopted by the right hon. Gentleman, and he had felt tempted to ask him whether the greatness of England began with the creation of School Boards, or whether the religious sentiment to which it was ascribed had not been in the minds of the people before those institutions were ever thought of? It was with the greatest possible satisfaction that he heard that there were about 5,000,000 scholars in the Sunday Schools throughout the country, and he could only hope that the right hon. Gentleman was accurate in his figures. He was afraid, however, that he had no information which would thoroughly justify that statement, and that it would be found to be a somewhat hazardous guess, rather than an official calculation which could be relied upon. But it might be that a portion of the scholars had been induced to attend a Sunday School, because they had received some portion of their previous education in schools in which they had no religious teaching. Would the right hon. Gentleman say, however, that because they had been taught in secular schools, and had been denied the daily bread of religion in the schools they had been obliged to attend, and which got a benefit by it, the Sunday School system

had been in any way a substitute for daily religious teaching? He should be surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman make such a statement as that, because the statement made and the argument used might lead an ordinary observer to suppose that the best method of teaching a child religion was to starve him during six days of the week, and give him religious instruction on Sunday only. With reference to the subject of over-pressure, which had been debated at considerable length that evening, he confessed there was a great deal to be said upon it; but they must bear in mind that the great majority of those who attended Elementary Schools, were children whose condition of life prevented their attendance at school for any lengthened period. The number of years which they could devote to educational purposes must necessarily be few, and they must secure to those children that the teaching given to them in those few years should be as thorough as it could be made. It should be practical, useful, and, above all things, thorough. Now, were the condition of the schools such as would insure the result? He thought that in one respect it was not so. The system of school teaching, which required that a child should year by year advance a Standard, was one which was not likely to conduce to the thoroughness of teaching, because the child was forced on to a Standard for which he was unfit at a time when the child's interest would be best served by leaving him for two years in the previous Standard. The Rules of the Department forbade that. [Mr. MUNDELLA: No.] He took issue with the right hon. Gentleman. The Rule was, as he had stated, unless there was "delicate health, prolonged illness, obvious dulness, or defective intellect." [Mr. MUNDELLA: It does not apply at all.] So far from it not applying, it dealt with the very subject he was considering. His point was, that unless there were the "reasonable excuses" mentioned, when once a child got out of the infant stage, the Rules put him into a higher Standard year by year; the child must be examined in a fresh Standard, unless it came within the clause he had cited. It was part of the cast-iron rule of the Department; it was cruelty to the children themselves; and it had this tendency—that in order to get them

into a higher Standard for which they were not fitted, the teachers were obliged to feed them, so to speak, with mental food which they could not digest, which, instead of doing them good, did them an injury. He did not say of necessity that it injured their health; it was their education which was likely to suffer by the Code being allowed to remain in this respect as it then was. He gave the right hon. Gentleman credit for having in his Code introduced many improvements upon previous Codes; and he admitted, with regard to specific subjects, that the change made was most useful and satisfactory, and that it had done something to moderate the ambition of those school teachers and managers who wanted the children to do more than they were able to perform. But, with all the excellencies of the present Code, they should not shut their eyes to the fact that there were blots upon it—that this was the proper opportunity for debating those defects; and that their sole object should be to improve, as far as possible, the system of public elementary education. Notwithstanding all that had been said in the course of the discussion of that evening, he was bound to state that he entirely agreed with the view that the system of payment by results was a vicious system; and he would put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether the time had not arrived for considering whether they might not take a fresh departure? Looking upon education as having reached a stage which a few years ago no one would have dared to prophecy for it; considering that they had largely, if not entirely, overtaken the arrears of the past, and that they had in full work a complete system of Elementary Schools, with an admirable staff of both school teachers and Inspectors, surely they might now largely modify the system of payment by results—a vicious system, which was once necessary as a stimulus. He thought it would be an easy thing to modify the system; and the easiest way, perhaps, would be to increase the grant for attendance, and give less upon the Reports of Inspectors. By so doing they would do much to remedy many of the evils now bitterly complained of. Pressure was, probably, put upon the Department by the Treasury; and he should not be surprised if the Gentleman who was the real origin of the

pressure, in this instance, was seated by the right hon. Gentleman—because he had observed that, when the right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his interesting speech, was alluding, in magnificent terms, to millions of expenditure upon education, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the final figures were reached, fairly took flight and left the House. It was only a very natural thing that, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer's pockets were not too full, the right hon. Gentleman should exercise a careful scrutiny of the expenses of every Department; it was very natural that the right hon. Gentleman should say to the Heads of the Education Department — “Your expenses are getting too great; cannot you keep them in check?” There was no doubt that a little more stringency in examination, a little more difficulty in earning the Government grant, would be very gratifying to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. One thing was quite certain, and he (Mr. Paget) did not think the Vice President of the Council would deny it, or, if he did, it would be because he was not aware of the circumstance, and it was this—that the examinations of the last 12 months had been in some respects more stringent than hitherto. There was an impression abroad, rightly or wrongly he could not say, that the increase of stringency was done to special and secret instructions to the Inspectors, that they must be more stringent. A manager of very large experience had told him that he saw the sums which were set the children, and those which were set the little children of the 4th and 5th Standard were so difficult and puzzling that he did not expect for a moment the scholars would be able to do them. He had received similar complaints by letter from teachers; but the writers had asked him not to divulge their names, because, if he did, they feared it might be possible that their Inspectors would treat them with even increased severity. This reminded him of another point which he thought was one which required to be insisted upon, and it was that the work of the Department ought to be done more openly than it was done at present. It was admitted that there were from time to time secret instructions given to Inspectors. Why should the instructions

be secret? Why should there be anything that the Department had to say to the Inspectors with regard to the execution of their public duties that they should not publish to the world? If it was necessary that Inspectors should turn their attention more strictly to reading, writing, and arithmetic, or to anything else, why not publish the instructions given, so that teachers and managers might know what they were to expect? Why instructions to Inspectors should be communicated mysteriously and secretly he could not conceive, unless it be that there was a deliberate desire to pull down the grant, or, in other words, that the schools should earn less than at present. There was another point he wished to allude to. He was told that Inspectors were in the habit, in respect to the subject in which it was most difficult for the children to pass—the subject of arithmetic—to bring the questions of problems with them, get the children to do them, and take the papers away with them, without allowing the teachers to see the sums which had been given. The teachers, therefore, never knew whether the children had done the sums or failed in them, and they were quite unable to point out to the children how to remedy any mistakes that had been made. He contended that such a system was most improper and unwise. It was quite right that the teacher should be prevented assisting a child in his work; but when a child had done his sums to the best of his ability, why the teacher should not be allowed to see what had been done he (Mr. Paget) could not conceive. There was yet another point in respect to the question of secrecy, and it was a point which the Vice President of the Council would do well to keep in mind. Under the present system very much depended upon the Report of the Inspector. An Inspector gave his Report “excellent,” or “good,” or “fair,” and the grant fell or rose according as the school was designated. But in the Report sent in, the Inspector gave no hint as to why a school was marked “good,” “fair,” or “excellent.” It was cruel to the teacher that such information should be withheld from him. Every Inspector should be instructed to send in a Report clearly indicating in what departments the school fell short of “excellent” and in what

departments the school was only "good" or "fair." The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council seemed to be somewhat astonished at such a suggestion; but he (Mr. Paget) knew schools in which, after the examination was over, the head teacher came up to the manager with a beaming face and had said—"The children were all present, they seemed to answer very well, the School Inspector seemed satisfied, and made no complaints. I did not see the sums, because he took them away; but as far as I can learn we had done very well, and shall earn a capital grant." Weeks passed by, and what happened? The hopes of the teacher were dashed to the ground; the Inspector's Report was nothing but "fair," and no reason why it was only "fair" was assigned. Such a system was a bad one, because it did not afford the teacher an opportunity of knowing in what respect the children had failed to reach a higher standard of excellence, and it absolutely hindered the children in receiving those benefits which the Department professed to offer them so freely. He hoped the remarks he had made would be seriously considered by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella), because he ventured to say that if the right hon. Gentleman eliminated the whole of that secrecy which was part of the regular Departmental action in regard to the points specified, he would do much towards remedying the grievances of which he (Mr. Paget) and others now complained. The right hon. Gentleman ought also to get rid of the attempt to obtain rigid uniformity and progress, because it was idle to expect that the mental capacity of a child would year after year maintain a uniform rate of progress. The mind of a child did not grow equally every year any more than his body did. In this matter he (Mr. Paget) put it to the right hon. Gentleman that there was room for considerable improvement. The only thing he had to suggest, in conclusion, was that the Vice President should, despite what had fallen from some hon. Members opposite, consider whether it would not be well, in the interest of the great mass of children who attended Voluntary Schools, that some addition to the grant should be given for attendance. He would not propose that such a grant should be given to a school so that a profit could

be made out of it; but he thought it should be given where it was wanted, where by its being given a real and substantial benefit would be conferred upon the education of the country. It must be remembered that though the requirements of the Code might press heavily upon Board Schools, they pressed ten times as heavily upon Voluntary Schools. A Board School never had the anxiety of the possibility of failing from want of funds; but that was an anxiety which was always present in the mind of the manager of a Voluntary School. The manager of a Voluntary School had no school rate to fall back upon, and it very often happened that if the Government grant was less than he and his teachers imagined they had earned, he was face to face with a deficiency. If the difficulty of meeting the deficiency was insurmountable, he had to face the certainty of inevitable extinction. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had expressed himself handsomely with regard to Voluntary Schools; and he (Mr. Paget) only asked that his (Mr. Mundella's) action might be as handsome as his words. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would remember that the interest of the country was clearly shown by the fact that two-thirds of its children were now educated in Voluntary Schools—the instinct of the country was unquestionably in favour of the voluntary system, which the Act of 1870 was intended to supplement and not to supplant.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH said, he only intended to occupy the attention of the Committee for two or three moments while he referred to a subject which had not been touched upon during the present debate, a subject which he thought would have some interest for hon. Members. The subject was that of grafting industrial training upon the school system of the country, as a means of grappling with the poverty, destitution, and pauperism in their great towns. It had been said with truth that their educational system had been a great success as regarded the mass of the population; but he feared it had not been a success with respect to what they might call the residuum of the population; it had not got thorough hold of the poor children, such as were described in the bitter cry of *Outcast London*; it had not

acted upon them with the full measure of benefit that was hoped. What, therefore, he had to suggest to the Committee was the expediency of grafting some industrial training on the common school system of the country, something after the style of that training which obtained in district schools, reformatories, and industrial schools. Those who paid any attention to the alleviation of the miserable condition of the poor in their large towns must be well aware that pauperism was in a large measure hereditary; that the pauper class reproduced itself; that pauperism went on from generation to generation. He was persuaded that if any serious impression was to be made upon this degraded class, it must be done by exercising a much stronger control over the children than had hitherto been exercised. He was not alluding now to paupers in the strict sense of the term, but to that class who were for the most part ignorant of any useful trade, and who were intemperate and vicious in their habits. The children of this class ran riot in the streets; there was no efficient control over them after they ceased to attend the National Schools; and the little benefit they received there was soon washed out of them. In his opinion, the State should undertake to exercise a certain control over such children for some years after the time they left school. Unless it did so, most of the children to whom he referred would drift into that class of persons who had no proper means of livelihood. At present they got no training in any skilled trade; and, indeed, if the State did not take them in hand, they never would be trained in any useful industry. He suggested that the State should exercise some degree of supervision and control over these children up to the age of 15 or 16 by means of night schools. As children of the corresponding class in Germany and other parts of the Continent were required to do, children who had left school in this country should be required to attend a night school for industrial training several evenings a-week. The Technical Commissioners, in their Report, referred to the fact that in all the towns of Germany and Switzerland children who had left the ordinary schools were compelled to continue their studies in the evening till the age of 16, and the Commissioners stated that too much

stress could not be laid upon the value of this requirement. Now, what he proposed was, that they, in this country, should undertake something equivalent to what was done in Germany and Switzerland, and other Continental countries; that they should require children to continue under some species of training in the evenings until they had attained the age, say, of 16 years; and he thought that training should be mainly industrial, such as was now given in that excellent London Institution called the Polytechnic. He did not for a moment say that a hard-and-fast rule should be made, because there were many to whom it was quite unnecessary to apply such regulations. He would not, for instance, propose to apply the rule to those children whose parents exercised proper surveillance over them, and educated them thoroughly. Had the State adopted years ago some such plan as he suggested, he was persuaded much would have been done to decrease the pauperism and destitution of their large towns. He assured the Committee that this was a very large and a serious question, because, at the present moment, their towns were full of half-employed unskilled labourers, often on the verge of destitution. An improvement in the present state of things could not be effected unless the State laid hold of the children, and put them under far more stringent training than it had hitherto done. He would not, at that hour of the night (12.50), trespass further upon the attention of the Committee; but he hoped that very shortly there would be an opportunity of discussing this subject more fully.

MR. BULWER said, that nothing had struck him more during the debate than the want of harmony between hon. Members and those they represented out-of-doors. It was all very well for hon. Members to have views such as had been enunciated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Smith) about spending money in industrial training, and giving boys this education and that education; but what did the man who had to find the money, and who had hardly enough to provide education for his own children, say to all this? No one was more in favour of education than he (Mr. Bulwer); he wished that every child should be educated; but he did not wish that a man who had barely

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enough to make both ends meet should be taxed to pay for the education of children who were not his own. If they were going to educate their children, let them teach them what was necessary for every child to know—how to read, write, and cipher; and if that was only a very slight education, and they would be liable to forget it, let them be brought up every two or three years, and, if they had forgotten it, teach them again. But to spend the people's money in giving them such an education as would enable them to understand an answer of the Prime Minister, was too much. He was acquainted with the facts connected with the establishment of the School Board at Rothwell, in Northamptonshire, to which reference had been made that night. The school there was a very good one, and it was taking the place of all the other educational establishments in the vicinity. There was a second school—he did not think it belonged to the Church of England—which could not compete with its rival, and it was, therefore, closed; whereupon some of the people came to the Education Department and said—"There is not sufficient school accommodation for the population, therefore we must have a School Board." The existing school authorities were willing to do what he understood the people of Willesden were willing to do—namely, to enlarge their school so as to meet the requirements of the district. But that did not suit the gentlemen who wanted to force a Board School upon the population; and how the matter had been settled by the Education Department he did not know. It was not that the Voluntary Schools wished to displace the other Denominational Schools; but all the managers wanted was that they should be permitted to meet the requirements of the parish, and thus prevent a School Board being forced upon an unwilling population. He wished to say a few words upon the question of over-pressure in schools. There was no doubt that a great mass of evidence had been adduced to prove the existence of over-pressure, and he had been very much struck by the letter which Dr. Crichton Browne had written to the editor of *The Times*. Dr. Crichton Browne stated that he was employed by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) to make investigations and report upon the sub-

ject, but that when he made his Report the Vice President of the Council very carefully kept it from the cognizance of the House and the public. Now, everyone knew that over-pressure in schools was very likely to occur; he had known it in his own experience. A friend of his who took the degree of Senior Wrangler, killed himself by the exertions he made to obtain the honour. If such was the result of over-pressure in a man of mature age, what was it likely to be with little children in Elementary Schools who had the strongest incentives to exert themselves?

Mr. MUNDELLA said, at that hour of the morning he hoped the Committee would forgive him if he was as brief and concise as possible in dealing with the subjects that had been last addressed to them. The hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton), who introduced the discussion, he thought had indulged in a style of argument that was not usual in that House. The hon. Gentleman admitted that he (Mr. Mundella) had treated the Committee very courteously, but the hon. Gentleman hardly reciprocated in kind, for he asked him (Mr. Mundella) whether he had one code of morals for private and another for public use, and he thought the hon. Gentleman must feel, on reflection, that his method of proceeding was hardly worthy of any hon. Member. If, on reflection, the hon. Gentleman did not think so, he must not expect a return of courtesy. The hon. Gentleman insinuated that he (Mr. Mundella) was anxious to conceal documents which did not favour his (Mr. Mundella's) own view. He would deal with that part of the case at once. He (Mr. Mundella) thought the Committee would give him credit for as much humanity as the hon. Member would claim for himself. He (Mr. Mundella) had not worked for years to lighten the labours of factory hands and the people with whom he had been associated in his life, that he should now be anxious to grind down little children almost to death's door. Nobody, he was sure, would be indifferent to a matter of that kind; and he could not, when he had overpowering evidence before him, admit the statements of the hon. Member in public, which he was obliged to withdraw. The hon. Member went to a great over-pressure meeting, at which a letter from Dr. Crichton Browne was

read, couched in the most extraordinary terms; and the hon. Member, on his return, asked him (Mr. Mundella) what answer he had given to that letter? Seeing that Dr. Crichton Browne was a Government official, it occurred to him to ask him to what school his letter applied; but he could not mention to him (Mr. Mundella) a single Elementary School which he had ever entered. He said he had in his mind a Class School when he wrote that letter. He stated that this work was very much overdone, and he mentioned a Senior Wrangler who had broken down through excessive work. He referred to Mr. Pitt, one of their Senior Inspectors, and he (Mr. Mundella) wrote to Mr. Pitt. In a short time he received a thick volume, called a letter, from Dr. Crichton Browne. The hon. Member for North Shropshire asked whether it could be laid on the Table, and he described it as an extraordinary document; but he (Mr. Mundella) thought he must class the opinions of the hon. Member with those of Dr. Crichton Browne. He hoped the hon. Member would move for it, and he would give it with pleasure; but he could not produce it as an official document emanating from a Government Department. Dr. Crichton Browne had written extraordinary opinions on education, and he (Mr. Mundella) would give the substance of an extract from a pamphlet which Dr. Crichton Browne had sent him. In that pamphlet he said schoolmasters should be called upon to amend their ways, and note the bodily characteristics of scholars. They should, he said, have a school register, containing details as to the names of boys and girls in the schools, sex, birth-place, nationality of parents, rank and occupation of parents, brothers or sisters alive, height without shoes in inches, weight in indoor costume without shoes in pounds, colour of eyes, colour of hair, girth of chest, circumference and strength of arm, power of sight, breathing capacity, hereditary diseases, previous education, and other matters. But, besides that permanent record, there should be complete information as to the progress of the children, and their conduct at stated intervals; and in addition to that, accurate observations should be taken as to height, weight, and so on, at least once in every two months. And so Dr. Crichton Browne went on with some of the most extraordinary theories. If they

went on such a system as that, there would be no grant that they could make that would pay the teachers. They could not conceive a more frightful burden on teachers; and so long as he (Mr. Mundella) was at the Education Department, he was not going to propose an army of Inspectors. He believed that Inspectors were the keystone of their system; but as to increasing their Inspectors unnecessarily, no greater waste of money could be made, and no greater mistake in administration than to adopt those extraordinary proposals; and he thought it hardly worth the while of an official Department to produce such a document as that. He hoped now he had made a statement which was satisfactory.

MR. BULWER: Is that the letter which Dr. Crichton Browne wrote to *The Times*, and which the right. hon. Gentleman failed to produce?

MR. MUNDELLA said, the document was one which Dr. Crichton Browne wrote before he visited the schools; and he (Mr. Mundella) read it to show that Dr. Crichton Browne had already formed extraordinary theories, which he felt bound to justify. Now, with respect to the question of over-pressure, that was not the time to go into the whole of that question; but he would say this much—that in the Reports of the ablest of their Inspectors—men who had served many years, fathers of large families, men of observation, who knew as much about education and the health of children as the hon. Member—they said the real cases of over-pressure were the cases of pupil teachers; and the hon. Member knew that he and the Society with which he acted were the very persons who remonstrated with him (Mr. Mundella) for reducing the hours of labour of pupil teachers. Did the hon. Member deny that?

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: We think that pupil teachers have to go through too severe and too lengthy examinations, and that that is the cruelty which injures their health.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that was not a very accurate denial. The hon. Member had not denied the statement that he and his Society remonstrated with the Education Department for reducing the hours of work for pupil teachers. A cry was got up by managers, because he (Mr. Mundella) insisted on reducing

those hours. With regard to the case mentioned by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Burghley), he thought the circumstances had been hardly accurately explained. There were two schools in Rothwell, which was a place of more than 3,000 inhabitants. For the last 50 years there had been a British School, and there had been a Nonconformist place of worship for 200 years. The Nonconformists kept the school going as long as they could; but, two years ago, the Inspector said the school must be rebuilt. No attempt was made to create a School Board; but the Nonconformists set to work to raise the money for the purpose of rebuilding the school. They could not, however, raise all that was required; and at last they threw up the game, and said they could no longer keep up their school, but they would not send their children to a Church School, but would go to prison first. Were they, then, supplanting a Voluntary School by setting up this school?

MR. BULWER: How about the other school?

MR. MUNDELLA said, they were not damaging the other school. He had examined the subscriptions for this so-called Grammar School, which had a small endowment, and the whole of the subscriptions came to £9 a-year, and, with one collection a-year, to about £17. All the rest was paid out of the Government grant. They said they had 200 children; but, if that was so, that would show that the Nonconformist children were in a majority; and that, he thought, was another strong reason why it would be impossible to compel all the children to go into the Church School. There was another reason. In this parish school they had no playground, and the children were turned out into the street to play; but the regulations forbade any school to be built without a playground. If they were to carry out the Act in that way, did hon. Members think that would last long? Would it be in the interest of the Church itself and of Church Schools, if they were to attempt to monopolize the whole of the education at a place like Rothwell? If there had been illegality, it had been an illegality going on for the last 14 years, and on an extensive scale. The noble Lord made one mistake. He said the School Board had declined to build a school because there was no deficiency. How was it that one

gentleman alone supplied the deficiency, and did not come to the Education Department? They had actually acknowledged the deficiency by building Church Schools. All he could say was, that when the deputation came from Willesden, they admitted that the School Board had done a great deal of good, and that the number in attendance had increased enormously. What more could they want? There was a statement now from that place that a school was badly wanted there, and if it was not supplied it would be necessary for the Department to proceed to extremities. The Education Act could not be worked unless this discretion vested in the Department was duly exercised, and as long as he was at the head of the Education Office he should carry out his duties fearlessly. He had never yielded to political pressure on one side or the other; he had always administered the Education Act as though there were no such things as denominational politics. In the administration of the Education Act there was no need for favouring either one side or the other. As to the Instructions given to the Inspectors, the Revised Rules would meet all reasonable wishes in this regard. There was no secrecy with regard to the Instructions as to the way in which the Act should be administered. There had been in the past no regular system with regard to the issuing of the Instructions, and very often the Instructions had lapsed, or had become forgotten. Now, however, it was intended year by year that the Instructions should be issued as soon after the Code as possible, and that the Instructions should contain in themselves all that applied to the inspection of schools. He was sure the Instructions he should have to place before the Committee would meet with the consent of all parties. Before he sat down he should like to say a word or two with regard to what had fallen from the hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Talbot) with regard to the Inspectors. The hon. Gentleman had complained of an Inspector in Lincolnshire, who had, it was alleged, imperfectly discharged his duties. Well, the present Government had not appointed that Inspector. They had never appointed any University men, and never since they had been in Office had they appointed a single unqualified or untrained Inspec-

tor. There had only been one University man appointed, and in that case it had been a necessity.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, he must not be understood as objecting to the appointment of University men generally. What he protested against was the appointment of men fresh from the Universities, who had no experience of Elementary Schools.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he could quite understand the hon. Gentleman taking that view; but, as he had said, only one outside man had been appointed, and in that case the appointment had been a necessity, as they had required a man who could speak the Welsh language. But from that time to this every vacancy had been filled up from the class of Sub-Inspectors—that was to say, from a class of well-qualified and well-trained men, who had served from 10 to 20 years as Inspectors' Assistants, and he had great pleasure in saying that they had discharged their duties admirably, and that he had no complaint to make of them, or less complaint to make than he had of any other branch of the Education Department. The Department was working so that all Inspectors could discharge their duties with fairness, kindness, moderation, and discretion; and if they did not do that, and if their action was brought before the Department, the Department could immediately put its finger on the men who were administering the grants too severely, because they had constant Returns showing what was done in connection with the Inspectors. There would be an opportunity given to hon. Members of knowing every change which took place in the practice of the Department, and, therefore, it would be admitted that an improvement had been made; and he hoped that in the future neither a man fresh from an University, nor a schoolmaster, nor any man would ever be appointed to go into a school for the purpose of inspection, until he had been thoroughly trained and qualified for his work. No man could inflict more misery on his fellow-creatures than an Inspector who was appointed for life, who was unfit for his work, and whom they could not discharge because there was no moral disability. During the last four years he had had a great deal of experience in dealing with men who never ought to have been appointed, and

who were totally unfit for the work with which they were charged. His last words would be with regard to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard), who made a demand for an increase of 4s. per head in the case of Voluntary Schools, which had been referred to on that (the Ministerial) side of the House.

An hon. MEMBER: It should be given all round.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that if the voluntary system was to be continued, some sacrifice must be made by its advocates in order to keep it alive. They could not say that they would give private individuals a sufficient endowment to enable them to carry on their educational institutions, and that they should take nothing out of their own purses for the purpose. He wished to know how far this 4s. per head was to be granted—where they were to draw the line? There were hundreds of schools the circumstances of which varied very materially. Some were 1s. short, some 2s.; what, then, did they mean by giving a uniform sum of 4s. per head? Taking the Wesleyan Schools all round, he believed the contribution had reached to nearly 2s.; and at the rate of progress which had characterized these schools for some time past, it would soon be nothing at all, because every year they were earning more money; and he wished to point out to hon. Gentlemen opposite that in the year 1877 the contribution per head for all children in the schools over 80 was £3. What were they to-day? They had been steadily falling until they were now 6s. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., or 2s. a-head less for every child than under the late Government, showing a considerable increase in the Government grant. That increase in the grant would go on, and he (Mr. Mundella) should be very glad if it did. But do not let them say that they thought it was a vital question for English religious teaching that the children should be trained in Denominational Schools, and then say they would not put their hands in their pockets to support them. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen cried "Oh!" but let him remind them that the whole amount of the voluntary subscription was only £700,000 a-year, while they sent out of

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the country every year £1,100,000 or £1,200,000 to pay for missions to the Heathen. How could they, when sending such an enormous amount out of the country, grudge £700,000 for the Christianizing of their own children? He maintained that with such grants as they now had all they really had to do was to increase the quality of the work and the average of the attendance; and he could only say that hon. Gentlemen who were always crying out about over-pressure, and about too much education, were not going the right way to lighten the burdens of the voluntary subscribers to the Voluntary Schools. They were doing their very best to increase these burdens; because the more they disinclined the parent to send his child to school the more burden they placed on the back of the teacher, and the more burden they placed on their own back. He was sorry to have kept the Committee so long. [An hon. MEMBER: How about the loans?] An hon. Member behind had reminded him of the loans. On that question it was not for him to give an opinion, as he could not associate himself with the Treasury. It was not in his power to give a bold and generous answer to the appeal. The matter was regulated by an Act brought in by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and if it was to be repealed and another arrangement made it must be by the Treasury. So far as he was concerned, he should be going a great deal beyond his functions if he were to give an opinion on the subject; and he might not be doing anything to ingratiate himself in the good opinion of the Treasury if he were to give a promise to reduce the interest, or extend the term of loans. He should be glad to see loans put on the best possible terms. Further, even under the present arrangements he understood that a great many School Boards fought for the money of the Treasury. If, however, they did not go to the Treasury, but went into the open market to get money on the best terms they could, and if they were dissatisfied with that system, he should recommend them to go to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and as he was not an ungenerous or an inconsiderate person, as some of his hon. Friends had suggested, the result of applying to him might be very satis-

factory. He hoped now the Committee would allow him to take the Votes, at least for Education and the Science and Art Department.

MR. WARTON (who on rising was received with some marks of disapprobation) said, hon. Gentlemen seemed impatient; but he had waited with a great deal of patience during the whole of the debate, listening to the speeches and endeavouring to form an opinion upon the points raised. Not long ago, at the dinner hour, he heard a very interesting speech, and took the liberty of showing his approbation by cheering, and was rewarded for his kindness by the remark, "The hon. and learned Member for Bridport cheers me. Have I said anything absurd." He (Mr. Warton) would pass over the good taste and appropriateness of that remark, and would only say this—that if a man should set himself up for a wit, he should always endeavour to make jokes of his own, or if he did condescend to borrow them, at any rate he should take care that they were old ones, and not jokes which he had read a day or two ago in a newspaper report of a speech delivered by the Master of the Rolls at the Mansion House. He (Mr. Warton) had a word or two to say, and an idea or two to express—and sometimes an idea might strike even the humblest mind. He was sorry to see, from the figures on page 335, that there was a tendency on the part of School Boards towards irreligion. The right hon. Gentleman wished to be even between all parties, and fair to all, and he had addressed himself very much with regard to his administration; but he (Mr. Warton) must say that if they looked at the figures, they would find them rather alarming. What did they find? Why, without any wish to say anything unkind of any of his fellow-creatures, he thought he might say that the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church were the two Churches which were most in earnest on the subject of the religious education of their children, for they found that these two were the religions in which there was a decrease of the Vote. The case of the Board Schools, however, was very different, the amount having increased ten-fold or eleven-fold. The real object of the Act of 1870 was not to supplant, but to supplement the

Voluntary Schools; and it seemed to him that the tendency of the Department now was in the wrong direction. It seemed to him that though this debate had been protracted, and though the right hon. Gentleman was anxious to bring this matter to a conclusion, they had not been very well furnished with materials for discussion. They had not had placed before them the letter or Report, which ever it was, of Dr. Crichton Browne, or the Reports of the other Inspectors on the subject of over-pressure. They had heard nothing about the pensions given to the teachers under the Motion of the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodric) some time ago—in fact, they had very little material before them at all; and, under the circumstances, he thought it was his duty to move that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Warton*.) put, and *negatived*.

MR. TOMLINSON really thought that, considering the position they were in with regard to information on the subject of the Education Vote, it was hardly fair that they should be asked to vote this large sum; and he trusted that, at all events, before they concluded they should have some of the information to which his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Warton) had referred. He (Mr. Tomlinson) wished to make one observation on another point. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council had said that he hoped not only to get the Vote for Education, but also the Vote for the Science and Art Department. He (Mr. Tomlinson) felt bound to remark that not one single word had been said on the Science and Art Vote. If they did not postpone the discussion on the important question of education to a time when they would have the means of properly considering it, he hoped that at least the Committee would not be asked to take the Vote for the Science and Art Department without discussion.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he did not propose to go beyond the next Vote for Scotland.

Mr. Warton

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not ask them to go on with the Science and Art Vote. It was a very important one, and might give rise to a great deal of discussion. Hon. Gentlemen sneered at the Science and Art Department as though it was not of the slightest importance; but, as a matter of fact, it was of the highest importance. An able Report had been presented to the House with regard to it, and he thought the greatest benefit would result from a full discussion on the subject. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would be satisfied that evening with having got the first Vote through.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON hoped they would report Progress, believing that the Vote for Elementary Education was sufficient for one night.

MR. MUNDELLA said, they had been there 10 hours, and they had only got one Vote; and he was obliged to say that the Science and Art Vote being quite exhausted they would be compelled to come for some Supplementary Vote, or make some arrangement of that kind, unless they got the money that night. The Science and Art Vote had never been refused on the first night of these Estimates on other occasions.

MR. DILLWYN said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman's argument that if the Department did not get the money they would be obliged to ask for a Supplementary Vote was a very bad one. The Science and Art Department required more watching than any other. Therefore, if the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) would move the adjournment he would support him.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Gentleman move to report Progress?

MR. DILLWYN: Yes; I will do so.

MR. BULWER begged to second the Motion. He was glad it had come from the other side.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Dillwyn*.)

Motion *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow* at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

MOTIONS.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 3) (LOWER THAMES VALLEY MAIN SEWERAGE DISTRICT) BILL.

Mr. EUSTACE SMITH, Mr. GILES, Mr. JOHN ROBERTS, and Mr. GEORGE ELLIOT *nominated* Members of the Select Committee:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Three to be the quorum.—(Mr. George Russell.)

CANAL BOATS ACT (1877) AMEND- MENT BILL.

Select Committee *nominated* of,—Mr. WILLIAM EDWARD FORSTER, Sir HENRY HOLLAND, Mr. BURT, Mr. ALGERNON EGERTON, Mr. SAMUEL MORLEY, Sir EDMUND LECHEMERE, Mr. CARINGTON, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. JOHN CORBETT, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Mr. ISAAC WILSON, Mr. TATTON EGERTON, Mr. SLAGG, Mr. STEWART MACLIVER, and Mr. KENNY:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

CHURCH PATRONAGE (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. STANHOPE, Bill to amend the Law relating to Patronage, Simony, and Exchange of Benefices in the Church of England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. STANHOPE, Mr. STUART-WORTLEY, Mr. JOHN G. TALBOT, and Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 251.]

House adjourned at a quarter
after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 17th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Viscount Torrington, after the death of his uncle; the Earl of Sandwich, after the death of his father.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*; School, &c. Buildings (Ireland)* (129); Newcastle Chapter* (130).

Second Reading—Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland)* (104); Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) (103); Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland)* (101); Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) (98), *negatived*; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) (102), *negatived*; Sea Fisheries Act (1868) Amendment* (125); Metropolitan Police* (118).

Committee—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders* (70); Great Seal (83).

Committee—*Report*—Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer)* (114).

Third Reading—Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Emsworth Gas, &c.)* (105), and *passed*.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE YEOMANRY RIOT AT LICHFIELD.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD DORCHESTER said, he desired to ask the Government whether they had any information of the recent occurrences at Lichfield? He had, on the previous evening, read with pain an announcement commenting with undue severity on irregularities and riotous conduct on the part of one of the finest, best disciplined, most numerous, and most gallantly officered regiments of Yeomanry in the country. He arrived late last night at Lichfield and found everything perfectly quiet; in fact, anything more solemn and dull than the appearance of the town could not be conceived. There was a perfect absence of excitement and of population in the streets. This morning he made inquiries as to the actual occurrences, and, if he was to give credit—as he undoubtedly did—to the word of three officers whom he consulted, none of whom had the slightest knowledge of his intention of bringing the question before their Lordships, the story that had been circulated in the newspapers was very enormously exaggerated. He questioned the three officers separately, one of them being Colonel Levett, the Representative of Lichfield in Parliament, whom he had known for 40 years. The newspapers stated that a large body of officers got upon the stage of some music-hall, locked up the manager, possessed themselves of the stage, and committed other enormities, frightening the ladies of the ballet, who, in his opinion, were not so easily frightened as the writer of the report seemed to imagine. He believed the real truth to be that a number of officers occupied the front benches, and that one of them joined in the chorus. The manager, who in a great measure depended for support on the patronage of the officers, came forward and characterized the officers in the front row as a set of snobs. He hardly knew the meaning of that word; but he had heard it sometimes, and he supposed it might be called an opprobrious term. There was a slight disturbance and the manager was locked up in his box, and very properly too. He might consider that he got off very cheaply. It was stated that on the following day there was great excitement with a mob in the street,

and that the face of Dr. Johnson's statue was blackened by some members of the Yeomanry. He believed there was not a word of truth in that, nor in the statement that a private of the corps, who was arrested and who was handcuffed by the police, was rescued by the men of the regiment, and that the handcuffs were sawn off. Such a charge as this was a direct libel on a gallant regiment. The fact was that, as was always the case when the Yeomanry assembled at Lichfield, a large number of Birmingham roughs poured into the town, and these roughs surrounded one of the yeomen and provoked him to fight, and that yeoman did fight. He hoped he would not live to see the day when a yeoman would not fight when occasion rose. An unfortunate incident, no doubt, occurred that night, mainly owing to the excitement which prevailed; and it had been so falsified in the newspapers that he had felt it his duty to mention it in the House, in justice to a deceased relative of his, who had been connected with the regiment for 40 years, and who had been urged to stay in when, from his delicate health, he had tendered his resignation. He considered it not only his duty to his relative's memory, knowing he was a great disciplinarian himself, but also out of consideration for the other officers of the regiment, many of whom were unknown to him, though some of them were his friends, to bring the matter before the House. He hoped the Government, with the civil and military authorities, would cause strict inquiry and denounce the untruths which had been circulated so industriously, not only in the London newspapers, by the telegraph, but in more impulsive and greedy organs of the Press, which were ready to take everything they could get. He thought that, when a regiment which could not stand up for itself was thus attacked, every inquiry should be made; and he trusted that if it was acquitted, the Government would express an opinion to the effect, and say that it did not deserve the blame attached to it by some local and provincial faction.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: I am glad my noble Friend has put this Question, and has taken this opportunity of stating what he knows in regard to this matter. I confess that when I saw the report of this occurrence, as mentioned by my noble Friend, in one of the evening

papers last night, I was immensely surprised; because the regiment is one that has been distinguished for the efficiency and the admirable discipline that has always characterized it under its late distinguished commanding officer. But I confess I could not credit the account given of these proceedings, and I thought there must be some mistake, or that the matter must have been grossly exaggerated. However, a telegram was despatched to Lichfield to inquire as to the truth and the nature of these occurrences. A further telegram was sent this morning. I regret extremely we have not yet received any answer to these telegrams; but I still hope to be able to bring it down to the House to-night.

LORD DORCHESTER: It is the annual Inspection.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: No doubt; and I am bound to say that I think the fact of the Inspecting Officer being there and holding an inspection to-day affords strong presumptive evidence that at least the reports which have reached your Lordships are extremely exaggerated. All I can say at present is that careful inquiry will be made into the truth of these reports, and great care will be taken that those concerned shall not be visited with undeserved blame.

Afterwards,

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he had received the following telegram with respect to the subject:—

"From General Officer commanding Northern District, York, to Adjutant General, Horse Guards.. Inspector of Auxiliary Cavalry telegraphs from Lichfield, absolutely no foundation for report in evening papers, concerning riotous conduct among Yeomanry. Men have behaved remarkably well. One yeoman was set upon by roughs. Have ordered Court of Inquiry to record evidence. Am writing."

CUELTY TO ANIMALS ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL—(No. 103.)

(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to meet the charges which were brought against those who opposed the Bill introduced into their Lordships' House recently by

Lord Dorchester

the noble Lord (Lord Balfour). It was said that in some places where pigeon-shooting was practised gross cruelties were inflicted on the birds. He was sure everybody was desirous that such cruelty should be put down, and the object of the Bill was to enable that to be done. The Bill provided that where cruelties were practised for the purpose of making the birds fly in certain directions when released from the traps, heavy penalties would be incurred; and to meet the great difficulty which had been experienced in this matter—namely, the want of facilities for detecting the cruelties, Justices of the Peace were empowered to give an order to proper persons to attend the meetings for the purpose of ascertaining if such practices were resorted to.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

LORD ABERDARE said, there could be no doubt that cruelty was practised in connection with pigeon-shooting. Birds were blinded in one eye, their wings were broken, or some of their feathers were pulled out. Sometimes they were brought to be shot at in such a miserable state of exhaustion that they failed to fulfil the purpose for which they were intended in consequence of their being too weak to fly. The present Bill was very inadequate and imperfect. By the 2nd clause it was proposed to subject to a penalty of £5, for every bird mutilated for the purpose of being shot at, any person who should use any ground for the purpose of shooting birds from traps or other appliances. According to his interpretation of the clause, a bird might be cruelly mutilated, and yet the keeper of the ground would not be punishable unless the bird was liberated for the precise purpose of being shot at. The 3rd clause proposed to enable the police to enter the ground and examine the birds to be shot at in order to enable them to discover cases of mutilation. No power, however, was given to punish those who might be guilty of such mutilation. There had, under the existing law, been many cases in which men had been found guilty of mutilation upon evidence obtained after birds had been shot at. Under this Bill the police would not be empowered to examine birds after they had been shot in order to discover previous mutilation. The 2nd clause

said that the bird must be injured so as to effect its flying. The case of a bird blinded in one eye would, therefore, not be met. Then the Bill would not touch the man who shot at a mutilated bird, unless it could be shown that he knew beforehand that the bird was mutilated. Surely if the bird was shown to have been mutilated it would not be too much to assume that the man who shot at it had knowledge of the mutilation. The noble Earl seemed to think that the Bill would do a great deal of good by allowing application to be made to the magistrate for permission to two persons to enter ground set apart for pigeon-shooting. That provision, however, would be of little use, for the mere approach of a respectable person to such locality was enough to excite suspicion among those engaged in shooting. Any person not having "villain" or "knave" stamped upon his face would be set down at once by those so engaged as an officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. He held that the present difficulties of detectives in obtaining conviction would not be diminished by this Bill, which he objected to, because it would be taken as giving the sanction of the House to a course which their Lordships collectively did not approve. Pigeon-shooting was a sport defended by very few. Nobody thought it manly, for it was not conducive to health or to the formation of virile courage. On the other hand, it was hopelessly and irretrievably surrounded by vicious circumstances. The evils with which it was accompanied would not be got rid of except by a measure much more stringent than that now proposed.

EARL COWPER said, he was of opinion that the principles upon which the present Bill was framed were right. He congratulated the noble Earl who had proposed it upon his former opposition to a very ill-considered measure on the same subject. That measure proposed to put an end to an amusement because it was connected with some abuses, and it reminded him of the action of certain people who shut the public out of their parks, because some scoundrel or other once cut flowers, or did some other objectionable thing. There was something hypocritical in the attempt that had been made in their Lordships' House to stop pigeon-shooting on the ground of cruelty; for if properly con-

ducted the sport was not more cruel than many of the sports in which their Lordships indulged. He did not suppose that there was any sensible man who thought that their Lordships were not anxious to put down cruelty. He would only add that he regarded the objections to the Bill as almost verbal, and considered that alterations could easily be made in Committee to render the action of the police more effectual.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS thanked the noble Earl for having introduced this Bill, and said the objections which had been urged against its machinery could be remedied when the Bill went into Committee.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he should be happy to consider the objections which had been urged by the noble Lord (Lord Aberdare), and he would endeavour to meet his views by Amendments in Committee.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

HYDE PARK CORNER (NEW STREETS)

BILL.—(No. 98.)

(*The Lord Sudeley*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD SUDELEY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he would refer for one moment to the question of Privilege raised by the noble Marquess opposite when the matter was brought before their Lordships' House before Whitsuntide. Since then the matter had been considered by the official authorities of the other House; and he was empowered to state that, in their opinion, this Bill did not in any way affect the Privilege of the House of Commons. In their opinion this Bill was, to all intents and purposes, a private one; all the incidents of a Private Bill being attached to it — the Standing Orders must be complied with, and the Bill go to a Select Committee. They considered it to come under Clause 226 of their Standing Orders, which stated that the House would not insist upon its privileges with regard to any clause in Private Bills sent down from the House of Lords which referred to tolls and

charges for services performed not in the nature of taxes but of rates levied and assessed by Local Authorities for local purposes. The object of the Bill was a very simple one. It was to make arrangements for placing in the hands of the proper Local Authority, whoever that might be, the duty of maintaining the new streets created in effecting the Hyde Park Corner improvements. In the ordinary course these new streets being properly completed and open for public traffic would as highways come under the care of the parish in which they were situated. In this particular case very considerable difficulties had arisen. It appeared that the Green Park, at the corner of which these improvements had been made, was entirely in the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, while the adjoining streets of Piccadilly and Grosvenor Place were in the parish of St. George, Hanover Square. The parochial authorities of St. Martin-in-the-Fields declined naturally to take over these new streets, on the ground that the inhabitants resided at the other end of the parish, and were not benefited by the improvements. They further contended that as the traffic would be diverted from Grosvenor Place and Piccadilly, thereby proportionately reducing the expense of repair in those streets, the cost of maintenance of the new ones should be borne by St. George's, as the parish derived a direct benefit from the improvements. They also said very fairly that having no houses abutting on the new roads, they could not recoup themselves for their increased expenditure by means of new rates. They said that the Green Park was an outlying tongue of land from which they received under £5 in rates; and, lastly, that the new street, being clearly to the profit of St. George's, should, in accordance with the precedent when Piccadilly was widened, be maintained at the cost of the parish benefited, and they did not see why rich St. George's should throw this burden on poor St. Martin's. The authorities of St. George's, on the other hand, objected to maintaining these roads on the ground that by the existing law no parish was bound to maintain a road situated in another parish. Secondly, they stated that they had not been consulted. Thirdly, they disliked having to pay an annual charge of £1,500 to £1,600 a-year, or, indeed, anything, if

they could get out of it. But the parish of St. George's seemed to forget that they had obtained a very considerable benefit, and that when the traffic was diffused, as it now was, over so large an area it must very largely lessen the expense of maintaining that part where the traffic had been congested, and where the road had consequently been much cut up. Their wish appeared to be to throw the expense either upon the Metropolitan Board of Works or upon the Office of Works. The Metropolitan Board of Works, as to whom the First Commissioner suggested that as there were so many difficulties in the way they might be willing to take over these duties themselves in the same manner as they had undertaken the maintenance of the Thames Embankment, replied that not being a road authority the Board would be unable to take charge except by statutory power; besides which, following all precedents of similar improvements, the streets should be maintained by the parish or parishes in which they were situated. The Thames Embankment seemed to have been a special case, in which there were so many authorities interested that it was thought desirable it should be vested in the charge of one responsible body; but this was the only case where the Metropolitan Board of Works had undertaken the maintenance of any improvement. So far as the Office of Works was concerned, it could not undertake to keep these roads in order, because Parliament would not vote the money for maintaining Metropolitan improvements of this character. Met by all these difficulties, the First Commissioner of Works placed the matter before the Metropolitan Board of Works as the great municipal authority, and asked for an expression of their opinion. They replied on the 20th of June, 1883, that—

“The best course would be that statutory power should be obtained to enable the Board to determine by what parish or parishes the roads should be hereafter maintained.”

The present Bill was, therefore, brought forward to carry out this suggestion. Now, what were the objections? It was urged, in the first place, that the Metropolitan Board of Works were an interested party in the matter, and, therefore, were not impartial, and ought not to be appointed to determine who should be responsible for

the work. Secondly, that it was purely a Metropolitan improvement, and not of a parochial character; and that the whole Metropolis ought to bear a proportion of the expense incurred. Further, that if there was any doubt on this subject, it was cleared up by the fact of the Metropolitan Board of Works contributing £20,000 towards the making of the improvements. It must be remembered that the Metropolitan Board of Works was a body representing the interests and communities of a great part of London; and that by the contribution they had given towards the improvements they had made over an amount which at 3 per cent interest meant a perpetual sum of £600 a-year, which they considered a fair *quota* towards the necessary expenses from the general ratepayers of London. Then, again, it should not be forgotten that the appointment of the Board of Works as referee was by no means a new idea. By the Act of 25 & 26 *Vict.* c. 102, s. 71, the Metropolitan Board of Works was authorized, on the making of new streets or improvements in different parishes, to apportion the contribution by each towards the cost of maintenance as they might think fit. Unfortunately, by this Act they were only authorized to make such apportionment when the new streets were in two or more different parishes; and as in this case the improvement was made entirely in one parish, the Board was technically unable to carry out this provision, however clear it might be held to be that the parish of St. Martin ought not to bear the charges for maintenance of these improvements. He had a great many precedents to show how this apportionment had been carried out in the great improvements which had been made in Northumberland Avenue and many other places. Those precedents showed clearly that Parliament looked upon the Board as the proper authority to determine such questions. With this clearly before them, he hardly thought the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Powis) could be serious in wishing to throw out the Bill on its second reading. This was a Hybrid Bill, and as such must go before a Select Committee to be considered on its merits. If it was thought by the Committee that the Metropolitan Board of Works was not the proper authority to arbitrate in the matter, then it would be quite competent

for the Committee to decide in what proportions the two parishes and the Metropolitan Board of Works themselves should contribute, and to alter the Bill accordingly. There were in this matter a great many interested parties; and it seemed only right that the question should be reviewed by such a tribunal as a Select Committee, with all parties properly represented. He ventured to draw their Lordships' attention before he concluded to the consequences of the throwing out of this Bill. Only two things were possible. Either these great street improvements at Hyde Park Corner must be stopped and the traffic diverted to the old channel—as it was quite certain Parliament would not vote money to maintain a Metropolitan road—or else it would be necessary for the Government to bring in a Bill following the precedent created in the year 1844, when Piccadilly was widened; to sever that portion of the Green Park from St. Martin-in-the-Fields and throw it into St. George's, when it would then be liable for the entire maintenance of the new streets; whereas if they sent this Bill before a Select Committee it was probable it would have to pay a proportion only. It seemed to the interest of everyone concerned that this Bill should go before a Select Committee to be thoroughly investigated, and he trusted their Lordships would consent to give it a second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Sudeley*.)

THE EARL OF POWIS remarked, that the Bill which the noble Lord had just described involved the question whether a parish could be properly taxed for works constructed outside its borders with regard to which its Vestry had not only not been consulted, but had not been allowed to say a word. What was the history of this matter? When, in 1882, the Chief Commissioner of Works was inspired by a laudable enthusiasm to make Hyde Park Corner perpetuate the memory of his own official career as *Ædile* instead of the memory of the Duke of Wellington, he devised the roads which formed the subject of this Bill, and persuaded the Metropolitan Board to give him £20,000 towards the expenses of the works. He was now engaged in removing the Duke's statue. When the plan was first started, as this

land all lay in the Green Park, the First Commissioner was under no necessity of applying to Parliament for compulsory powers to take land. He gave no Parliamentary notice in *The London Gazette*, and simply communicated with the Metropolitan Board. The matter became one of public notoriety, and the Vestry of St. George's wrote to ask whether they might be permitted to see the plans, and make representations upon the subject. The answer of the Office of Works was not contained in the Correspondence before their Lordships' House; but it was a distinct and peremptory refusal. It was clear, however, that in May, 1882, the Office of Works had not conceived the idea that it would be convenient to tax St. George's for these works. It was suggested that the Metropolitan Board should undertake the matter; but they declined. The Vestry of St. George's also pointed out that the works were outside their parish, and that they ought not to be taxed for the maintenance of those works. The Office of Works then sent a letter to the Vestry of St. Martin's, desiring them to take over the roads on the 1st of May last year. This letter was sent after the communication to the effect that that Vestry ought not to be taxed; but it did not succeed. In the month of July a Bill was introduced which would practically throw the roads upon the parish. The Standing Orders, however, were not complied with, and the Government did not venture in that House to move their suspension. Then they came to the beginning of the present year. This was a great Metropolitan improvement, as much used by the traffic from all parts of London as by that of the locality, and it would not be fair to put the proposed tax on the parish. In 1842, when Piccadilly was widened, a portion of the Green Park was added to the thoroughfare; but Lord Lincoln had previously consulted the parish, who accepted his plans. The precedent then established ought to have been now followed. The cost of these new streets should not be thrown upon the local burdens, in a manner for which there was no precedent in highway or street law. The Bill proposed to vest the arbitration of the issue in the Metropolitan Board; but that Body was interested in keeping the cost of maintenance off its own rates. It would, therefore, be a collusive arbitration,

Lord Sudeley

If independent parishes and districts could be treated in this way now, what would be their position when they were only component parts of a central Corporation? On the grounds that the Metropolitan Board would be an interested arbitrator, and that expense would be thrown on St. George's, which had nothing whatever to do with the improvement, he moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Earl of Powis.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that as the noble Lord had just alluded to a Bill which was not yet before their Lordships, he would remark that this case illustrated the extraordinary position in which the Metropolis was placed, for when its authorities could not agree among themselves as to the maintenance of an important improvement, yet one of no great magnitude, their Lordships were asked to say that it should not be maintained at all. It was absolutely necessary that some provision should be made, for no one would say that the streets should be shut up; if they were adopted and used by the public, they must be maintained in some way. No doubt, any objections might be urged against all the four modes of maintaining them. As between the two parishes, the preponderance of the facts seemed to be in favour of the case of St. Martin's. The Metropolitan Board had not undertaken anything like it anywhere else; and there was no precedent for throwing the cost of maintenance on Imperial funds. But their Lordships were not asked to determine the question; they were asked to say that it should be decided by the Metropolitan Board. By the Metropolis Local Management Acts that Body was appointed arbitrator as between two parishes or districts; but the present case did not come within the Acts; and, therefore, it would be necessary to come to Parliament. Their Lordships were not tied to any particular method of distributing the cost of the improvement by the Bill, and might refer it to a Select Committee. It would certainly not be a satisfactory method of dealing with the question to throw out the Bill on a second reading. If the Bill passed, and was referred to a Select Committee, who

could satisfactorily deal with all the questions involved, that would certainly be a better course than to leave the matter altogether unsettled.

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER said, he hoped that the noble Earl opposite would not press his Motion, for the reasons given by his noble Friend behind him and the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack. The Committee would have full power to apportion the various sums to be paid by the different Bodies. There could be no doubt that the proposed changes were a great Metropolitan improvement, especially in respect of the enormous traffic from the Great Western Railway to the South West of London, and that the Metropolitan Board of Works should therefore contribute. There was no doubt that the two divisions of St. George's parish would benefit largely.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, there was one point which had not been touched in the speeches which had been addressed to their Lordships. This was not simply an improvement for the convenience of traffic, but a great ornament to the Metropolis. If precedent were to be followed, the cost would have to be borne by the Metropolitan Board of Works or the Crown. In the case of the Thames Embankment, no one had ever thought of making each successive parish through which it passed contribute to its construction. This was as near a case to the Thames Embankment as could be found. Now it was proposed that the Metropolitan Board of Works should arbitrate on the question. But that impartial arbitrator had on June 20 last year declined to take upon itself any portion of the cost. Yet, with this announcement staring them in the face, the Government gravely asked their Lordships to refer this matter to that Body for them to say whether they would bear the costs or not. It was ridiculous to pass an Act of Parliament of that kind. The proposed road really fell within the precedent of Constitution Hill, of which it was a continuation. If he was not mistaken, Constitution Hill was maintained out of the public Estimates, and it was out of the Estimates that this payment ought to be made. He quite understood the argument of the noble Duke (the Duke of Westminster) if the Committee would have full power to determine the whole matter. But a Select Committee would not be

empowered to decide whether the burden should be borne by the Crown, or the Estimates, or the Metropolitan Board of Works. The Government should be called upon to pursue a consistent course; and they ought not to be allowed, simply because it suited them, to refer to a mutilated and one-sided Committee a matter which required full and unlimited powers to be properly dealt with. He did not see what on earth the Standing Order referred to by the noble Lord, which said that the House of Commons would not insist on its privileges in respect of Private Bills or Provisional Orders or Certificates sent down from the House of Lords, had to do with the matter. Their Lordships ought to deal with the question in a consistent manner. The House could not insert words which would have the effect of bringing a charge on the Estimates. As their Lordships' Committee would not be able to decide whether the money should be paid by the parishes of St. George's or St. Martin's, or the Metropolitan Board of Works, or the Estimates, he should support his noble Friend behind him.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, the noble Marquess's argument was one of the most singular he had ever heard. Their Lordships always took care not to come into collision with the House of Commons. There was no reason why their Lordships should not deal with the matter on the ground that the House of Commons might take a narrow view of its rights and privileges. The noble Marquess objected to the Bill because they had no power of putting a Vote on the Estimates. But that objection had no weight, because, in strictness, no Vote could be proposed in the House of Commons itself except by the responsible Minister of the Crown. But of all the curious arguments he had ever heard, the noble Marquess's argument about Constitution Hill was the most curious. Constitution Hill was not a public thoroughfare at all, and there was, therefore, no analogy between the two cases. The question was, who was to provide for the maintenance of this highway? There was something to be said for throwing it on the Board of Works, so that it would be paid out of a general rate, and something for making the cost chargeable to St. George's and the other parishes interested. He gathered from the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Powis) that

there was a soreness felt by St. George's, because it was not consulted. He should be most anxious to consider parochial honour, and was sorry if that were so. But the question of this thoroughfare, which was an especial convenience to almost all Members of that House and to the public generally, was a broad and important one, and the method of apportioning the contributions to its maintenance could well be decided by a Select Committee. The noble Marquess stated that the Metropolitan Board had already decided this question. What they did was to decline to undertake the whole cost of maintaining this road.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, the decision of the Board was in these terms:—

“The Board is of opinion that the best course is that statutory powers should be obtained to enable the Board to determine by what parish or parishes the road should be maintained.”

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, the Board had consented to the introduction of this Bill, which proposed to apportion the cost between the Metropolitan Board and the two parishes. The only point, therefore, that remained was, that this House was not enabled to impose the expenses on the National Exchequer. But he was strongly of opinion that there could be nothing more unjust or unfair to the general taxpayer than that they should be called on to contribute to the maintenance of roads in this rich Metropolis.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES) pointed out that the Bill was originally introduced in the other House; that it remained there for some time, and then was withdrawn and brought in in that House; but the question now in issue should have been determined in the other House. He objected to the Bill, on the ground that it would leave to the Board to determine whether it should pay anything, or throw the whole charge on the parishes or one of them.

LORD SUDELEY said, he desired to explain why the Bill was withdrawn from the other House. As their Lordships were aware, there was a certain hon. Member there who blocked everything. This Bill was, unfortunately, blocked by him, and as the Government saw that there was no chance of their getting the Bill referred to a Select Committee, they felt that the only course

was to introduce it into their Lordships' House.

EARL CAIRNS said, he had always understood that in the case of taxing Bills this House dealt with the non-taxing clauses, and left the taxing clauses to the other House. This Bill would enable the whole of the expense of maintaining this road to be cast on parish No. 1, or parish No. 2, or on the Metropolitan Board. Could there be a more taxing clause than that?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, the highest authorities of the other House had been consulted, and were of opinion that this was not a taxing clause.

EARL CAIRNS said, that the clause was distinctly a taxing clause, for though it did not impose the expense directly on any parish or body, it enabled another authority to do so. If this Bill, which contained only one clause, and that a taxing clause, was to be accepted by the House of Commons, though introduced in this House, he hoped that this decision of the authorities would apply to every case, and not merely to Government Bills.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, the Government could not accept the noble and learned Earl's interpretation of this clause. Rates were not the same thing as taxes. This Bill imposed rates on a certain district, and not taxes of a national character. That was the ground of the distinction.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK reminded the noble and learned Earl on the Wool-sack that in a previous Session he proposed an Amendment to a Bill dealing with local guarantees for tramways, and he was told that he was treading on the province of the other House.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had no recollection of this incident.

On Question, "That ('now') stand part of the Motion?"

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 70; Not-Contents 94: Majority 24.

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Bedford, D.	Lucan, E.
Devonshire, D.	Minto, E.
Saint Albans, D.	Morley, E.
Westminster, D.	Northbrook, E.
	Ravensworth, E.
	Saint Germans, E.
Bristol, M.	Sydney, E.
Northampton, M.	

Yarborough, E.	Kenmare, L. (<i>E. Kenmare.</i>)
Eversley, V.	Lawrence, L.
Gordon, V. (<i>E. Aberdeen.</i>)	Leigh, L.
Powerscourt, V.	Loftus, L. (<i>M. Ely.</i>)
Sherbrooke, V.	Methuen, L.
	Monson, L. [<i>Teller.</i>]
	Monteagle of Brandon, L.
Carlisle, L. Bp.	Ormonde, L. (<i>M. Ormonde.</i>)
London, L. Bp.	Penrhyn, L.
Rochester, L. Bp.	Ramsay, L. (<i>E. Dalhousie.</i>)
Aberdare, L.	Ribblesdale, L.
Auckland, L.	Robartes, L.
Belper, L.	Romilly, L.
Brabourne, L.	Sandhurst, L.
Bramwell, L.	Sefton, L. (<i>E. Sefton.</i>)
Breadalbane, L. (<i>E. Breadalbane.</i>)	Somerton, L. (<i>E. Northampton.</i>)
Carlingford, L.	Strafford, L. (<i>V. Enfield.</i>)
Carrington, L.	Sudeley, L. [<i>Teller.</i>]
Castletown, L.	Teynham, L.
Cottesloe, L.	Thurlow, L.
Crew, L.	Truro, L.
Emly, L.	Vernon, L.
FitzGerald, L.	Walsingham, L.
Greville, L.	Winmarleigh, L.
Hare, L. (<i>E. Listowel.</i>)	Wolverton, L.
Hatherton, L.	Wrottesley, L.
Hothfield, L.	
Houghton, L.	
Inchiquin, L.	

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Salisbury, M.	Hood, V.
	Sidmouth, V.
Annesley, E.	Strathallan, V.
Ashburnham, E.	Templetown, V.
Bathurst, E.	
Beauchamp, E.	Gloucester and Bristol, L. Bp.
Brooke and Warwick, E.	
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Cairns, E.	Abinger, L.
Camperdown, E.	Aveland, L.
Carnarvon, E.	Bagot, L.
Coventry, E.	Balfour of Burley, L.
Fortescue, E.	Bolton, L.
Haddington, E.	Brancepeth, L. (<i>V. Boyne.</i>)
Hardwicke, E.	Calthorpe, L.
Harewood, E.	Carysfort, L. (<i>E. Carysfort.</i>)
Howe, E.	Clanbrassill, L. (<i>E. Roden.</i>)
Jersey, E.	Clanwilliam, L. (<i>E. Clanwilliam.</i>)
Lathom, E.	Cloncurry, L.
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Macclesfield, E.	Delamere, L.
Manvers, E.	de Ros, L.
Mar and Kellie, E.	Digby, L.
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Morton, E.	Dorchester, L.
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Powis, E. [<i>Teller.</i>]	Ellenborough, L.
Radnor, E.	
Redesdale, E.	
Rosse, E.	
Selkirk, E.	

Fisherwick, L. (M. Donegal.)	Ormathwaite, L. Poltimore, L.
Foxford, L. (E. Lime- rick.)	Saltersford, L. (E. Cour- town.)
Gerard, L.	Shute, L. (V. Barring- ton.)
Harlech, L.	Silchester, L. (E. Long- ford.)
Hopetoun, L. (E. Hope- town.)	Stanley of Alderley, L.
Kenlis, L. (M. Head- fort.)	Stewart of Garlies, L. (E. Galloway.)
Kintore, L. (E. Kin- tore.)	Stratheden and Camp- bell, L.
Lamington, L.	Tollemache, L.
Loveland Holland, L. (E. Egmont.)	Tredegar, L.
Lyveden, L.	Trevor, L.
Moore, L. (M. Drog- heda.)	Ventry, L.
Mostyn, L.	Wemyss, L. (E. Wemyss.)
Norton, L.	Windsor, L.
North, L.	
Oranmore and Browne, L.	

Resolved in the negative.

Bill to be read 2^a this day six months.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL.

(The Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.)

(NO. 102.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he brought forward this Bill because he knew it was strongly desired by the inhabitants of the county. Already legislation of the same class had been applied to Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, so that whether this Bill passed or not, the House had already sanctioned the principle which it contained on three different occasions. The principle having been adopted, he should hope that if he could show that an earnest desire for the Bill was felt by the inhabitants of Cornwall the House would say there was no practical reason for refusing to one county, which constituted the Duchy of Cornwall, that which had been granted to 12 counties which constituted the Principality of Wales. He knew the Bill would be eloquently opposed by the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Bramwell). No doubt the noble and learned Lord would attack the Bill root and branch; but he hoped the House would remember that the principle had already been sanctioned on three occasions. They would be told, probably, that it was tyrannical, unjust, as between rich and poor, and exceptional legislation. No one could

be more opposed than he was to unnecessary restrictive legislation; but he did not think the word "tyrannical" could be used for legislation which was desired by the people to whom it applied; and the demand for this Bill came almost unanimously and most earnestly from those who were to be affected by it, and who knew perfectly well how it would affect them. The suggestion that it was unjust fell to the ground for the same reasons. He spoke as President of the Cornwall Sunday Closing Association; but he had not accepted that office until he knew that the feeling of the people of Cornwall was universally favourable to the Bill. He had never on any occasion done anything to stimulate the movement in the county. He had never attended any meeting. He felt that he was one who would not be affected by this Bill; and it was only when he saw that it was desired unanimously by the people of the county that he undertook to represent them in this matter. He denied that the Bill was exceptional. Sunday closing was the rule, not the exception, so far as trading was concerned; and where exceptions were made it was not for the benefit of any industry but of the public. If it was felt that the injury to the public was greater than the convenience afforded, there was good ground for restricting such an exception as this. It would be said, too, that Cornwall was distinguished by sobriety, and that was proved by the number of the convictions for drunkenness. He admitted Cornwall was distinguished by sobriety. Such a Petition as was sent up in favour of this Bill would not have come from a county which was not distinguished by sobriety. At the same time, the number of convictions for drunkenness did not entirely prove the assertion, because these were only the cases in which drunkenness was accompanied by disorderly conduct and rowdiness, and the exceptional feature of the county of Cornwall was the absence of rowdiness. The county had its proportion of drunkards, and they drank on Saturday nights and Sundays. Many such men signed that Petition, and did so with their eyes open, and because they felt it would be desirable to have a relief from temptation on Sundays. Some people, he knew, had no patience with any sentiment of that kind; but he must deal with men

as they were. Their Lordships would regard as almost incredible a story he heard the other day from Liverpool. A man came from sea with money in his pocket, and wishing to send it on to his wife. He knew it would be all right if he could get safely to the Sailors' Home; but he knew he could not trust himself, so he employed a bigger man than himself, and promised him 5s. on condition that he would convey him safely, and by force, if necessary, to the Sailors' Home. There was some free fighting, but the man succeeded. He was told this by an eye-witness, who assured him it was not an unusual occurrence, and that there were men at Liverpool who were so employed. The population of Cornwall numbered, including infants, 330,685, and the 60 per cent above 16 would be 198,000. Out of that number 120,000 signed the Petition in favour of this Bill. He knew that attempts had been made to disprove some of those signatures; but after they had passed the ordeal of the House of Commons they could only be reduced to 119,485. All the Mayors of the boroughs in Cornwall supported the measure, with one exception. Of the 13 Members of Parliament, 11 supported it, and all the county Members had their names on the Bill when it was before the Lower House. The year before last 181 meetings were held in favour of the Bill, at all of which resolutions were carried in its favour, and in almost all cases unanimously. Last year, after the failure of the Bill in this House, he was unwilling that further agitation should go on in the county. But it had been said that this was a movement which came only from one party and one school of religious thought—namely, the Nonconformists. He thought it was the best way to try and ascertain the opinion of the clergy in the diocese. He wrote to 250 parishes, and received 188 replies, of which 162 were distinctly favourable; 16 were doubtful, either because the writers could not ascertain, or thought the feeling was divided; and 10 were adverse. He thought that was fair proof that the feeling in the county continued. On application to the Nonconformists, out of 153 who were written to 118 replied, and were all in favour of the Bill. There was one point which had been strongly urged—namely, the allowance of one hour on Sunday for the

purchase of beer to be consumed at home. That might be fairly discussed in Committee; but he could not himself support it, because he knew it was contrary to the wishes of those who wished for the Bill. They thought it would do a great deal of injury. Again, he would say that since this Bill was last before the House there had been evidence of the results of Sunday closing in Wales. In Cardiff and Swansea the Act had been evaded in various ways, but through the country generally it had worked well and done good; and the complaints from the large towns were such as in Scotland, under the Forbes Mackenzie Act, were speedily obviated. The only other word he wished to say related to the local character of the Act. Why was it the Licensed Victuallers, in the papers they had sent round to Members of the House, objected to the piecemeal character of this legislation, and demanded that there should be a uniform policy for the whole country? He thought it was because that would put off the whole question to the Greek Kalends. It was said the Lords Committee declined to recommend Sunday closing. But that referred only to a general Sunday Closing Bill for the whole country, which would be surrounded with enormous difficulties, especially in connection with London and other large towns. It was said, also, that the Committee declared against local areas; but that decision of the Committee referred to total prohibition by local option in parochial areas. The Committee advised, on the other hand, that localities should be assisted and allowed to make experiments for themselves in dealing with this complicated and delicate subject. That was what he asked their Lordships to allow in the case of Cornwall. If the experiment should fail, it was not a serious matter, considering the character of the county; while if it succeeded it might be a valuable guide for future legislation. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, he rose to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months. He should not attempt to be eloquent, for eloquence was a quality which he did not possess,

and without which he had managed to get on hitherto. He should simply make a plain statement, appealing—the noble Earl opposite must forgive him for saying so—to their Lordships' common sense on the matter. What was the justification for the Bill? It proposed to put an end during one day to a lawful trade, which was to continue lawful in the county except upon the one day on which it was to be stopped, and which was to continue lawful throughout the rest of the United Kingdom except where it had been particularly stopped. What justification was there for that? The trade might not be one for which their Lordships had much love, nor one which attracted their custom; nevertheless, it was a trade of very great importance to those who carried it on, and those who dealt with them. The House ought to bear in mind that this was not merely a proposal to put an end to the sale of intoxicating liquor on Sunday in Cornwall, but to put an end to the sale of all the commodities sold by those who retailed beer and spirits. Under this Bill a man who sold intoxicating liquor would not be at liberty on Sunday to sell any other articles—such as bread, cheese, and ginger-beer. Of course, it would be impossible to have the public-houses open for one part of the trade alone; but he placed this consideration before their Lordships, in order that they might see what it was the noble Earl was asking them to assent to. But what was the justification of the Bill? The Bill was not necessary as a police regulation, because Cornwall was exceptionally sober on Sundays—that was to say, out of doors. Whether it was sober indoors was another matter, upon which he would have something to say presently; but the number of convictions for intoxication on Sunday was almost ludicrously small, and was greatly to the credit of Cornwall. There was one conviction in every fortnight—about 28 in the year—and the number of persons convicted was about one out of 12,000. Therefore, on the ground of decency and order, there was not the least necessity for the proposed measure. Who, then, asked for it? Was it those who did not drink themselves, and who wished to make the rest of mankind as good as they were? If so, he thought it a great piece of impertinence that a man should come forward and say,

“You are not as good as I am; I am above all temptation. I do not want to drink, and, therefore, I desire that you shall not drink at all, for fear you should fall into temptation.” Was the Bill, on the other hand, to be passed for the sake of those who drank too much? If so, here was a man who said, “I cannot resist temptation; therefore, shut up the public-houses on a Sunday. Not only prohibit my going into them, but also prevent all the sober people in Cornwall from doing so.” Surely that was an unreasonable proposal. Supposing an Inspector was to enter their Lordships' houses every Saturday night as the clock struck 12, and to demand the key of the cellar, not because he thought their Lordships were going to drink more than was good for them on Sunday, but because there was one man in 10,000 in the district who might take too much—that would be intolerable, would it not? The present Bill was promoted either by the sober, who wished to make other people as good and sober as themselves, and to put an end to what might be called reasonable drinking—such as was necessary for the health and enjoyment of those who were accustomed to it—or it might be promoted by the drunkards, who, having no restraint over themselves, wished the law to step in and help their weakness. In other words, they wished others to be restrained because they could not restrain themselves. It was said that Cornwall petitioned for the Bill. One could very well understand how Petitions were got up. A man went to another, and said, “Will you sign this Petition?” It was always pleasanter to say “Yes,” than “No,” and so the person asked signed the Petition, thinking he would never hear about the matter again. If these Petitions were of the value attached to them, what on earth was the need for this Bill? Cornwall would shut up the public-houses of itself. Why, instead of petitioning, did not the people of Cornwall refrain from going to the public-houses, and then they would very soon shut up. But what was the meaning of limiting this Bill, if it were, as was said, a good Bill, to Cornwall? Certainly Cornwall was a very isolated district, and on that account perhaps the easier dealt with. On two sides it was surrounded by the sea; but on a large part of the third there was no natural division

between it and Devonshire. Depend upon it, if people wanted drink on the Sunday they would get it, very likely by violating the law, or else by making provision for it on the previous Saturday. Whenever there was an article which one man wanted to sell, and another man to buy, they might be sure that business would be done between those two men. It was inevitable, then, that, despite all interference and restrictions, drinking would take place upon Sunday. That being so, their object should be to take care that it should be done in as decent a manner as possible. That would be better provided for by allowing the drinking to take place in the public-house under the supervision of the licensed victualler, who was responsible for the good order of his establishment, rather than in the house of the drinker, where there was not anything calculated to impose restraint upon him. There would be less drunkenness and less sottishness than if done quietly in the house of the drinker. Short time as he had been a Member of their Lordships' House, he had had to say this several times—that they were creating a new offence—an offence with which men's conscience did not go. When they made a law against stabbing, or stealing, people knew that it was wrong to stab or steal, and they had a disposition to obey the law. But when they made a law which said that a decent, well-conducted man should not do what he had been doing all his life, they made a law which would be disobeyed, and they created one of those offences with which the public conscience did not go. They would have the law broken—a thing bad in itself; because as soon as a man began to break one law he was on the high road to breaking another. They would have the publican desirous to sell, another man desirous to buy, and a regular force of spies, informers, and perjurers springing up in consequence. Therefore, let them not put this temptation in the way of the people. Why was this restriction to apply to Sunday? He desired Sunday always to be decently and decorously observed. But why restrain a man from doing on Sunday that which was not wrong in itself? If wrong in itself, why prohibit it on that particular day only? Why prohibit it in Cornwall? People from other places occasionally went there. Why should they be placed under those unreasonable

restrictions. He had already referred to the proximity of Cornwall to Devonshire, and had no doubt if this Bill should pass that Devonshire folks would have a considerable number of visits from their Cornish neighbours. It was for those who proposed to pass this Bill to show why a trade which was lawful in itself, and which would continue lawful the other six days of the week, ought to be stopped. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

LORD ABERDARE, in supporting the Motion for the second reading, said, that there was no question which affected the morality of the people of this country more than this drink question. It was universally admitted that drunkenness was the great national sin and the source of more crime than any other cause. Over and over again inquiries had been made into the subject, the last by a Committee of their Lordships' House; and it might be taken as the unanimous opinion of that Committee that any large measure dealing with the whole subject of drink was, in the present state of public opinion, impossible. In that Report there was an expression of regret that Liverpool was not allowed to try its free-trade system, and Birmingham the Gottenburgh system. They reported in favour of some further restrictions; and while strongly opposed to local option, the general suggestion of the Committee was that important localities, such as Birmingham, should be allowed to grapple with the evil. Now there existed in Cornwall a very strong desire to take one step for the suppression of drunkenness. It was quite true that the convictions for drunkenness in Cornwall were not numerous; but convictions were not the measure of the actual amount of drinking, but of the actual amount of drinking with disorderly conduct. His noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) objected to any interference with a lawful trade. That argument might be carried too far. Was not the trade of the draper lawful? And yet they did not allow the draper to carry on his trade on Sunday. Why? Because it would violate the public con-

science. But if drinking on Sunday violated the conscience of the people of Cornwall, why not allow a restriction to be placed upon it? He could very well understand why the people of Cornwall, as well as the Welsh, Scotch, and Irish people, should have expressed a strong opinion on this subject. Public opinion had been shown to be in favour of such restrictions; and he could see no reason why, having granted those restrictions in England, Scotland, and Wales, this Bill should not be passed. He was compelled to admit, however, that the experiment tried in Wales was not so successful as he could have wished it to be. In those parts of Wales which were of the same character as Cornwall success had been complete; but when they came to the large towns there was no doubt that there had been a failure to some extent, and especially was that the case in Cardiff and Swansea. There was great difficulty in determining who was a *bona fide* traveller; and every Sunday evening drunken sailors, coming back to Swansea after spending the day at the Mumbles, chanted a refrain of a song, "We are all *bona fides*." The formation of sham clubs and illicit drinking had largely contributed to that failure. This was a matter in regard to which it seemed to him that the Cornish people had a right to be heard, and he hoped their Lordships would agree to the second reading of the Bill.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE remarked that the argument of the noble and learned Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill would have been practical some years ago before this system of legislation had been entered upon. It was now impossible to argue simply on general and broad grounds, because the very kind of legislation now asked for had been granted to Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Rightly or wrongly, this was a matter which was exercising the minds of a very large number of people, and if they wanted an enthusiastic unanimous meeting, they had only to advertise one for the promotion of Sunday closing. It was stated by the noble Earl who moved the second reading of the Bill that this was a question which affected the poorer classes; and there could be no doubt that the opinion of an enormous majority of the poorer people of the country was in favour of the action which their Lordships were asked to

take. It was, however, in his opinion, very unfortunate that they should have this kind of piecemeal legislation. If they were to have it, Cornwall was, perhaps, the best county in which to try the experiment; it stood by itself, and was much cut off from the rest of England. There were counties very differently situated—for example, Lancashire. There was, perhaps, as much beer and spirits consumed in Lancashire in a week as there was in Cornwall in a century. Now, Lancashire projected into his diocese, between Cumberland and Westmoreland, in such a way that if Lancashire passed a Sunday Closing Bill, and Lancashire people went into the other two counties to drink, the position would be intolerable; it would be like throwing weeds into your neighbour's garden. For such reasons he objected to county legislation. But what was the alternative? Were they to reject the Bill altogether on the grounds on which they were asked to reject it? He could not make up his mind to that alternative; he would not assist to overthrow the Bill. He was quite certain it would grieve the hearts of many most earnest persons, who were working for a great object, if it were rejected; and, therefore, with a simple but strong protest against county legislation, he should support the second reading of the Bill.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, that he naturally took a great interest in the subject, and he had a personal interest in Cornwall. The arguments advanced that night had been characterized by practical strength on one side and by theoretical strength on the other; but the practical arguments were overwhelming, while the theoretical arguments, notwithstanding the sound eloquence of the noble and learned Lord, were practically broken down on every side. The argument against restricting the trade on one day of the week was only a sound in the air. It rested with the advocates of intemperance to show that one trade should be exempted from restrictions which applied to all others. The question was not one of Imperial policy at all; it was one of police regulation, and nothing more. Everywhere they had Licensing Boards; all that was asked was that certain instructions should be given to those in Cornwall. At present they could issue licences for six days a-week, and what was asked was

that in this district they should issue them only for six days a week. Enough stress had not been laid upon the reality of the unanimity which prevailed among the Cornish people upon this subject. That unanimity was not represented by any forged Petitions he could assure their Lordships. He was in the county when the subject was being discussed, and he saw a good deal of the people who took part in the discussion. He was at the time of opinion that it might be well to open public-houses in the middle of the day, and again in the evening, for the supply of family beer. At a crowded town meeting at which he was present a gentleman supported this view in an excellent and argumentative speech; but only four hands were held up in favour of it, and the rest of the meeting unanimously supported the view that the public-houses should be entirely closed. This was only one instance out of many that might be adduced. No doubt county legislation was imperfect legislation; but the advocates of more general legislation were bound to accept what they could get when such acceptance was called for by the real demand of the whole county concerned. It was the wish of the people of a certain group of licensing districts that their licences should be issued in a particular way, and he thought that the request ought to be granted.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY desired to say a few words upon this question, both on account of the general interest he took in it, and the connection which he had with the county of Cornwall. At the outset he might say that he differed with some remarks which had been made as to what was thought just objection to the Bill. Whilst he supported this measure, he admitted that the objections which had been urged by the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Carlisle) might be urged against all legislation of this kind—namely, that it was piecemeal. He certainly was not more enamoured, as a rule, of that kind of legislation than was the right rev. Prelate; but he thought that this was a case for such legislation; for all those who had looked carefully into the subject were aware that, unless they proceeded with piecemeal legislation in dealing with the closing of public-houses on Sunday, practically they could not proceed at all. He did not believe that anyone who had

studied the subject would be prepared to suggest that all the public-houses should be closed in London. This was a very great exception to make, and showed how necessary it was to deal with the question by piecemeal legislation unless they wished to stop all legislation on the subject. It was to him a sufficient excuse for this proceeding. The first question which naturally raised itself was whether there was such a strong feeling in the county of Cornwall in favour of this legislation as that represented by the most rev. Primate. Of this there could be no doubt, and it should have no inconsiderable weight in their dealing with this matter. He had satisfied himself that the feeling was not expressed merely by Petitions, which could be got up with the greatest ease, but by a strong and genuine feeling throughout the county. It was shared in by all classes, and everyone practically was desirous of legislation of this kind. He could see no reason why the House should reject the Bill. As the House was aware, an extraordinarily strong feeling existed throughout the county on this temperance question. Indeed, a stronger feeling prevailed with regard to it amongst the working classes than existed upon any other subject. He did not share many of the opinions held by the extreme advocates of temperance; but he asked their Lordships not to lose sight of the fact that every day the feeling was growing, and that they could not afford to neglect it, or to treat it with disdain. He quite agreed that they could not go the full length many conscientious men would have them go; but when they had a measure with such a strong desire in its favour they should give heed to the wishes of the population. There was this strong argument in favour of the proposal. The Sunday closing of public-houses had already been given to some parts of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] He could assure noble Lords that this was a subject worthy of discussion. It was all very well to cry "Divide!" but the matter was not one to be treated lightly because the dinner hour had arrived. On the grounds that there was precedent, that the measure was desired by the county affected, and that there was a general desire in the country for such legislation, he hoped their Lordships would read the Bill a second time.

On Question, "That ('now') stand part of the Motion?"

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 39; Not-Contents 57: Majority 18.

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Morley, E.	Norton, L.
Morton, E.	Ormathwaite, L.
Mount Edgcumbe, E. [<i>Teller.</i>]	Ramsay, L. (<i>E. Dalhousie.</i>)
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Ashburnham, E.	Kintore, L. (<i>E. Kintore.</i>)
Beauchamp, E.	Leigh, L. [<i>Teller.</i>]
Bradford, E.	Loftus, L. (<i>M. Ely.</i>)
Brooke and Warwick, E.	Lovel and Holland, L. (<i>E. Egmont.</i>)
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Castletown, L.	

Resolved in the negative.

Bill to be read 2^a *this day six months.*

GREAT SEAL BILL.—(No. 83.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

EARL CAIRNS said, that the real question raised was whether the Office of Lord Privy Seal was to be abolished or not. It was an important question, which had been brought forward in his recollection four or five times in the other House. The Bill did not directly propose to abolish the Office; but it seemed to be a surreptitious way of effecting that purpose, as it would leave nothing for the Lord Privy Seal to do. The Bill, in fact, did not tell a true story.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, the Bill proposed simply to take away from the officer called the Lord Privy Seal the few nominal duties which he had now to discharge. That officer did not exercise any efficient control over the Instruments which had to pass the Great Seal, for which, in some instances, the Lord Chancellor, in others the Home Secretary or other Secretary of State, or the Treasury were responsible. This Act contemplated that the persons who had the real responsibility should obtain the Royal Warrant, and that the Royal Warrant should then pass directly through the Office of the Lord Chancellor. The formal duties now discharged by the Lord Privy Seal only served to add to the expense in the case of those Instruments. The Bill did not propose to abolish the Office; but no salary would henceforth be attached to it. In fact, no salary had for the last two or three years been asked for it. He did not anticipate that the Office would long survive.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that the matter was not of such trivial importance as the noble and learned Earl seemed to attach to it. It was a matter which affected the most important body of men in the country—namely, the Cabinet, of which the Lord Privy Seal was, from time immemorial, a Member. It ought carefully to be considered whether the Bill was sweeping away a mere administrative cobweb, or making an important change.

House in Committee (according to order); Amendments made: the Report thereof to be received on *Thursday* next.

NEWCASTLE CHAPTER BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to make provision for the foundation of a Dean and Chapter for the Bishopric of Newcastle; and for the transfer to the Cathedral Church of Newcastle of one of the canonries in the Cathedral Church of Durham; and for the transfer of certain ecclesiastical patronage to the Bishopric and Chapter of Newcastle; and for other purposes connected therewith—*Was presented by The Lord Bishop of DURHAM; read 1st. (No. 130.)*

House adjourned at Eight o'clock,
to Thursday next, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 17th June, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES—SUPPLY—considered in Committee—*Resolution [June 16] reported.*

PRIVATE BILLS (by Order)—Considered as amended—North Metropolitan Tramways*; South Eastern Metropolitan (Lewisham, Greenwich, and District Tramways).*

PUBLIC BILLS—Standing Committee on Law, &c.—Report—Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices)* [No. 220] [3-252].

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) (City and County of Bristol, and others)* [239]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) (Bournemouth and others)* [240]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) (Accrington and others)* [241]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) (Borough of Aberavon and others)* [242]; Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 14) (Dawlish and Kenton)* [243]; Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 15) Saint Luke (Middlesex)* [246]; Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment [231], debate adjourned.

Committee—Representation of the People [119] (New Clauses) [Tenth Night]—R.P.

Report—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Districts of Dorking and Hendon, &c.)* [190]; Tramways Provisional Orders (Birmingham and Aston Tramways, &c.)* [180]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Barrow-in-Furness Tramways and others)* [194].

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE ANNUITY AND INSURANCE—THE TABLES.

MR. RANKIN asked the Postmaster General, If in the New Annuity Tables shortly to be issued by the Post Office Department, he will frame a simple and easily understood Table, by which persons of either sex may, by annual payments made between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, purchase an annuity of ten pounds payable on and after sixty years of age; and also, if he consents to do this, whether he will direct such Table to be placed in a conspicuous position at every post office?

MR. FAWCETT: The new Post Office Annuity and Insurance Tables were issued a fortnight ago, and they can now be seen or purchased at any post office where there is a savings bank. The Department has been most anxious to make the scheme as simple and as intelligible as possible. Annuities can be purchased by any person of five years of age and upwards for any amount not less than £1, or any multiple of £1 up to £100, the annuity to commence at 60 or an earlier age. The Tables are prepared so as to show at a glance the cost of an annuity of £1 to commence at any age within the prescribed limits. It will simply be necessary to multiply the premium for £1 by the number of pounds. It is intended that the scheme should be made known as far as possible through the issue of notices containing simple examples; but I fear, if the particular suggestion of the hon. Member were carried out, of giving examples confined to the ages of 18 to 25, it might produce an impression that these were the only ages allowed. If, however, the hon. Member will communicate with me I shall be very glad to discuss the subject with him.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE REV. JOHN BRIEN FRITH (CO. FERMANAGH).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Rev. John Brien Frith, a J.P. for the county of Fermanagh, is the same person as the Rev. J. B. Frith, who was condemned by Mr. Justice Lawson for committing a fraud upon

the Commissioners of Church Temporalities in Ireland, whilst rector of a parish in the neighbourhood of Dundalk, by procuring an incumbent of an adjacent parish to appoint him a sham curate, he giving the said incumbent a similar sham appointment; and, whether, if they are the same person, the Rev. J. B. Frith will be retained in the Commission of the Peace?

MR. TREVELYAN: There is no information in the possession of the Government to warrant the statement that Mr. Frith was condemned for fraud. He claimed an annuity as Incumbent of Camlough, and also as Curate of Meigh in the same diocese. Mr. Justice Lawson allowed his claim as incumbent and disallowed the claim as curate. Mr. Frith did not appeal against this decision. Another case which appears to have been intimately connected with this ended differently. The clergyman who was Incumbent of Meigh claimed in that capacity and also as Curate of Camlough. In his case also the claim in respect of the curacy was disallowed by Mr. Justice Lawson; but he appealed to the three Commissioners, and in the result the claim was allowed.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL OF CONSTABLE SHUDALL FROM CORBETSTOWN POLICE STATION TO THE UNION FEVER HOSPITAL.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Sergeant Thompson, who, in April last, was in charge of the Corbetstown (county Kilkenny) Police Station, reported that a constable named Shudall, quartered at that station, who had been attacked by fever, had been removed to the Union Fever Hospital in a "nuisance car," or a "dung car;" whether, in consequence, a personal inquiry was made at the Workhouse by Sergeant Thompson's superior officer, Head Constable Burke, and it was established that, as the owners of public conveyances had refused to allow the use of any of them for the removal of a person suffering from a contagious disease, the master of the Workhouse, by direction of the medical officer, provided for the constable the conveyance specially procured for such cases by the guardians, and had the constable removed under the care of

a qualified nurse, and with all practicable comfort; whether the guardians of the Union, by unanimous resolution, adopted on the 3rd instant, characterized the report of Sergeant Thompson as calculated to impeach the administration of the affairs of the Union, and to affect, injuriously, the character of the officials, and whether the guardians unanimously called for a copy of the report; and, whether copies of the report, and all other reports, statements, or decisions in regard to it by other officers of the Constabulary Force, will be laid upon the Table?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sergeant Thompson did complain to his officer that one of his men, who was suffering from fever, was removed to hospital on an open cart, which he believed was a nuisance cart. Inquiry showed that he was wrong in this opinion, the vehicle being an open cart used by the Union for the removal of patients. The Sergeant made no complaint against any person. The Board of Guardians asked the Inspector General for a copy of the Report. The Inspector General could not comply with this request, but informed the Guardians that the Sergeant had made some statements in ignorance of the facts, to which his attention had been drawn, with the view of his being more cautious in future. I cannot undertake to lay copies of the Report, &c. on the Table. There would be a manifest objection to the production of communications made by members of the Police Force to their own officers.

THE LUNACY COMMISSIONERS—"THE BASTILLES OF ENGLAND."

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been drawn to a recent publication entitled *The Bastilles of England*, in which grave charges are made against certain Lunacy Commissioners; and, if so, whether any steps will be taken to inquire into the truth of the said charges, or whether there is any foundation for them?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I know nothing of the publication in question; but I would point out to the hon. Baronet that any complaint made against the Lunacy Commissioners should be addressed to the Lord Chancellor, who is the authority in such matters.

Mr. Sexton

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—
RUMOURED FALL OF BERBER.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Ministers have received confirmation of the account of the storming of Berber, sent by the Correspondent of *The Times* at Korosko, on 13th June, in which "an Arab, present at the attack on 23rd May," states that "the defenders bravely fought for two hours, and then, their ammunition being exhausted, the rebels 'rushed' the town, and slaughtered the garrison of 1,500 men and about 2,000 of the male population, sparing the women and children;" why the reinforcements and ammunition for which the Governor prayed on 20th April, and which Nubar Pacha advised should be given to him, were not sent; whether the fall of Berber will affect the security of Dongola; whether it is a fact, as stated by the Correspondent of *The Times*, that "the Mahdi's forces are within eight days' march of Dongola or Korosko," and that there are "only 300 Egyptian troops at Dongola and 300 at Korosko, with Major Kitchen's Bedouins of doubtful fidelity; whether there is "nothing to prevent the Mahdi from sweeping down on any position in Egypt within twelve hours of Cairo;" and, whether his attention has been called to the further statements, that "opinions are unanimous that Dongola should be defended at all hazards," and that "the advance of British troops is necessary, as the majority of the population freely state that they will wait to see which side is stronger before declaring themselves?"

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The details alluded to by the hon. Member in the first paragraph of his Question have not reached the Foreign Office. The reinforcements asked for by the Governor of Berber were not sent, because, after consultation between the civil and military authorities, it appeared that, considering the season of the year and other circumstances, it was impracticable to comply with his request. The third paragraph of the hon. Member's Question is a matter of opinion. I am not in a position to state whether the Mahdi's forces are eight days' march from Dongola or Korosko; but I may point out that about 350 miles intervene

between those two places. A telegram of May 30 announced that it was the intention of the Egyptian Government to raise the garrison of Korosko to a full battalion, and to send to Assouan another battalion and two or three squadrons of Egyptian Cavalry. I cannot state the exact number of men at Dongola. The fifth and sixth paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question are matters of opinion.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Will the noble Lord state what were the views of the military authorities in this country on the refusal to send the reinforcements and ammunition asked for by the Governor of Berber?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not think it is at all desirable that I should, from day to day, be called upon to enter into these purely military questions; and I wish to inform the hon. Baronet that military Questions ought not to be addressed to the Foreign Office.

MR. J. LOWTHER: It may have been right or not for the noble Lord to state what he did; but the noble Lord did state that there had been consultations between the civil and military authorities. To whom was he alluding?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That is not the same Question as that asked by the hon. Member for Wigtonshire, and I have no objection to answering it. I alluded to the military authorities in Egypt.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE: I wish to ask, whether, in view of the fact that on April 23 Hussein Khalifa said that—"If Berber falls there will be no hope for the Soudan;" and, also, in view of the fact that Sir Evelyn Baring, on April 20, stated that the fall of Berber would seriously affect Gordon's position, any steps, and what steps, have been taken to protect General Gordon from the consequences therein anticipated?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Evidently that is a Question which ought to be put on the Paper; but I do not see how, under any circumstances, I, or anybody else, can be expected to know what Hussein Khalifa said to somebody else.

SIR WALTER B. BARTHELOT: On April 23 the Governor of Berber telegraphed—

"We are in great danger, and have only sixty cases of ammunition. Send ammunition

quickly, and also troops which I asked for yesterday."

Are we to understand that the noble Lord's answer is that the authorities decided that it would be unwise and imprudent to send troops for the relief of Berber?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That is exactly what I stated, and I have nothing to add.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: And, therefore, Berber has been allowed to fall.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE: The noble Lord says the Government are not supposed to know what Hussein Khalifa has said. Are they supposed to know what Sir Evelyn Baring said? My Question was founded on what Sir Evelyn Baring said, that the fall of Berber would seriously affect the position of General Gordon.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: With regard to the reply of the noble Lord to paragraphs 2 and 3 of my Question, I beg to ask him, whether he will recall the telegram from Mr. Egerton to Lord Granville, dated April 23, in which he said that Nubar Pasha's opinion was that, considering the pressing demands of the Governor, the two Egyptian battalions at Assouan should be sent on at once to Berber; and, further, whether he is aware that the Prime Minister informed the House that the fall of Berber would not affect the position of Khartoum?

MR. GLADSTONE: I must protest against this practice of the hon. Member. He is constantly making grossly inaccurate statements, which he coolly ascribes to me. I never used the words he has uttered. I must say that unless the hon. Gentleman entirely changes his habit no attention ought to be paid to him.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Out of respect to the Prime Minister I am justified in challenging him to give me a single instance in which I have quoted him inaccurately.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir. [*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: I am bound to say this sort of irregular debate is entirely out of Order. If the hon. Member will put his statement in the form of a Question, he will be in Order.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I will repeat the Question now, giving the *ipsissima verba* of the Prime Minister,

which he says I quoted grossly inaccurately. On the 24th of April the right hon. Gentleman was asked by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) whether if Berber fell the position of Gordon would not then become a position of peril? The right hon. Gentleman replied—

"We believe, according to all the information we possess, that there will be no essential change in the position of Khartoum in consequence of the fall of Berber."

I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, after that, he really considers he was justified in accusing me of misquoting him?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir, I do; both to-day and every day.

MR. J. LOWTHER: On what does the right hon. Gentleman base that accusation?

[No reply.]

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT).

MR. HOULDSWORTH asked the Postmaster General, Whether all communication of telegraphic news supplied to clubs at "Press rates" to persons not members of such clubs is treated by the Department as an abuse of the privilege, or if it is only when such news is communicated by means of private telephones that it is so treated?

MR. FAWCETT: News is supplied at Press rates to clubs registered at the General Post Office, on condition that such news is used solely for exhibition in the club-rooms. The systematic communication of such news to persons other than members of the club, whether the communication be by telephone or otherwise, is held by the Department to be an abuse of the privilege.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—SUAKIN AND NILE RAILWAY.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government contemplate the construction of a Railway between Suakin and the Nile?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that it has been the duty of the Government to consider very carefully all questions relating to the probability of sending an expedition southward in Egypt; and, among others, the question as to whe-

Sir Walter B. Barttelot

ther it would be expedient to construct a railway between Suakin and the Nile, and all other particulars relating to the construction of that railway. Further than that I do not think it would be for the public interest to say.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 119.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 13th June.*]

[TENTH NIGHT.]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

New Clauses.

EARL PERCY, in rising to move the following clause :—

(Persons serving in sea or land forces of Her Majesty.)

“Any man serving in Her Majesty’s sea or land forces, and occupying separate quarters in any building belonging to or being occupied on behalf of the Crown, shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act and of the Representation of the People Acts to be an inhabitant occupier of such building as a tenant,”

said, he was sorry to have to raise this point again; but, with due deference to the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, he found that considerable doubt prevailed on the part of his hon. Friends upon that side of the House whether the provision he sought to include in the Bill was already included in it or not, and he thought it was desirable that the doubt should be cleared up. No one in that House would dispute that the class included in his Amendment was fully entitled to enjoy the franchise. It included seamen and others, who, although of the same class as those who enjoyed the franchise, were at present deprived of their rights. He believed that in some cases Marines, and in other cases seamen, did enjoy the franchise; but those classes did not enjoy it generally, and would not be enfranchised unless a clause of this nature were inserted in the Bill. What he wished to learn from the Government was, whether the term “dwelling-house” included a separate room or rooms in which a non-commissioned

officer or an officer lived in barracks? Of course, there was this very great difficulty—that they were constantly moving about entirely without any fault of their own, and were thus deprived of the franchise. That was a difficulty which he confessed he did not see the possibility of remedying; but it was extremely hard, where a regiment was quartered for a long time in the same town, and where non-commissioned officers had separate dwellings, that they should enjoy the franchise, while those non-commissioned officers who had rooms in barracks were deprived of the vote. If there was any doubt about the matter he thought it ought to be made clear. He did not understand that there was any objection to the principle of the clause, and he was quite willing to qualify the words in any way that would gain the object in view. He put it earnestly to the Government whether they would not consent to the clause or introduce one of their own?

New Clause (Persons serving in sea or land forces of Her Majesty.)—(*Earl Percy,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Clause be now read a second time.”

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that before the Attorney General addressed the Committee he should like to put a question upon this matter, because it was understood the last time the subject was brought before the Committee the Attorney General said that it was met by provisions already in the Bill in Clause 9, page 6, line 30. He wanted it made perfectly clear whether or not separate quarters such as those referred to in the Amendment of his noble Friend really, as a matter of fact, came within the term of a dwelling-house. He was not at all prepared to say that they did. He took it for granted, from what had fallen from the Attorney General, that it was the intention of the Government to allow persons in this position to vote, and if that were so it ought to be made perfectly clear by the insertion of distinct words. He confessed that considerable doubt existed in his own mind; but he had no doubt that some of his hon. and learned Friends would address the Committee before the debate closed, and settle the doubt whether, as a

[Tenth Night.]

matter of fact, a non-commissioned officer occupying separate quarters would be entitled to vote or not. It was quite clear that the words of the clause—namely, “separate quarters in any building” that might be held by a man serving in Her Majesty’s sea and land forces, would come within the terms of a dwelling-house in Clause 9.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he hoped that the case of these non-commissioned officers and men would be seriously considered by Her Majesty’s Government; because he thought it would not be denied that they were very capable citizens, and certainly deserved to have a vote if a vote could possibly be given to them. There were few officers and non-commissioned officers who occupied the same quarters for more than a year, and it was owing to their being moved about; but in the case of the Marines and permanent sergeants and others, the same quarters were occupied for a considerable time, and he had no doubt in the world that the persons by whom they were occupied were entitled to have a vote. He, therefore, desired to have it clearly laid down whether an officer, living in a barrack-room entirely to himself, was not entitled to have a vote; and also whether a married sergeant or a married private, who had an independent room or rooms, was not equally entitled, supposing he occupied such rooms for a sufficient length of time to give him the right to a vote? He had received many letters on the subject from persons whom he certainly thought were left out in the cold. The Government were now going to enfranchise 2,000,000 of men; and certainly a class of men like those, who rendered valuable service to the country, deserved serious consideration at the hands of the Government.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) said, he hoped that, when the matter was fully understood, the noble Lord would not feel justified in pressing his new clause, because he thought the Committee would see that it was impossible for the Government to accept it. They were all agreed as to the object of it, and they were willing that officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers should be in the same position as all the rest of Her Majesty’s subjects. But it could not be claimed that officers and non-commissioned officers

should have greater advantages and more rights than other people, and the Government did not want them to have less. The only reason why they had not previously had a right to vote was that rating was essential, and Crown property was not rated. They had now got rid of that difficulty by inserting in the 9th clause, on page 6, line 30, the following words:—

“In any part of the United Kingdom, where a man inhabits a dwelling-house in respect of which no person is rated by reason of such dwelling-house belonging to or being occupied on behalf of the Crown, or by reason of any other ground of exemption, such person shall not be disentitled to be registered as a voter, &c.”

Thus, although Crown property was not actually rated, it would be treated for this purpose as if it were; and, therefore, there would be no disqualification, either against the person or in respect of the building. If the matter were left as it was, men in Her Majesty’s Service, under the general law, would be in the same position as ordinary civilians. But if they went further by accepting the present Amendment, soldiers and sailors would have certain privileges extended to them, and would be put in a different and better position than the rest of the community, which the Government did not desire to do. The Amendment of the noble Lord said—

“Any man serving in Her Majesty’s sea and land forces, and occupying separate quarters in any building belonging to or being occupied on behalf of the Crown, shall be deemed, for the purposes of this Act and of the Representation of the People Acts, to be an inhabitant occupier of such building as a tenant.”

The noble Lord asked for a definition of the term “dwelling-house;” but his (the Attorney General’s) reply was that he could not give a definition. But, although there was no exact definition of the term “dwelling-house,” the term “separate quarters” was absolutely unknown. Did it cover the case of an officer and servant, the latter of whom, having a separate bed-room, would have separate quarters in that sense? If so, the clause would give a vote to every man in that position, as well as to the officer. But he did not apprehend that the noble Lord wished to give to men in Her Majesty’s Service greater privileges than were given to ordinary civilians. If the clause meant more the Government ob-

jected to it, and if it meant less the noble Lord did not want it. He contended that the case was provided for under the Bill already, and that it would be unsafe to give a specific definition to the term "dwelling-house." It had been held by some persons to mean any place where men might dwell; but it had been differently construed under different circumstances. Not only might it be a separate building, but it might be part of a building. In the Representation of the People Act of 1867, it was laid down that the term "dwelling-house" should include any part of a house where that part was separately occupied. A barrack-room would probably come within that definition, if the occupant had separate control, and in that case he would be entitled to vote. A non-commissioned officer might have, for the purposes of his family, part of a common building apportioned to him, into which no one else would have a right to enter as against his occupation. If he had separate control over it, so that it could not be commonly occupied by any other person, it would be part of a dwelling-house, qualifying the occupant for a vote, and it would be much safer to leave the matter in that condition than to accept the term "separate quarters," which might mean, in military phraseology, a man occupying a bed-room or one room. As a matter of fact, he did not know what it meant, and he thought it would be most unwise to accept the term "separate quarters" in the Amendment of the noble Lord. It would be far better to leave soldiers and sailors in the same position as civilians, which was really the intention of the Government.

MR. GIBSON said, the Attorney General had spoken with great clearness and fairness upon the matter; and he could not help thinking that the question itself was involved in considerable doubt. He wished that the attention of the Committee had been drawn to it when the original clause was in Committee. It now appeared that if their attention had been drawn to the particular paragraph of the Bill on which the Attorney General relied, with reference to this point, it might have been discussed with advantage, instead of coming upon the Committee now by surprise. It now appeared, according to the statement of the Attorney Gene-

ral, that that clause was framed with the very intention of including the classes aimed at in the Amendment of his noble Friend. Of course, he accepted at once the statement of the Attorney General that the clause was drafted with the intention of including the soldiers and sailors who were included in the Amendment of his noble Friend; but the question was whether the drafting of the Government in that particular paragraph was so clear that they could with safety leave the matter there without seeking, by a supplementary clause or by some Amendment on the Report, to make the matter more clear? This was obviously a most important and interesting question, and it might affect a considerable number of Her Majesty's subjects. Whether the number was large or small, Her Majesty's Government, when they framed the clause for the purpose of including soldiers and sailors, must have made some estimate as to how many were likely to be affected by it. They must have known how many soldiers and sailors would be likely to occupy this class of building, and, as they framed the clause with the express intention of including them, they must have formed some estimate of the number. He should be glad to know what that estimate was. He had read the paragraph in Clause 9 referred to by the Attorney General, and he would at once admit that it did take away the necessity for the rates being paid, and the house being rated. That difficulty was removed, and in future no man occupying Government property could be prevented from placing himself on the Register in consequence of the property not being rated. He thought his hon. Friend behind him had indicated a point in which greater clearness was desirable, and that was whether the words "dwelling-house" were sufficiently full and elastic to include barracks and quarters in the occupation of soldiers and sailors. It was not clear that that was so, and the matter would be left in great doubt if it were allowed to stand as it did. He granted that the Attorney General had pointed out that the term "separate quarters" was open to criticism, and that it was a term that had not hitherto found its way into any Reform Act. He admitted that it was a term that had not hitherto been explained or used; but he thought, also,

that the term "dwelling-house" was not a satisfactory term under which to include so many different classes as those which were intended to be grasped in the paragraph relied upon by the Attorney General. On the whole, he was disposed to think that the wisest course to take would be this. If his noble Friend, after having listened to the discussion, could see his way to the framing of an Amendment to this particular clause which would meet the objection of the Attorney General, it would be desirable to do so; and, if not, then it would be better to withdraw the clause, and consider the whole matter on the Report. The sole object was to prevent soldiers and sailors who occupied separate quarters, in the way indicated in the clause, from being disfranchised in the event of the Revising Barrister deciding that such separate barracks or quarters were not covered by the term "dwelling-house."

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, it seemed to him, although there might be a vagueness in the proposal of his noble Friend, that it was absolutely necessary there should be a distinct statement in the Bill that soldiers, sailors, and the Royal Marines would be entitled to have the franchise in respect of premises for which they would, undoubtedly, have a vote if they were civilians. There were many Royal Marines and men of the Royal Marine Artillery who lived at Portsmouth, and he was afraid it would be only those who lived in a separate tenement who would have the franchise conferred upon them. He trusted that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would give some assurance upon the point, in order to encourage the noble Lord to frame an Amendment that would settle the question.

MR. CAUSTON asked if it would be the fact that, in the event of a regiment being stationed in a garrison town for a sufficient length of time, the whole of the regiment would be placed, under this clause, upon the Register of Voters? He would ask this question in order that the matter might be clearly explained. Was it the intention of the clause to enfranchise whole regiments? A considerable amount of ignorance appeared to prevail upon the question; but he imagined that, under the clause as it stood, an entire regiment would be

enfranchised, provided that it had been quartered in a borough for two years.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT suggested that the words "or public building" should be added to Clause 9, after the word "dwelling-house." He thought that would meet the difficulty.

MR. WARTON wished to remind the Committee that at a quarter to 7 on Friday afternoon, five minutes before the debate on the Bill must necessarily have ceased, the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill requested the noble Lord not to bring forward this Amendment. He thought that if the noble Lord had acceded to the request he would have established a very bad precedent indeed; and it was undignified on the part of the Government to endeavour to hurry through an important measure of this kind in that manner. Although he had the highest opinion of the Attorney General, he was not disposed to accept the *ipse dixit* of the hon. and learned Gentleman on all occasions, especially where a matter was doubtful. But although he did not always believe in the learned Attorney General, he always implicitly took the hon. and learned Gentleman's word, and he had no doubt that soldiers and sailors were present in the mind of the Attorney General when the 9th clause was drawn up. It was a great pity, however, that it was not so expressed. If his recollection were accurate, Clause 9 was passed with considerable rapidity, and not a single word was said in regard to the paragraph in line 30 in which the words "dwelling-house" were inserted. Not one word was there about soldiers and sailors, and they were now only left to the opinion of a few hon. Members that soldiers and sailors were intended, although they might not have been expressed. He did not think that that was the proper mode of interpreting the clause, and he should like to have everything clearly done in black and white. What he wanted to call attention to now was the statement of the Attorney General, that he did not wish to treat soldiers and sailors worse than civilians. He was glad to hear that announcement, and for this reason, that soldiers and sailors were not exactly in the same position as civilians. They were ordered on service from one place to another, and very often they only remained in a particular place for a very short time. He would suggest,

therefore, that the Attorney General should make an exception in favour of soldiers and sailors by reducing the time necessary to obtain a voting qualification. At present an officer who had not occupied a separate dwelling for the whole of the year would lose his qualification, and would not be allowed, for instance, to vote for quarters at Windsor because he happened to have been moved to some other place, and it would be necessary for him to occupy his separate quarters for two years or so before he could acquire a qualification. If the Attorney General was sincere in his wish to treat soldiers and sailors with the same justice as civilians he should take these facts into consideration, and bear in mind the actual position in which soldiers and sailors were placed, whether officers or privates. They were not like other people, but were moved about from place, and therefore had not the same opportunities for acquiring a residential qualification. Therefore, the assertion that provision was already made for them was only giving "a promise to the ear, and breaking it to the hope." He would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether some clause might not be introduced allowing a shorter residence for soldiers and sailors in order to give them the voting qualification? They must have a residence somewhere, and a qualification might be given to them by making a residence in barracks for a shorter period all that was necessary.

MR. LEWIS said, he must deny that the idea the Attorney General wished to convey was covered by the paragraph referred to in Clause 9. The provision in Clause 9 was simply to prevent the voter from being disqualified by reason of his not being rated. The qualification was incidental, and the clause certainly did away with any difficulty in regard to the house not being rated. It enabled the Revising Barrister to say that this provision in Clause 9 did away with any difficulty in respect of the non-rating of Government buildings; but it could not be taken to constitute an enfranchisement of any class of persons connected with the Naval or Military Services of Her Majesty. As to the appeal of the hon. Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton) opposite to know whether it would be possible to enfranchise a regiment of soldiers under the clause, he hoped that

the Committee might hear an answer to that question from the Government.

EARL PERCY said, that a great deal more had been imputed to the clause than he had intended. There certainly was no ground for the supposition of the hon. Member for Colchester, that the whole of a regiment as well as the officers were to be enfranchised by this clause. He could assure the Committee that that was not the intention of his Amendment, and he certainly did not understand it to be the object of the Bill. As he had said before, he would be very glad to make any alteration in the phraseology of the clause which the Attorney General might, from a legal point of view, consider necessary. If the words "separate quarters" were not a term known to the law he was ready to defer to any suggestion the Attorney General might make. The hon. and learned Gentleman himself admitted the difficulty of defining what a separate dwelling was, and had told the Committee that in one Act of Parliament the definition of a separate dwelling was that it was a dwelling which no one but the occupier had a legal right to enter. In that sense it would be very difficult to say that there were any separate dwellings in barracks, because officers and others had certainly a right to enter all separate quarters and barracks. He should be glad if the Attorney General would enlighten the Committee upon that point, and also upon the point which had been raised by the hon. Member for Colchester. He was quite ready to withdraw the clause now and bring it up at a later stage if the hon. and learned Gentleman would tell him any words that he was willing to accept.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was of opinion that soldiers forming the mass of a regiment would not come in under the Amendment, because they had no such separate quarters as would entitle them to a vote. They all lived together, and he did not think that any difficulty existed in that direction. As to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) that this legislation was not sufficient because it did not enfranchise a class, all he had to say was that the class was not disfranchised now, and never had been. The reason why they did not vote was simply because they occupied property

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which was not rated, and it required legislation to get rid of the disqualification which affected non-rated property by placing it in the same condition as other property. The noble Lord asked him to get rid of a difficulty created by the clause. The noble Lord thought that part of a barracks might be held to be part of a dwelling-house, and place the persons occupying it in the same condition as the occupants of ordinary dwelling-houses who were entitled to a vote. The object of the Government was to put them in that position; but they did not think in regard to these services that the men connected with them should have any further privileges than those enjoyed by ordinary civilians. If the noble Lord asked him to say what might occur in a particular case where no definition was given he was afraid he could not help him out of that difficulty. All that the Government proposed to do was to give soldiers and sailors equal rights in regard to voting power with civilians, but no greater.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped that the Attorney General would consider the question before the Report. It was quite true that an officer occupying separate quarters would escape the penalty of disqualification in regard to the non-rating part of the question by the 9th clause; but what was really behind the question was whether the officer occupying these quarters according to military law was entitled to be placed upon the Register, seeing that he was an occupant only in one sense and not in another. What the noble Lord said was quite true—military men did not occupy these premises like an ordinary householder—that was to say, that nobody could legally enter them except themselves. They occupied them as the officers of a regiment, subject to certain regulations which gave to other persons the right of going through them. The question was whether that was a qualification in regard to occupation which did not put them in a different category from the ordinary tenant of a dwelling-house. He wanted the question to be made quite clear, so that an officer might not find himself disqualified because the Revising Barrister might not consider the words in the Bill gave a vote to an officer in respect of a dwelling in barracks on the ground that he did not occupy it separately.

The Attorney General

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) wished to point out that the proposed clause must be read in connection with Clause 3, which provided that where a man inhabited a dwelling-house in virtue of any office, service, or employment the vote should not be invalidated. It was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman that as other persons might have a right to enter for a particular purpose it would not be a separate occupation. Now, he was not of that opinion. He did not think that the right to walk into a man's room at certain times for the purpose of inspection or anything else would disqualify a voter. If a right existed on the part of the Crown to enter an officer's room he did not for a moment suppose that that would be a disqualification. What he meant was that there should be separate occupation by separate people, and not a common occupation, and the right of a man to say to any other person—"You cannot come here because I hold dominion over that room." Bank directors might reserve the right to enter their manager's room; but that would not prevent the manager from giving a vote under the service franchise.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that as the hon. and learned Gentleman had promised to give the subject his consideration, he hoped he would not confine that consideration to the very limited portion of the subject with which he had just dealt. The hon. Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton) had thrown out a suggestion that under the clause, as proposed, a whole regiment might find themselves in possession of the franchise. To this the Attorney General replied that the Government had no intention of enfranchising soldiers as a class, but that he simply wished to place those serving Her Majesty in her land and sea forces in the same position as any other subject of the Queen. It did not appear to have occurred to the hon. and learned Gentleman that that might have been a fair argument in the days when the franchise was restricted to persons possessing a considerable stake in the country; but when practically the class from which the whole regiment, to use the expression of the hon. Member for Colchester, was drawn—that was to say, that when the franchise was exercised and enjoyed by the very class of Her Majesty's subjects from which the whole

regiment was drawn—it was perfectly comprehensible that soldiers would, under ordinary circumstances, enjoy their Constitutional rights but for the fact that they were serving Her Majesty. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not appear to recollect that, owing to the exigencies of the Public Service, and under the conditions in which the land and sea forces of Her Majesty were placed, they were precluded from exercising the rights which they undoubtedly would enjoy if it were not for the accident of their being engaged in the service of Her Majesty. In other words, a class of men who, under ordinary circumstances, would enjoy the rights of citizenship, would forfeit those rights from the accident of being engaged in the service of Her Majesty in her land and sea forces. He would not go the length of the hon. Member for Colchester in saying that the entire regiment would be entitled to give their votes in the same way as in France, and, perhaps, in some other countries. He regarded that notion as absurd; but he would suggest to the hon. and learned Gentleman whether, considering the peculiar position occupied by Her Majesty's land and sea forces, he would provide that, as the franchise in England was at present enjoyed, to say nothing of the attempt now being made to introduce a very much larger number of persons upon the Register, that the land and sea forces should not be placed in a position of peculiar disadvantage and disqualification. He did not suppose that those who were responsible for the discipline of the Service would undertake to say that any injury would accrue from soldiers and sailors being permitted, under proper conditions, to exercise their Constitutional rights. He did not suppose that that argument would be advanced before the Committee; but he hoped that the hon. and learned Gentleman would interpret the law in a sense favourable to Her Majesty's land and sea forces, because we ought to bear in mind that when we called upon Her Majesty's subjects to engage in the service of the Crown, we ought, as far as possible, to remove from them every stigma and disqualification which it was in our power to remove. As matters now stood, persons serving in the land and sea forces of the Queen were the only persons the right hon. Gentleman

the Prime Minister did not allow to be capable citizens. He hoped before the Report was brought up that the hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to place a clause upon the Paper which would enable the House to see for themselves how he proposed to meet the difficulty.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he had heard, with great satisfaction, the statement of the hon. and learned Attorney General that he intended to put the land and sea forces on the same footing as civilians with regard to the franchise. He thought it was a very serious matter that that was not already so; and he hoped it really was intended that persons who were serving the country in this way should have the privilege of voting on the same conditions as other people, and that proper provisions would be introduced into the Bill having reference to the conditions of their service. Of course, the question of residence was a very difficult one in the case of this class of voters; and he would suggest that the proper mode of dealing with that incident in the qualification of the land and sea forces would be by substituting an incoming regiment for the one whose place it had taken; so that when a regiment was removed from a barracks, and another regiment placed in it, the officers occupying the place of those removed should be entitled to vote. In that way, an officer, for instance, removed from Windsor would not lose his vote when quartered elsewhere, and *vice versa*—those who were removed to Windsor would also retain their votes. He thought that something in that direction might be devised for getting rid of the difficulty. As the case now stood, a Minister for War, having strong political tendencies, might find that in a particular borough the presence of a regiment of soldiers might have the effect of altering the balance of political Parties in that borough, and he might bring about a sudden removal of the regiment with the sole object of disqualifying the members of the Service from voting. He thought it was a matter of satisfaction that the question had not been disposed of in the hurried manner some hon. Members appeared to have desired on Friday night; and he trusted that some provision would be introduced into the clause to enable members of Her Majesty's forces to

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exercise the right of voting by getting rid of any disqualification which might exist from the nature of the service which they had to perform.

MR. GIBSON said, he was satisfied now, after the last statement of the Attorney General, that the Bill could not be allowed to pass the House without some understanding upon this point. The way in which the matter now stood was this—he had followed the statement of the Attorney General all through, and the hon. and learned Gentlemen said it was not necessary to accept the Amendment proposed by the noble Lord, because it was covered by the paragraph of Clause 9, which had been referred to. In other words, that the separate portion of a house might be regarded, within the meaning of the Act for the Representation of the People, to constitute a dwelling-house, and that the separate quarters occupied in a barracks might be held to be occupied separately by officers and non-commissioned officers. That was the reasoning they were at first following in the reply of the Attorney General to his noble Friend, and to that reasoning he had naturally applied his mind. It was then pointed out, as the discussion went on, that the principle by which they were to be guided with regard to the meaning of a separate dwelling-house was that that separate part of the house was the man's castle if he occupied it, that he had absolute dominion over it, and that no one could enter it without his sanction. The principle laid down, so far as he was able to interpret it, was that the man who occupied separate quarters was practically lord of his own dwelling-house, had full control over it, and that it was, in fact, his castle. But that could not be applied to soldiers and sailors, because they were subject to a certain amount of interference and supervision, and there was a right of ingress on the part of others which civilians were not subject to. In the next place, the hon. and learned Attorney General, in answer to the noble lord who moved the clause, said that, whatever the amount of interference might be, it was covered by a reference to Section 3, which was the service section of the Bill. That introduced an entirely different element. Up to that time the Committee had been led to believe that under Section 9 was to be found the

rights of the soldier. Now they were told it was to be found somewhere or other between Sections 8 and 9. He did not think that that was at all satisfactory. He did not presume to say absolutely that what the Attorney General said in reference to the last paragraph of Clause 9 might not be construed as being its meaning; but he should be sorry to have any right he was relying upon personally so obscure that it had to be eked out by reference to some other section his attention had not previously been drawn to. If the present clause were read a second time he had no doubt that some Amendment could be suggested that would make the meaning clearer, or if the clause was withdrawn, no doubt, on the Report stage, some words might be introduced in connection with the words "barracks and quarters" to show the Revising Barrister that soldiers and sailors were in the express contemplation of the Legislature when the provision was passed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman went far beyond the claim of the noble Lord, who had never claimed to put the position of soldiers and sailors beyond that of the Service Clause. He was bound, therefore, to refer to the Service Clause—the noble Lord having said that the qualification came under Clause 9. He, on the contrary, called attention to the fact that it came under Clause 3. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that he had changed his ground.

MR. GIBSON said, he had accused the hon. and learned Gentleman not exactly of having changed his ground, but of having enlarged it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that if he had added to his ground to the extent of changing it he did not see what the difference was. It was the desire of the Government to put these men in the same position as civilians who were rated for a separate dwelling. It had been hitherto necessary that all civilians, before they could possess the right of voting, should be rated. The Government wished in the Service Clause to provide that that should not be necessary in all cases; but that a gamekeeper, for instance, or a coachman, who had control over a house for his own purposes, should be entitled

to a vote. The noble Lord the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy) wished to put soldiers and sailors in the same position; but the noble Lord added that other persons might have the power of entering every portion of a barracks, and the noble Lord raised a question whether the access which their military superiors might have to their dwellings would invalidate the right to the vote. In this respect the masters of game-keepers and coachmen might in one sense be said have a right to enter the premises their servants occupied, for the purpose of calling them up or saying that their services were required; but that fact would not deprive the man of the vote. It was exactly the same thing here. All he had been trying to do was to endeavour to make out that if it was practicable for a civilian who occupied a separate part of a dwelling-house to be entitled to vote, in the same way a sergeant or non-commissioned officer would be entitled to vote if the quarters he occupied were occupied in such a manner as to entitle him to keep other persons out of his part of the dwelling. The fact that his superior officers might have the right to come in and see that the Regulations of the Service were obeyed would not disqualify him, or take away his right to vote. He should be glad to consider the matter further; but he could not accept the present clause. All he said was, that he could not put these persons in a better position than civilians; but it was his desire to place them in the same position.

COLONEL MILNE-HOME remarked that before the Amendment was disposed of, he hoped to have an assurance from the hon. and learned Gentleman that a clause would be brought up on the Report insuring to every sergeant, soldier, and sailor, as described in the Amendment, a vote. It was impossible that these men could be looked upon in the light of civilians, inasmuch as they did not possess the separate residences which civilians ordinarily possessed. Nor could they be looked upon as being in the position of game-keepers, coachmen, gardeners, and similar persons engaged by the year and remaining constantly in one place, if they happened to render good service. The soldiers of the Crown, as everyone knew, were moved from barrack to barrack. Therefore residences must be left out of the question

altogether. The Prime Minister told them, when he brought in the Bill, that he had introduced the Service Clause in order to enfranchise, if possible, many men possessing the qualification of education as well as household residence. He contended that the sergeants and non-commissioned officers in the Army were in the same position, and that all of them possessed educational acquirements which fitted them for the enjoyment of the franchise. Then, why was not the right hon. Gentleman willing to go further and extend the principle of educational franchise to soldiers and sailors? He (Colonel Milne-Home) contended that every soldier in the Army was as entitled to the franchise as the persons the Government were enfranchising by this Bill, if not more so. Everyone who was connected with either Service knew to what a high pitch of education soldiers and sailors had now reached. The noble Lord at the head of the War Office had very properly laid down that soldiers and sailors were entitled to enjoy their political predilections as well as any other citizens, and he was sure the Army thanked the noble Lord for that candid admission. It seemed to him that there ought to be no sort of difficulty in enfranchising every soldier and sailor of a year's service. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad to hear that cheer from below the Gangway. He was sure, from the experience he had gained of our soldiers, that they were as entitled as many now on the Register to enjoy the right of voting—if, indeed, they were not even more entitled. He had therefore heard with satisfaction the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy); and if the noble Lord went to a Division he would vote with him. He would prefer, however, to have a complete assurance from the Government that soldiers would be enfranchised under the Bill. At present the matter was in considerable doubt. Lawyers, like doctors, occasionally differed; and it was, therefore, desirable to have a complete assurance from the Government that this was their intention, and that if the Bill, as it stood, did not accomplish the desired object, it would be amended in that direction.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, he had listened to the debate with great atten-

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tion, and the point for consideration was whether soldiers and sailors, under the Bill, would be damnified or not in the exercise of their rights and privileges. Nobody in that House wished that any rights or privileges should be given to soldiers and sailors that were not possessed by the rest of the community; but, at the same time, after listening to the Attorney General, it seemed to him doubtful whether, in the mind of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Bill really gave those rights and privileges to soldiers and sailors which they were entitled to expect. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that was his opinion; but with every respect for the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman—and no man was more qualified to express an opinion—there certainly did appear to exist a certain amount of ambiguity in the matter, and therefore it was desirable to provide that certain words should be inserted in the Bill, by which it should be made clear that soldiers and sailors were not to be in a worse position than other persons. No doubt it would be necessary to maintain military discipline, and there was no wish that soldiers and sailors should be called upon to do that which the discipline of those Services did not admit of. At the same time, if they were to exercise the privileges of the rest of the community, it was clear that certain laws and regulations, which were in force in barracks, might be used against them, and it might be necessary to have the case decided in a Court of Law—as, for instance, whether a soldier, confined to barracks or confined to his own room, could be said to have the right of ingress and egress. He did not know how far that might or might not be held to be an objection by the Revising Barrister. It was a question for the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General and for lawyers to decide. He was quite ready to allow that when they came to admit soldiers and sailors, under these circumstances, to the privilege of the franchise, a great many anomalies would arise; but in any extension of the franchise that was proposed, a vast number of anomalies must arise, and in listening to the remarks of his right hon. Friend the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), it certainly seemed to him that the difficulties, which his right hon. Friend and

other speakers had discovered in regard to the question, led directly to manhood suffrage. It was perfectly clear that, in regard to soldiers abroad, and in France especially, manhood suffrage existed, or otherwise it would be extremely difficult to confer upon them the right of voting. Considering the difference in the position of civilians and that of soldiers and sailors, difficulties of this kind, and constant trouble must arise, and nobody would be satisfied until the whole question was brought into a Court of Law, and a decision obtained from the Judges. He believed this was a very important point. He entertained no doubt that the Attorney General was himself anxious to do what was right and just in the matter; but he really did not see, unless the hon. and learned Gentleman gave the Committee an assurance that he would bring up a clause himself, or that he would consider the matter more closely and intimately than he had already done, that the House would be satisfied with his expression of the law and nothing more. He said this with every desire not to prolong the proceedings of the Committee; but he thought that members of these Services, and especially of the Military Service, in which he had always taken the greatest interest, should certainly not be deprived of any portion of the rights they were entitled to enjoy. After the course the debate had taken they ought to feel that their rights and privileges had just as much weight with the Treasury Bench as they had with the rest of the House. He felt that the assurance and the kind indication given by the Attorney General, that he would carefully consider the matter with the noble Lord before the Report stage of the Bill, in order to render it unnecessary to appeal to a Court of Law for a decision, would be hailed with the greatest satisfaction.

MR. WARTON said, he did not think that the Committee had, as yet, come to a clear understanding as to the course which the Attorney General intended to pursue, and it was not desirable to leave the matter undecided. Some of them might and some of them might not give the Government credit for a desire to bring forward a satisfactory clause; but it seemed to him that the Attorney General was of the same opinion as that

which he had originally expressed, and he had certainly quite as much confidence in the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) as he had in the Attorney General. On Friday last an endeavour was made to dispose of the question in a few minutes before the time for discontinuing the debate at 10 minutes to 7, on the ground that it was settled by a paragraph in Clause 9. Not a word was then said about Clause 3. Now, however, the Attorney General said that Clause 3 had something to do with it. The Committee had themselves heard what the hon. and learned Gentleman said. It was perfectly true that the Attorney General had entirely changed his ground; and the real fact of the matter was that, at the present moment, the Committee did not know what the Attorney General meant at all. That was his (Mr. Warton's) justification for offering a few remarks now. He thought no answer had been given by the hon. and learned Gentleman to the observations of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), or to those of the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross). The hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to be anxious to place soldiers and sailors on a footing of equality with the rest of Her Majesty's subjects; but he gave the go-by altogether to an essential point which had been submitted to his consideration—namely, whether soldiers and sailors, by the very conditions of their service, were not in an inferior position to the rest of the community in regard to residence. That was a point he would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to consider. He thought it was just as well that in dealing with soldiers and sailors there should be words introduced into the Bill which were appropriate to soldiers and sailors, and the words "separate quarters" he thought were appropriate, because they were suitable to both branches of Her Majesty's Service; and, in the next place, they drew a distinction between a dwelling-house and separate quarters. Whatever the hon. and learned Attorney General might say, it was perfectly obvious that the dominion which a subject of Her Majesty had over a dwelling-house, subject only to his paying his rent to the landlord, was very different from the right a soldier had in his separate quarters. He thought if

the Prime Minister could have supported the contention of the learned Attorney General he would have done so; but as the right hon. Gentleman had remained silent, he took it for granted that he was unable to do so. They all knew perfectly well that by the conditions of the Service a soldier's occupancy of separate quarters was in a very different position from that of a citizen who occupied a house which was entirely within his own dominion. He wanted to know from the Attorney General, before the Committee parted from the subject, whether he was of the same opinion now as he was before, that this case was met and provided for by the 9th clause, or did he intend to bring forward some Amendment which would do equal justice as between soldiers and sailors and ordinary citizens?

EARL PERCY said, he should ask the leave of the Committee to withdraw the Amendment in consequence of what had been said by the hon. and learned Attorney General. He did hope, however, that the point which had been raised would not be dropped by Her Majesty's Government. There was one remark he felt called upon to make in consequence of what had fallen from the Attorney General. The hon. and learned Gentleman had compared the right of a master to enter the house of his game-keeper or coachman with the right of an officer to enter the quarters of a non-commissioned officer; and the hon. and learned Gentleman said that as that right in the first case would not deprive the coachman or game-keeper of his vote, so, in the other, it would not invalidate the vote of the non-commissioned officer. But the right of the master to enter into his servant's house was merely a right to enter it for the ordinary purpose of looking after the dwelling, or after the men he employed. It was not the same right as that of an officer who was bound daily to inspect the separate quarters of the non-commissioned officers stationed in barracks. In the one case, the master was not responsible for the conduct of his servant in the dwelling-house; whereas, in the other case, the officer was responsible for the conduct of the non-commissioned officer and his family. He should like to be assured that that difference would not be held by the Registration Courts

to deprive a non-commissioned officer from the exercise of the franchise.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS, in moving the following clause :—

(Votes in case of constituencies returning two Members.)

"From and after the passing of this Act, in every constituency returning two Members to Parliament, every elector thereof shall be entitled to give a single vote for one candidate, and for no more,"

said, he hoped the Prime Minister would be able to accept the clause, because he did not think that it would weight the Bill very much, or be likely to impede its progress in "another place." He certainly thought he ought to have the support of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway who had spoken in the Provinces in favour of the principle of one man one vote. His proposition was that in all constituencies where there were two Members each voter should be restricted to one vote. He very much objected to the entire system of the double vote, and they were not considering as much as they ought the effect which a redistribution of seats would have. Whenever that Bill was passed, there would probably be very few places returning two Members, and he hoped they would come to a system of one vote for one man, or else three votes for three men. What was the system of the double vote? It simply accentuated the influence of a dominant majority. This system of double voting did not apply practically to Scotland and Wales. In Scotland the only seats having two Members were Dundee and Edinburgh, and in Wales the only town was Merthyr. Therefore, practically speaking, Scotland and Wales ought to be left out of his purview in considering this question. In Ireland there were 32 county constituencies and three boroughs which returned two Members each; but, in illustrating the question, he should confine his remarks solely to England. He found that in England there were 75 divisions of counties which returned two Members each, and out of those 75 divisions 64 returned—he was not now considering bye-elections—128 Members of the same politics, and there were only 11 which were what in the North of England were called piebald—returning one yellow

and one blue. Therefore, they had in the county constituencies 64 Members returned by the pure vote of a dominant majority. He contended that that was an unfair system of voting. It was quite right that each of those 64 constituencies should return one Member representing the majority; but he could not see why the minority in those 64 constituencies should be unable to return a single Member representing their opinions. In this way, double voting accentuated the opinion of the dominant majority. In the boroughs the case was not so bad. There were 56 borough constituencies returning 112 men of the politics of the dominant majorities, and only 15 which were piebald. These were chiefly small places like Warwick and Weymouth, which a future Parliament would probably reduce to one Member a-piece. Therefore, they had as a fact that, practically speaking, in all the larger constituencies, except under exceptional circumstances, the dominant political Party enjoyed a double representation. The late Lord Beaconsfield said the origin of a system of dual voting of this kind, which allowed the boroughs to return two Representatives, was that, when the Members went to London, they might not be waylaid by highwaymen, and that they might return safe together. If that was really the reason, it did not apply now, and there was no danger that any person representing a single seat would not be as safe as the Members for Scotland and Ireland, who were situated at the extremities of the Kingdom, and had to come up singly by themselves, without being accompanied by a Colleague. When the Reform Bill of 1832 proposed to add a third Member to the counties, Mr. Mackworth Praed, who was at that time a distinguished Member of the House, objected to the proposal on the ground that it would increase the dominant power of the seven counties to which it was proposed to give an additional Member; whereupon Lord Althorp said that the House ought not to be afraid upon that ground, because no county constituencies would ever return two Members of the same politics. Any person who would study this subject by perusing the volumes of *Vacher* would find that that was now merely a lingering tradition, growing out of date. There were no counties, he believed, or di-

visions of counties, except North Lincolnshire and the North Riding of Yorkshire, which at the last General Election had returned one and one. He was quite aware that the adoption of his proposal would, in a majority of cases, place the majority and the minority on the same footing. He could not say that that was altogether desirable, and he thought that a single Representative for a single constituency would be still better. Most of the cities returning three Members, such as Leeds, Manchester, and Liverpool, were driven to dual representation; but, if driven into a corner, he contended that of two evils it was the less that the minority should have one Member and a majority one, than that the majority should have two. But what was wanted was a system such as that proposed for the old three-cornered vote. On these grounds he begged to move the clause of which he had given Notice.

New Clause (Votes in case of constituencies returning two Members.)—(*Mr. Thomas Collins*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE: The Government cannot accept this clause, because it is an attempt to introduce a perfectly novel and very objectionable mode of voting for the sake of remedying what the hon. Member pleases to call an essential defect in our present Parliamentary system, which, for the most part, depends on dual representation. The hon. Gentleman has said very truly that the whole question of whether we ought to be represented by three, two, or only by a single Member, or in any other way, is a very large question, which ought to be considered in a more regular manner. Therefore, it would be a great mistake, on the hon. Member's own showing, for the House to attempt to cobble, if I may so say, and patch up the system of dual representation, with regard to which we do not yet know what the judgment of the House may be. Of course, the hon. Gentleman is aware that he is proposing to deal with what is really a very small part of the question of redistribution in this measure, which is a Franchise Bill. We should be doing positive mischief if we were to attempt to anticipate that

measure of redistribution by a partial and a single portion of the subject, which must be brought before us in a much larger form than it could be in the proposition of the hon. Gentleman. I cannot see for myself how, from any point of view, this clause could be accepted. It involves an innovation which would be received with astonishment, and the discontent it would excite would be so universal that it could never be carried out. I must say that it would require a great deal of argument to convince me that in a constituency having a voting power of 1,500, 501 should be able to elect a Member for themselves.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that, although he was not prepared to go the full length of his hon. Friend, he thought the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would have been far more satisfactory if it had contained some indication that the Government were prepared seriously to consider that most important question of minority representation, which lay at the bottom of his hon. Friend's clause. The other day the right hon. Gentleman took exception to an Amendment moved in Committee, which had been submitted from a very different standpoint, which dealt with the question of minority representation. He referred to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow (*Dr. Cameron*). The right hon. Gentleman met that Amendment by the astonishing assertion that the whole question of the representation of minorities was not a question which ought to be dealt with in any Franchise Bill; but that it ought to be considered in connection with a redistribution of seats. He had never heard a more astounding statement in his life. It was contended by the right hon. Gentleman that the representation of minorities had found its way by accident into the so-called Franchise Clauses of the Reform Act of 1867, and that the Amendment by which it obtained its accidental insertion in that Bill was due to a freak of a clerk of the House of Lords. Now, he (*Mr. J. Lowther*) asserted that the matter had been carefully weighed in the House of Commons, and that the position it now occupied in the Reform Act of 1867 was due to the initiative of no less a man than the noble and learned Earl who had several times filled the Office of Lord High Chancellor (*Earl Cairns*),

and who was undoubtedly capable of discriminating as to the most appropriate portion of a statute any specific provision ought to be placed in. Therefore, he was not speaking without authority, when he asserted that no measure professing to deal with the question of the franchise could be considered in any way perfect unless the views of the Government on the important question of the representation of minorities had been fully laid before Parliament and embodied in the law of the land. His hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins) was a reasonable man, and would not probably be disposed to push his views to an illogical extreme. He would, therefore, suggest to his hon. Friend that he should consider some modification of his provision, in order to obviate what he must say was a reasonable objection on the part of the Prime Minister. He did not think that his hon. Friend intended to propose that 501 persons should override the opinion of 1,000. That was going further in the direction of the representation of minorities than any hon. Member would seriously advocate. But they had been told that afternoon that the Government, in regard to another clause, would be prepared to consider it, and he hoped they would take the same course with regard to this question. What he wished to call the attention of the Government to was this. No measure dealing even with one branch only of the subject—namely, the franchise, which they had selected for special treatment—would deserve serious consideration unless this portion of the subject was also practically dealt with. It was of no use to say that it belonged to the question of redistribution. It did nothing of the kind. Whether there were to be two, three, or four Members, or only one accorded to special constituencies, was not the question, but whether minorities were to be absolutely snuffed out as they were now, or whether some means could not be provided for affording proportional representation to local opinion. That, he ventured to say, was a subject which no ingenuity could dis sever from the question of the franchise.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he did not think proportional representation would be best secured by adopting the proposal of the hon. Member for

Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins). He wished it to be understood that the proposition now made by his hon. Friend was not made officially on behalf of hon. Members who sat on that side of the House, nor did it accurately represent their views. They had no desire that the power of the electors of the country should be so materially diminished, as it would be if this clause were adopted, and without any palliating circumstances of any kind. There was only one point on which he agreed with his hon. Friend, and that was that the existing system most successfully secured what he might call the misrepresentation of the people.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) in one remark. He did not see why, in Committee upon the present Bill, they might not, with advantage, discuss the large question of proportional representation. Indeed, he regretted that in deference to the feeling of the House they were confining themselves in the present Bill to the question of the franchise, and that various subjects of much difficulty, as well as importance, had been postponed until the Redistribution Bill. They had now, however, a promise from the Government that the whole question of proportional representation should be fully and fairly considered next Session. His hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough knew very well that he (Sir John Lubbock) was quite as much in favour of proportional representation as he or any other Member of the House was; but it seemed to him that the present proposal would not secure the proportional representation which he desired. When the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) brought forward his Amendment to abolish the present minority vote, he (Sir John Lubbock) was unavoidably absent; but he understood it was the general feeling of the House that the subject should be postponed, on the ground that this was not the proper time for discussing it. He would venture to suggest to the hon. Member for Knaresborough that in deference to the view of the House he should take the same course. He quite sympathized with the general spirit of the remarks made by the hon. Member, but not in the particular manner in which he proposed to deal with the subject. More-

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over, he felt that in discussing the question of proportional representation in connection with dual seats, the supporters of proportional representation did so at a disadvantage. The argument in its favour was much stronger as regards constituencies returning three or more Members. The proposition of the hon. Member for Knaresborough, whatever its advantages were, did not give them proportional representation. It was when they came to the great constituencies returning more than two Members that their case became so strong. Under these circumstances, he hoped the hon. Member would rest satisfied with the interesting discussion he had elicited, and would now consent to withdraw his clause, leaving the House to consider the whole question when they came to the Redistribution Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not rise to support the somewhat crude proposal of his hon. Friend; but he wished to call attention to the inconvenience of the course the Government were pursuing in putting off until next year the discussion of all large and important questions. Next year they must introduce a Redistribution Bill, which must necessarily be of a complicated and difficult character. They were told that it must absolutely pass next year, or otherwise the next Election would take place with a new franchise and the old constituencies. In addition to all the complicated questions which must arise upon that question next year, the Government were putting off a large number of questions which might be discussed this year. He certainly thought that the question of proportional representation and the question of the female franchise might have been discussed this year. [*Cries of "Oh!"*] Hon. Members objected to that statement; but he wanted to point out that the Government next year would come down and say that this was an important and interesting question, but, in the interests of passing a Redistribution Bill, they must implore hon. Members not to discuss it. If any attempt were made in the Redistribution Bill to raise a discussion upon the representation of minorities, hon. Members would be told by the Government that they were endangering the passing of the Bill, and that it was absolutely necessary to pass

the measure as it stood, in order that the new elections might not take place during the existence of the old constituencies with a new franchise.

Mr. RAIKES said, he did not know whether his hon. Friend proposed to withdraw the clause or not; but, before it was withdrawn, he wished to say a word or two upon the principle to which it related. He was not aware whether his hon. Friend was a member of the Proportional Representation Society, of which the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) was the President. He hardly imagined that he was, because it appeared to him that the proposal made to-day was so much more simple, practical, and intelligible than any which had yet emanated from that Society. He hardly could have been converted by any of the general propositions of the Proportional Representation Society, who had set themselves to work out so many ingenious puzzles. He had always been strongly in favour of proportional representation; but he thought that the proposition of his hon. Friend, although, perhaps, rough and simple and therefore intelligible, might, without a complete re-adjustment of the existing constituencies, give rather more than a just representation to a minority. At all events, wherever a minority existed of one-third in the case of three Members in any constituency it would enable them to return one Member; but under other conditions it would give rather more than their fair share. If they dealt with the question next year they would have had a sort of preliminary discussion in regard to the principle which he hoped would be serviceable. He had taken notice of the observations of the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), who was anxious to disassociate himself from any proposal so reasonable as this; but in the event of Sheffield returning three Members at the next election the hon. Member might scarcely still remain of the same mind. He hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins) would feel that he had done good service in bringing the question before the House, and that he would now withdraw the clause rather than press it to a Division. His hon. Friend would see that there were many circumstances, apart from those which were raised by

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the proposal, which might prejudice the clause on the present occasion.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, the proposal of this clause of his hon. Friend and the short discussion which had taken place upon it convinced him more and more of the extreme inconvenience to which the House had been subjected by the determination of Her Majesty's Government to take one isolated portion of a Reform Bill by itself, and press it through Parliament without going through the form of taking Parliament into their confidence on all the other subjects which must come before them on the question of Reform. Nothing could be more clear than the statement of his right hon. Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) that this question was essentially a question affecting the franchise. If Her Majesty's Government had done anything at all they had signally failed to convince him that it would be injudicious to show their whole hand in respect of the great scheme of Reform. At least, they might have given to the House an indication of their view upon this question which was essentially connected with the franchise part of the subject. Her Majesty's Government declined to do that, and the result, no doubt, would be that this measure would go from the House of Commons without the slightest indication on the part of Her Majesty's Government as to the way in which they were prepared to deal with the great question of minority or proportional representation. Neither the House nor the country at large would be in possession of the views of the Government on this most important part of the question.

MR. WARTON agreed with the noble Lord who had just sat down as to the extreme inconvenience occasioned by the determination of the Government to refuse to deal with the question of Reform as a whole. They had, however, gained one thing—namely, that although the Government had made no sign it was quite clear that the Prime Minister had a very distinct animus against the representation of minorities. No doubt he had endeavoured to affect impartiality; but it was quite clear, from the observations he had made, that he was against minority representation. The Prime Minister was too honest to disguise his thoughts and all the rest of the Ministers were afraid to state their own thoughts

until they knew what it was they would be allowed to say upon the subject. The Committee were, however, able to judge for themselves what course the Government would take next year upon this question. The Prime Minister had indicated what he thought and felt, and it was perfectly clear that the right hon. Gentleman had a strong animus in his own mind against the principle of proportional representation.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS remarked that he had shown that in the majority of the constituencies there was what in another year he believed the House would consider to be an unfair proportion of voting power in respect of this dual representation. He hoped the Prime Minister would take that into his consideration during the course of the next 12 months, and having, as he believed, done some good by moving the Amendment, he was willing to save the Committee the trouble of dividing, and would therefore ask leave to withdraw it.

MR. LEWIS said, he was surprised that an hon. Member of such discernment as the hon. Member for Knarborough should allow himself to be taken in by the assurance of the Government that an opportunity of discussing the question would be given next year. Why, with reference to anything which might then be put forward in the form of an Amendment, they would be told not once, but ten times, what they had been told this Session—namely, that the Government Bill would be imperilled. They were likely to see the Prime Minister imploring his supporters over and over again not to imperil the Bill by introducing their crotchets. When they reached the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), he thought hon. Gentlemen on those Benches would be able to show how curious would be the position of matters if an election took place on the bastard constituencies which might yet be the result of the hon. Member's proposal. They might be assured that the Redistribution Bill put forward by the Government next year would be presented at them for acceptance as a whole, as a pistol might be; hon. Members who supported the Government, and who were in favour of the principle of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Knarborough, would find themselves

with a General Election immediately in front of them, and there would then be far greater reason than there was now for the Government to say that their Bill must be accepted without alteration.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. CLARE READ, in moving the following clause:—

(Non-resident voter for boroughs.)

“Every man having a qualification in a borough which would, before the passing of this Act, have entitled him to vote for a county, and who is not qualified as a householder to vote in such borough, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter and to vote at an election for such borough: Provided, That a man shall not be entitled to be registered as a voter, or to vote at any election for a county, in respect of such qualification,”

said, the Prime Minister, in the speech with which he introduced the Bill to the House, stated that he was not in favour of electoral districts, and that he intended to preserve the existing distinction between borough and county. With the permission of the Committee he would read the eloquent words of the right hon. Gentleman, who said—

“The question is, whether there is not in pursuits and associations, and in social circumstances a difference, between town and country, between borough and shire, which it is expedient, becoming, and useful to maintain?”—
(3 *Hansard*, [285] 129.)

He (Mr. Clare Read) certainly did think it expedient, becoming, and useful to maintain that distinction; and therefore he desired to make it more practical and more real. The right hon. Gentleman, it was true, had somewhat qualified his statement since; because, in speaking the other day upon a Motion of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ercroyd), he said that the borough and county differed in this; that whereas the county had not much to do with the borough, the borough was comprehended in the county, as an island was surrounded by water. But, so far from the town being a part of the county, as the Prime Minister had stated, some had found in the course of his administration of the old Cattle Diseases Act that there was a decided antagonism between them. He did not think the Committee was aware of the extent to which the borough qualification entered into some county constituencies. In South Leicestershire, for instance, he thought he was right in saying that one-half of the freeholders who lived in the borough of

Leicester voted for Leicestershire, and the result was not only that electors of that flourishing town returned two Liberal Members to Parliament; but they also succeeded in returning to the House a Liberal Member to represent the county. His object was to reserve some counties which were more or less agricultural, and when he used the term “agricultural” he did not particularly refer to the owners and occupiers of land. Their case would be certainly hard; but he wished to point out that if something in the nature of the principle embodied in the clause which he was about to ask the Committee to read a second time were not included in the Bill, a large number of agricultural labourers would be overwhelmed by the votes of the freeholders in the boroughs. The old franchise law, as was very well known, distinguished between the borough and the county in this way—that the counties were supposed to represent property, and the boroughs residence. That distinction, however, had passed away, and he contended that when they were assimilating the two franchises the owner of property should be allowed to vote where his heart and his interest lay—that was to say, in the borough, if he had property there. While, as far as he was concerned, he acknowledged and appreciated the difficulties under which the Prime Minister had settled the franchise, he thought it would be well that his proposal should be adopted, and he believed it would help in the matter of registration. The right hon. Gentleman also defended the extension of the franchise to agricultural labourers, by saying that there were already some five or six boroughs in which the agricultural labourer had a vote; and he (Mr. Clare Read) would say in defence of his proposal that there were also five or six boroughs in England in which the borough freeholders voted for the borough. There was the City of Norwich, in which he had the privilege of voting, as well as others in which freeholders voted for the borough, as he believed, with success; and he was not aware of any inconvenience having resulted therefrom. The custom, he believed, had existed in Scotland from time immemorial, and he considered that he was entitled to the support of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), who the other day, on the Amendment of the hon.

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Member for Preston (Mr. Eeroyd), said he should support the Motion if the principle of dual voting which it contained could be got rid of. But there were two or three hon. Friends around him who were not in favour of his proposal. The hon. Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot), for instance, did not like it, because he said it would take from the counties a certain amount of property qualification which he would desire to retain in them. That was so; but that removal he did not think would do them any harm. While men now possessed a double vote in the borough might in course of time come to be disfranchised, his clause would provide for the manufacturer outside the borough having a vote for the borough which he was not now entitled to. The hon. Member for West Suffolk said he did not like the clause, because it was a disfranchising Amendment. He (Mr. Clare Read) understood the Prime Minister, when introducing the Bill, to say that it was not to be a disfranchising Bill at all, and that all voters who were now on the Register should continue to exercise the franchise. If that were correct, he supposed that words might be introduced to give effect to it. He had no wish whatever to disfranchise anybody, and therefore he hoped his hon. Friend would support the clause. He said that his proposal would enfranchise those who lived just outside boroughs, and had property within them, and because he believed that it would be to their interest that they should be admitted, he begged to move the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause (Non-resident voters for boroughs).—(*Mr. Clare Read*),—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am sorry to be obliged to oppose the Amendment of the hon. Member for West Norfolk. In the first place, it involves a very great innovation in the system of county voting for boroughs in respect of property in boroughs which the hon. Gentleman proposes to change, and the proposal is not encouraged by the fate which has attended similar proposals on former occasions, for Parliament has always shown itself unwilling to entertain them.

Mr. Clare Read

The hon. Gentleman stated that I have observed that the town was part of the county, but that the county was not part of the town. That is a principle which is recognized by the Constitution and by long practice, and I know no reason for the innovation which the clause of the hon. Gentleman would introduce. The hon. Gentleman may say that in certain cases the clause would enfranchise persons who otherwise would have no vote for the borough. I admit that proposition; but it is subject, first, to the observation that the case would be exceedingly rare in which it would enfranchise anyone; and, secondly, that the clause was in its main features a large disfranchising clause. Of that there could be no question whatever. Another innovation which the clause would bring about would be to make the freehold franchise in boroughs independent of residence. To the extension proposed by the hon. Gentleman we are not prepared to assent. I cannot conceive that any proposal would be received with more universal unpopularity in the towns of the country.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he was somewhat surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have opposed the clause of his hon. Friend (Mr. Clare Read) on the ground that it was an innovating and disfranchising clause. Surely there never was a greater innovation than the Bill they were considering, and he thought it hard that the Committee should be called upon to reject the clause of his hon. Friend simply on the ground that it was an innovation. The right hon. Gentleman objected that this was a disfranchising clause; but what had the right hon. Gentleman done with regard to the owners of property whom the clause proposed to deal with? He admitted that he did not disfranchise them; but he had done his best to swamp their influence in the constituencies. He could not, however, support the proposal of his hon. Friend, because it appeared to him that if any class of borough freeholders ought to be transferred from the counties to the boroughs, it was the residents, who were precisely those whom the hon. Gentleman did not propose to transfer. Under the circumstances, although he sympathized with the intention of his hon. Friend, he trusted he would not press the clause to a Division.

MR. WALTER said, he knew it was quite useless to say anything in defence of the Amendment of his hon. Friend opposite. He advised him to follow the example of his Predecessors, and not press his clause to a Division. He was bound to say, however, that having had occasion to look very carefully into this matter several years ago, he saw no reason why there should be this permanent distinction between counties and boroughs which it was sought to perpetuate. Some hon. Members entertained a great horror of electoral districts. After all, what was an electoral district? What was a county but an electoral district? What was a borough but an electoral district? On what grounds could any reasonable man contend that persons ought to vote in one electoral district in respect of property lying in another electoral district? It was not the case, as some supposed, that a borough consisted merely of houses. There were some 60 Parliamentary boroughs which contained a very large area of agricultural land; and he would give an example to the Committee of what seemed to him to constitute the absurd state of things which resulted from the present system. Take the case of the borough of East Retford. It contained 200,000 acres of land, being about half the size of the county of Berkshire. It included the whole of the magnificent properties known as the "Dukeries." It seemed to him a very absurd state of things that the owners of those properties should vote for that portion of the county of Nottingham not included in the borough of East Retford, but that their tenants should all vote for the borough of East Retford. It seemed to him that the continuance of this anomaly was absolutely indefensible. They must either make a borough very different from what it really was—at least, something very different from the popular notion of it—or else they would be compelled to act on the principle—a sound and Constitutional one as he believed it to be—that a man should vote for that district in which his property lay. It was useless to speak of this Bill as being a measure for assimilating the county and the borough franchise. The Bill did nothing of the kind. The borough franchise was thrown into the county; but the county franchise was not taken into the boroughs.

He did not advise his hon. Friend to press the matter to a Division now. He did not think that the Committee really took in the meaning of the term "Parliamentary borough;" but he hoped that when this matter came before them again—and it was possible it would do so next year—it would be thoroughly looked into.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he hoped the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) would not misunderstand the position he intended to take with reference to his proposal. The Prime Minister had divided this subject very properly under two heads. The hon. Gentleman proposed, first of all, that the qualification in a borough which would entitle a man to vote for the county should confer upon him a borough vote. So far as that went he agreed with his hon. Friend; and if he went to a Division he should vote for the clause with the object of amending it afterwards. He thought they should say that property in a borough should give a vote for the borough, however small that property might be; but his hon. Friend went further than that, and in an almost totally opposite direction. He went on to say—

"Provided that a man shall not be entitled to be registered as a voter, or to vote at any election for a county in respect of such qualification."

That amounted to a disfranchisement of the freeholder so far as the county was concerned; and it was, therefore, a proposal which he was not prepared to support. He had thrown out a suggestion the other day which he feared he should be too sanguine if he were to expect the right hon. Gentleman to accept, but which expressed his view that a person who was a freeholder in a borough should be entitled to vote for the borough as a freeholder, and also that he should be entitled to vote as a freeholder for the county. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the clause of the hon. Member on the ground that it was a disfranchising proposal; but he could not say that the proposal which he (Mr. J. Lowther) made came within that category. On the contrary, it would allow a voter to give a vote for the Parliamentary Division in which his property was situated, and would, at the same time, enable him to have what the Prime Minister attached so much im-

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portance to—namely, his Constitutional rights as well.

MR. CLARE READ said, he should not have thought of bringing this clause forward unless the county and borough franchise had been made practically identical. If they abolished the real distinction between the property qualification in counties and the residential qualification in boroughs, then he said the owner of property might be allowed to vote where that property was situated. The Act of 1869, he believed, disfranchised a great number of those freeholders, because, as he thought he was right in saying, a man who occupied property in a borough must vote for the borough and not for the county, and it was only when a man had a separate property qualification for a county that if he lived in a borough he could vote for the county. He thanked the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) for the support he had given to the principle contained in the clause, which showed that, although hon. Gentlemen near him had not felt able to support it, it was a legitimate corollary to a Bill which would introduce a great innovation into the electoral system of the country. He would ask leave to withdraw the clause.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. H. H. FOWLER, in moving the following clause:—

(Commencement of Act.)

“This Act shall commence and come into operation on the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five,”

said, the clause he was about to ask the Committee to read a second time had been already so fully discussed in advance that, under ordinary circumstances, he should have contented himself with formally moving it only. Having regard, however, to what had been said on both sides of the House as to the value and worthlessness of the Amendment, he hoped the Committee would indulge him for a few minutes while he explained its meaning and intention. The effect of the clause would be to postpone the operation of the Act until the 1st of January, 1885. The practical effect of that would be that county householders and artisans would after that date be in the same position as the enfranchised borough householder, and, subject to the provisions of the law with regard to the

payment of rates, would be put on the Register in the summer, and would be subject to the revision of the Revising Barrister in the autumn, and at the end of the year would be duly qualified as a voter to exercise the franchise on the 1st of January, 1886. It was said that the clause added nothing to the Bill. That was not correct, and he would ask any hon. Member to say what would be the position of the Bill if the clause were not introduced. Without the clause the Act would come into force immediately after it had received the Royal Assent; and the House before it parted with a Bill had no knowledge as to when the Royal Assent would be given to it. Assuming that to take place before the 31st of July, the new franchise could come into force immediately, and produce a state of things which would cause difficulty and embarrassment to all persons administering the electoral law. If the Bill received the Royal Assent after the 31st July, it was clear that the proposal he now made would simply be the expression of the normal state of the law. He asked the Committee to accept the clause, because he attached some meaning to it on either hypothesis. He thought the Bill should not leave the House of Commons without any indication as to when it was to come into force, and that it should not depend upon accident of time with regard to the Royal Assent. He thought the House of Commons should say what it meant in this respect, and he was asking the Committee to say that the Bill should not come into force until the 1st of January next year. He knew that in making that proposal he was not in harmony with other hon. Gentlemen who wished the Bill to come into force at once. The scheme of the Government all through had been that the Bill should not come into force until Parliament had had an opportunity of dealing with the question of redistribution. The statements of the Government had been unmistakable and clear upon that subject. The present Parliament must come to an end after the Session of 1885 had closed; and therefore, if they were to have an opportunity of dealing with redistribution as part of the same measure of enfranchisement, it was necessary that they should make provision for a scheme of redistribution to be submitted to Parliament next year. It was said that his proposal

Mr. J. Lowther

did not secure that a measure of redistribution should be passed before the Franchise Bill came into operation. No; he did not propose that it should; that was not his object in moving the clause. He could not find better words than those of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who said on the second reading of the Bill that what the Conservative Party really wanted was some guarantee that the same body which dealt with the franchise should be in a position also to deal with the question of redistribution, and that both of those subjects might be dealt with in one Parliament, but certainly not in two. That was the way in which the right hon. Gentleman summed up the requirement of the Conservative Party. And that was their requirement up to the last two or three days—namely, that this Parliament, after having disposed of the Franchise Bill, should also deal with redistribution. But, supposing that next year Parliament did not deal with redistribution—either could not or would not deal with it, then in that case he protested against 2,000,000 people being any longer kept out of their rights. If next year the Government brought in a scheme of redistribution which the House disapproved, the House would be in a position to give effect to its disapproval; and if the Government entered into a conflict with the House it would not be the House of Commons that would go to the wall. The House would settle for itself whether next year it would deal with redistribution, and the newly-enfranchised voters would probably wait until the House had an opportunity of doing so; but if the present House of Commons declined to deal with that question, it had no right permanently to hang up the rights of the new voters, and a new election must take place in what he admitted would be very disadvantageous circumstances. But the fault of that would not rest with the constituencies; it would be the fault of the House, and that would be a lesser evil than the permanent postponement of the measure. He begged to move the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause (Commencement of Act,)—*(Mr. H. H. Fowler,)*—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE: I think I am within the bounds of truth in saying that the substance of this Amendment has been dealt with by the process of exhaustion. As originally framed, the Bill would have taken effect after the passing of the Act; but that proposal the Government agreed to give up, and I think, in so doing, they acted in conformity with the general sense of the House. A proposal was then made which provided for what is called hanging up the operation of the activity of the new constituencies until a Redistribution Bill should have passed, and that without any limit of time being fixed. That alternative was fully considered, and the House disposed of it by decisively refusing to adopt it. Then another proposal was made by my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), which lay between those two, but which contemplated going to the very furthest point—as we thought to too remote a point—for the purpose of giving not a single but a double opportunity to the House to deal with redistribution during the present Parliament. That proposal, after being considered, was withdrawn, and evidently its withdrawal was agreeable to the general sense of the House. Therefore, Sir, I think I am right in saying that all possible alternatives to this clause have been disposed of, and they had been disposed of after very full consideration of all the interesting matters of argument that are capable of being raised, and that have been raised in connection with the several proposals. At last my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) suggests to us what is the only remaining method, consistent with what we have heretofore done—namely, the adoption of a plan which shall enable the present House to deal with redistribution; but which shall not absolutely make the operation of the new constituencies contingent upon the passing of a measure of redistribution. I think I am justified in saying that that is substantially, though not technically or formally, the conclusion which the House has already sanctioned by large majorities. I will not go over the topics which

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are embraced by the clause, but only say that the clause is heartily accepted by the Government, and that I hope it will be accepted by the Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not deny that the Amendment proposed by his hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was an improvement of the Bill; but he maintained that the improvement was so small, so microscopic, as hardly to be capable of detection by the most careful observation. In fact, the only advantage he saw which would accrue to the Bill was in the event of the Royal Assent being given to the measure before the 31st of July; if that were to take place, the Amendment of his hon. Friend would undoubtedly prevent a confused registration. But if he looked at the question from a very much larger point of view, he could not see that the slightest benefit was gained by the change which the hon. Member (Mr. H. H. Fowler) proposed. In the first place, the Government were sincere or they were not sincere in saying that they meant to bring in a Redistribution Bill next year. He believed that they were sincere; he fully and absolutely accepted the repeated assurances of the Government as to their intentions in this matter. But if the Government were sincere in what they had said as to redistribution nothing whatever was gained by his hon. Friend's clause; if they were not sincere what security did it give them? For the sake of argument, if they could accept the hypothesis that the Government were deceiving the House and the country, did the hon. Gentleman really think that his clause would have the effect of binding the Government not only to bring in, but to pass a Redistribution Bill? If the Government were to bring in a Bill which the House did not like there would be an end of it. His hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had said—"Oh! but in a conflict between the House and the country the Government, of course, will go to the wall." He did not think the hon. Gentleman had considered what would really take place. If the Prime Minister proposed redistribution which was decidedly antagonistic to the feelings of the House what would occur would be this. At some stage of the Bill the House would declare its antagonism, and show in a very marked manner its

dissent to the Government proposal. The Prime Minister would then get up and say—"Under these circumstances I withdraw my Bill;" and he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) asked his hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) what protection the House would have in such a state of things? What possibility would there be of the House passing a Redistribution Bill? The hypothesis was only to be suggested to be shown to be absurd. Even if the security was greater than it was, the gain which would result from the proposal would in no way destroy the objection he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and his hon. Friends felt to the separation of the franchise and redistribution questions. It did not destroy that objection for this reason—that the action of the Government hampered the liberty of the House and of the Crown. The action of the Government in separating the two questions hampered the freedom of the Crown in this manner—that a Minister who might otherwise advise the Crown to dissolve Parliament would hesitate to do so unless Parliament had settled the question of redistribution. He had said it also hampered the discretion of the House. How could they possibly discuss freely the Government measure of redistribution when they knew that the alternative of that measure was not a better measure, but no measure at all? That was the alternative put before them by the Government, and that state of things was in no way remedied by the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. If the Government came down to the House with a Redistribution Bill which was highly unpalatable to the majority of the House, the majority would hesitate, and must hesitate, before they endangered the passing of the Bill, because they would say to themselves—"It may be better that we should accept this exceedingly bad Redistribution Bill rather than go to the country upon the old constituencies and a new franchise." With that alternative before them the House would have no freedom of action next Session; and it was because of that that he could not regard the proposal of his hon. Friend as in any way palliating or mitigating the evils forced upon them by the course the Government had chosen to take.

MR. LEWIS said, he should vote against this clause, because he was per-

suaded that if he supported it, and the proposed arrangement were not upset, his mouth would be stopped upon the question of redistribution. He was surprised that a Gentleman of the practical experience and knowledge of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had not appreciated the whole of the registration difficulty. It was now the 17th of June, and it was conceded on all hands that this Bill could not possibly pass in time for the registration this year. It was perfectly obvious that that was so, because the first step in registration had to be taken on the 10th of June. Even if the progress of the Bill were accelerated to the utmost, it was impossible that the Bill could become law in time for the registration machinery to be put in motion respecting it this year. He was afraid that the Committee generally did not appreciate the fact that they would be in exactly in the same position next year in regard to the Redistribution Bill, unless it should happen that that Bill disfranchised no constituency, and did not enfranchise any new constituency; if, in point of fact, the Redistribution Bill made no new constituencies whatsoever, or did not take away the rights of any present constituencies, they would be exactly in the same position next year as regards the registration difficulty as they were in now. He would like to make the position clear to the Committee. He would suppose a new borough to be created; he would assume that West Ham, a suburb of London, containing a vast population, was made a borough constituency. What would be the result? The county Register for the parish of West Ham would be enormously reduced—in other words, hundreds and thousands of persons now on the county Register for West Ham, and next year entitled to be on the county Register for West Ham, would be struck off that Register. An entirely new borough Register would have to be made out. All occupiers and all occupying owners within the borough would be disfranchised for the county, and all occupiers who might be owners in the county entitled to register both for county and borough would only be allowed to register for the county. So that in the case of West Ham, a district which was very likely to be made a borough by the Redistribution Bill, an

entirely new Register would have to be prepared. The disfranchising and enfranchising operation would have to begin on the 10th of June. Did the Committee appreciate what an enormous amount of labour would be involved in respect to this very case? Perhaps they would do so when he said that there were as many as 19,800 houses in the parish of West Ham. The result of the operation would be this—that 3,000 or 4,000 persons, entitled under the present system to be county voters, would be disfranchised as county voters and registered as borough voters. Let them take a converse case. What would be the case of a constituency now a borough which was disfranchised? The result would be that the separate borough Register now existing would have to be done away with, and the county Register would have to be largely increased; occupiers in a borough and owners in a county now separately registered for borough and county would only be entitled to be registered for the county. This being the result of the operation of registration in the two cases, the consequence would, in all probability, be that House would be landed in the same difficulty at the commencement of the month of June of next year as they were in now; and, in spite of all their protests and petition, they would have a hybrid election—that was, an election upon the old constituencies but new electors. It could be said—"Oh, you can take the same course which was adopted in 1868—namely, expedite the registration." But the expediting of the registration which took place in 1868 had no reference whatever to any of the matters to which he had referred, and it simply amounted to the appointment of an additional number of Revising Barristers, in order that the increased work of registration might be completed by the month of October. The appointment of an additional number of Revising Barristers in the present instance would not enable the House to surmount the difficulties he had pointed out. It had been said that the Government, under the pressure of circumstances, might, instead of passing a special Act of Parliament, and instead of beginning the registration period in the month of June, begin the work of registration in September; but the result would be that in attempting to avoid

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one great difficulty they would involve themselves in a greater one, because there would be such a confused registration that there would, in reality, be no Register at all. This, after all, was only one of those practical commentaries upon the absurd and illogical and unconstitutional way in which the Government had proceeded from the beginning. What he had shown was one of the natural and ordinary results from insisting to deal with the franchise question apart from the redistribution question; and he should be delighted to hear what was the explanation of the Government as to the practical way in which they proposed to avoid the difficulties he had pointed out. He did not think this matter had been considered by the Government; indeed, they would not now be discussing the Motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) if the matter had been considered by the Government when they introduced their Bill. It could not be supposed for one moment, considering the period of the Session at which they introduced the Bill, that the Bill would pass through this House and the other branch of the Legislature, and receive the Royal Assent before the 10th of June, the date at which the registration period commenced, inasmuch as notices were served on the Clerks of the Peace and the Overseers. On the second reading he endeavoured to get an opportunity of pointing out this registration difficulty; but he was unable to catch the Speaker's eye. It was pointed out on the Committee stage by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, and he (Mr. Lewis) also referred to it. The Government never seemed to have contemplated that there was this difficulty; they pitched the Bill on the floor of the House of Commons, and trusted to "another place" putting all matters right or rejecting the measure altogether. What the Committee had to determine was what course they were to pursue under the circumstances. To support the clause of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton would be to admit that it was a sufficient remedy for the blunder which the Government had committed. It was perfectly charming to hear the hon. Member for Wolverhampton let out the truth as to what he was looking forward

to, and as to what he hoped would happen. What was it the hon. Gentleman was hoping would happen? Why, that if next year a redistribution scheme was not passed there would be an appeal to the country on the old constituencies, but the new franchise. Did the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton refer to the prospect as one which was worthy of any regret? The hon. Member for Wolverhampton evidently thought he had got the Tories in a fix, and that when the Redistribution Bill was brought in the probability was, they would be bound to submit as the Liberal Party below the Gangway had been bound to submit. Not a note of independence had been elicited from those hon. Gentlemen; they had been bound hand and foot, and been prevented from pushing forward any Amendment, on the ground that it would very likely shipwreck or forfeit the Bill. Next year the Opposition would have a turn. They would be told—"Oh, you want redistribution, do you; you had better take this or you will get nothing." Practically they had been told so this Session, and he had no doubt they would be told so in a still more pointed manner next year. The Opposition could not take any part in aiding the passing of the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), because they did not believe it would be effectual for the purpose intended; they could with still less consistency have anything to do with the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). It was only the other day that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) told them that his hon. Friend's (Mr. H. H. Fowler's) Amendment freed them from that Registration Bill which the Government at one time had contemplated introducing this year as a supplement to this Reform Bill. Considering that the Registration Bill was heard of then for the first time, and that its introduction would be rather inconsistent with what had been said by the Government several times to the effect that they never intended to catch the House by the ears and get the newly enfranchised electors on the Register this year, he did not think they had much to thank the Government for in that respect.

Mr. Lewis

This was a vital question, and the House would find it out next year when they came to deal with the Redistribution Bill. Next year would be a rather serious year for any Government, because the Irish difficulty would crop up again. Seeing that hon. Gentlemen from Ireland who sat below the Gangway had found that they had only to squeeze enough this squeezable Government to get what they wanted, it would be found that, so far from the Redistribution Bill being likely to have an easy time of it, it would have a very difficult one. But what position would the House be in with reference to the extreme section of the Irish Party in the House if this measure passed? The hon. Gentlemen forming the section to which he referred would say—"We have got our Franchise Bill—that is secure; we do not care how long you discuss the question of redistribution with all its complicated details; but the sooner you bring us to that period of Elysium when we shall be relegated to the constituencies the better." The "one man one vote principle" and all the other nostrums which were aired at the Leeds Conference, and which hon. Members opposite had put in their pockets at the entreaty of the Prime Minister, would be brought forward again, and it would be the new Parliament that would be called upon to settle the question of redistribution. He hoped his hon. Friends would not be so foolish as to be caught in this trap with their eyes open. They might go into the Lobby and be beaten by a large majority; but they would make a practical protest against the attempt of the Government to hoodwink the House of Commons and place them in a position of inextricable difficulty. He felt satisfied that the Members of the Committee would agree with him that this matter had not been by any means so much discussed as it ought to have been. He was of opinion that the matter should be turned inside out, and that they should ascertain from the Government what was their policy with regard to the registration difficulty under the Redistribution Bill. Unless the Government gave them the details of their scheme it would only intensify the opinion which was very largely held, that they meant to have a General Election before redistribution. He hoped that this clause

would not pass its second reading. If it did pass, he should propose to omit the word "five" and substitute "six," in order that there might be the whole of next year in which to deal with redistribution and registration matters.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, he objected to the insertion of this clause, but for reasons precisely opposite to those which induced the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lewis) to oppose it. From his point of view, the hon. Gentleman was to be congratulated upon his political insight. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) did not conceal his satisfaction at this clause, and he accepted it. ["No!"] Well, he did what was tantamount to accepting it, for he expressed the opinion that it was about the best substitute for the proposal of the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) that was likely to be obtained; and in that he was, from his standpoint, very wise. He (Mr. Jesse Collings) could only characterize this as a change of front on the part of the Government at the expense of the 2,000,000 agricultural labourers it was now proposed to enfranchise; and although he had no doubt the clause would be carried, he wanted to make his protest against it, in order that he might have a satisfactory answer to give any of the 2,000,000 labourers, if, in the event of an Election next year, he were asked whether he supported the proposal to hang up their enfranchisement until 1886. This was a change of front on the part of the Government, because there was no doubt that when they introduced this Bill they contemplated the natural accompaniment of all Reform Bills, a special Registration Act. It was understood so in the country; but when the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth was accepted, he (Mr. Jesse Collings) had his suspicions as to what was being arranged as a compromise with regard to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey). It was said it was only for the convenience of debate that the Amendment he referred to was withdrawn; but they saw now that it was preparatory to the hanging up of this matter until 1886. What was the meaning of the clause of his hon. Friend the Mem-

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ber for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler)? If the Bill should pass before the 31st of July—and they could not deny the possibility—they said to the 2,000,000 agricultural labourers—“You shall not have the right to the franchise as soon as you might have it.” But suppose the Bill did not pass by the 31st of July. They all knew that, in the natural course of events, the voters would be put on the list during the year 1885; and, therefore, this clause must be read in the light of the interpretation put upon it by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James), who, when speaking about it the other day, said that if the clause were carried he, on behalf of the Government, promised that no special Registration Bill should be introduced. Unless read in the light of the Attorney General’s interpretation the clause of his hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) could have no effect whatever; and, therefore, he (Mr. Jesse Collings) maintained that this was a change of intention on the part of the Government. He did not think it was likely; but suppose the Government went out of Office next spring upon some point of their policy, or suppose they resigned upon the Redistribution Bill itself, what would happen? The Opposition would come in, and have the whole manipulation of the redistribution. That was not a nice look-out for the 2,000,000 labourers, who were in future to enjoy the franchise; because, although the possession of the franchise was a good thing in itself, its value, from his point of view, very much depended on the nature of the redistribution. He had no fear as to the kind of Redistribution Bill which would be passed, because it could not be supposed for a moment that the 2,000,000 agricultural labourers would allow those already possessing the franchise to finally settle what the value of their votes should be. Any unfair Redistribution Bill would not be allowed to stand any considerable time after the 2,000,000 were admitted to power. He did not attach much importance to that; but what he did attach importance to was, that it should not be said that the Liberal Party, by their action, deprived these men of the exercise of the franchise until a certain date. If the exercise of electoral power by these men was to be postponed, let

it be postponed by the Opposition, or in “another place.” If a General Election took place, as it might in 1885, do not let it be said that men who were considered by Parliament fit to have the vote were not allowed to use it. If the clause stood by itself, it was valueless; if it stood by the light of the interpretation of the Attorney General, which interpretation amounted to a promise that no special Registration Bill should be brought in, it was a retrograde step on the part of the Government, which he regretted. He would like the Government to fall back upon their original intention of introducing a special Registration Bill, or else leave the matter open, so that in the coming year those in power might be free to take what course they thought fit.

Mr. RAIKES said, it was impossible not to feel a sense of refreshment at the ingenuous candour of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). He only wished other hon. Members opposite would place themselves so frankly in correspondence with the House as the hon. Gentleman had just done. At the same time, he (Mr. Raikes) rose to say that he, for one, did not think so badly of Her Majesty’s Government as the hon. Member for Ipswich appeared to think of them. He did not believe that when the Bill was introduced it was the intention of the Government to pass a Registration Bill immediately on the heels of this measure, and so, practically, to exemplify that they were not in earnest in their promise to bring in a redistribution scheme. He believed the Government had intended to introduce a Redistribution Bill next year; and, so far as he could judge, there had been no change of position on their part in accepting the clause of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. He very much regretted, however, that his hon. Friend should have been the Member to propose this particular new clause; because it appeared to him that, although very effective speeches had been made, both by the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) with regard to this question, there had been no speech which had more completely demonstrated the hollowness of the clause than the speech made by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton himself; it appeared to

Mr. Jesse Collings

him that the clause merely amounted, as it were, to crossing "t's" and dotting "i's." By it they would not make the slightest difference; but they would run a great risk of attaching value to that which really had no value. He dismissed it altogether as having no real or appreciable bearing on the merits of the case. In the event of the Bill obtaining the Royal Assent before the 31st of July, the clause would have some value, inasmuch as it would tend to prevent the confusion which would arise; but he was certain that such an event was not only in the highest degree improbable, but that if it seemed to be within the bounds of possibility, it would be possible, either in this House or the other House, to take some step which would prevent the confusion contemplated. Although a good deal had been said as to what would be their position in the event of a Redistribution Bill not being passed, and as to how extremely worthless this provision would be to protect them against the inconvenience which would then arise, he wanted to ask the House to consider what effect the clause would have upon the future registration of the constituencies in the event of a Redistribution Bill passing? As he had said, he regarded it as extremely improbable that this Bill would receive the Royal Assent before the 31st of July next. What probability was there of a Redistribution Bill, even if it should pass next year, receiving the Royal Assent by the 31st of July? He did not believe, however sincere the Government might be as to passing a Redistribution Bill next year, that they would ever get it through; and though he did not believe this contingency would arise, those who supported a Government who indicated their sincerity in this matter ought to consider what would be the result if the Government policy was successful next year. Suppose there was a Redistribution Bill which was satisfactory to both Houses of Parliament, and it received the Royal Assent, what must be the first consequence? There must then be a Boundary Commission, and that Commission must examine the limits of every constituency probably in the whole of the United Kingdom. They must then report, and their Report must be considered by Parliament, and legislation must ensue upon that Report;

and when that Boundary Commission had been appointed, and had sat and reported, and when legislation had taken place, they would then have to pass a Registration Bill, in order to deal with the new constituencies created under that Boundary Commission; and, therefore, anybody who could suppose that the work of redistribution could come into operation next year must lay himself open to the charge of not having fairly or fully considered this question. Then, what would be the position after they had passed a Redistribution Bill, even if the Boundary Commission should report in time for a Winter Session in 1885, and a Bill should be passed in November or December, in order to enable the Registers to be made up for the new constituencies as delimited by the Commission? What a state of confusion they would be in in getting the Registers in readiness by January! He thought it extremely probable that there would be no Registers. He attached very little value to the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Albert Grey), though he thought that, in view of all these difficulties, even the 1st of January, 1887, would be the earliest date when the Registers would be ready; and he considered the present Amendment worth a good deal less than that of the hon. Member opposite. He hoped the House and the country would take note that if this clause was added to the Bill, at all events, it was added to the Bill in defiance of the protests of those who were really anxious to see this scheme properly supplemented by a scheme of redistribution, and which without that would only lead to confusion and unnecessary trouble, because all through 1885 the registration authorities would be hard at work providing a Register which was never to come into operation if the Government were in earnest; and after they had devoted the greater part of 1885 to making this factitious Register, at the end of the year they would be called upon to undo the whole of the work. These considerations, he thought, were worthy of attention by the Committee; and he should have been sorry to have sat through this discussion without contributing a humble opinion that, however plausible the arguments in favour of this clause might be, they were of extremely little substantial value.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT wished to know whether provisions could not be inserted in the Bill making it come into operation in Scotland at the same time as in other parts of the United Kingdom?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was unable to agree with the right hon. Member (Mr. Raikes) as to the value of this clause, which was now moved by a supporter of the Government. Before any date was suggested nine-tenths of the House were open in mind as to whether redistribution should form a part of the scheme of Reform or not. That matter was left entirely open; but the Committee would remember that on Friday last the Prime Minister made a very precise, and, indeed, a very solemn declaration, in addition to what had previously fallen from him, to the effect that it was the intention of the Government to make "a strong and resolute effort to deal with the question of redistribution next year." Although he was not one who could be supposed to hold a very high opinion of any declaration by the Government, still this was a declaration in which the Committee might be prepared to place confidence. But, in addition to that declaration, the Government decided to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. He put these two things together, and he noticed that, with the exception of the speech of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), there had not been a word of objection to the course which the Prime Minister had adopted from any part of the House on the other side. Therefore, they ought to take precautions to insure a reasonable and proper allowance of time for the settlement of redistribution before the new enfranchisement took effect. He did not think he put the matter too high, and he could not say that he looked upon the declaration of the Prime Minister as a concession of great value. In connection with this point, he could not help recalling the plan that was adopted by Mr. Disraeli in 1867. Having passed a Reform Bill, in which no date was mentioned, and having been beaten on the Irish Church Bill, what course did Mr. Disraeli take? He came down and announced that he had advised Her Majesty that a Dissolution should take place, and that an appeal should be made to the new constituencies. That was assented to unani-

mously by the House of Commons, and he thought that formed a very strong precedent in the event of a Dissolution taking place, and the Government should appeal to the new constituencies rather than to the old. But what he wanted to point out was that, if the Prime Minister adopted such a course as that, he would be only following the precedent set by Mr. Disraeli. But he thought they were completely guaranteed against anything of that sort; for, by inserting this date in the Bill, together with the declaration of the Prime Minister, they declared that so far as they could provide, no matter what might happen to the present Government, the Bill should not come into operation until 1886. This was, therefore, a guarantee of some value, if not a complete guarantee, and one which ought not to be refused. He should be glad to know from the Prime Minister, if that was possible, whether, considering the fact that the scheme of redistribution would probably be much larger than any former scheme, and considering that the time of Parliament was now much more occupied than it used to be when Reform was formerly before the House, he should be glad to know whether the Prime Minister thought the ordinary length of the Session, taking into account the other matters which Parliament must deal with, would be sufficient to deal with the question of redistribution? He thought it possible that great doubt might arise on that point, unless precautions were taken against the Session proving too short for that purpose. Then there was another matter which might be taken into consideration, and which would strengthen confidence in the declaration as to the intentions and the earnestness of the Government. He imagined that the question of boundaries need not be deferred till next year. He saw no reason why that should not be provided for in the course of the coming autumn; but on that point he was only asking for information; and if he was in error he would apologize to the Committee and to those who had made up their minds that on any pretext whatever the extension of the franchise was too large, and was altogether opposed to Constitutional safety. He could understand those who held that opinion opposing this Amendment, and declining to consider it as a concession or anything of any

value; but there were many others who thought that the extension of the franchise was not in itself an evil, or a measure which they should be afraid to deal with; and as they were unable to compel the Government to adopt what he thought would have been the right and proper course—namely, dealing with the two subjects at once, he thought they might consider the concession as to which a certain value did attach.

MR. GLADSTONE: Considering the points which the noble Lord has raised, in conjunction with the general spirit of his remarks, I may answer at once. One of the noble Lord's questions relates to the possibility of an ordinary Session not being long enough for a Redistribution Bill; and the noble Lord asks me whether it would be the duty of the Government to consider the adoption of special means for pushing the measure forward. First of all, let me say that I consider the pledge, which, undoubtedly, we intend to stamp and seal by assenting to this clause, as a pledge which we give not so much as to the present Administration as a pledge representing that which will always be the Executive Government of the country. Our desire is to enable the present Government, as well as a future Government, to deal with redistribution next year. Certain things may occur to defeat that object; but that is what we consider will be the duty of the present Government, and of any that may take its place. Speaking in that sense, we think it would be the duty of the Government, having taken that pledge, to take every secondary or subsidiary measure that would give it effect. I do not like to entertain such subjects as that of lengthening any ordinary Session which is felt in our time to have reached the limits of physical or mental strength. It is a question in what way time may be saved. There are many ways of doing that. There is one case I may mention. In 1872 there was a measure dealing with redistribution; but I should like to say that it would be our duty to adopt every measure which would increase, so far as necessity demanded, the available time for dealing with redistribution next year. That, I think, probably gives an answer, as far as it is possible to do so. Then the noble Lord asks whether it might not be possible to relieve next Session, and prevent that

block of Business which some have anticipated as likely to impede the arrangements with regard to Reform, by issuing a Boundary Commission in the present year. That ought not to be a subject entirely neglected; and though I cannot say that we have actually arrived at a conclusion upon that point, give an opinion—though not a final yet it is a very proper subject for consideration, and so far as I am able to opinion—there is reason to hope that considerable economy of time and work might, perhaps, be effected by the adoption of that course in the present year.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The last observation of the right hon. Gentleman opens up a very serious question. I own I do not understand how it is proposed that a Boundary Commission should be appointed until we know what are to be the boroughs whose boundaries are to be investigated; and if we are to know which are to be the boroughs whose boundaries are to be investigated, we must know something of the scheme of redistribution. In point of fact, the further we go in the discussion of this Bill, the more do we see reason to feel the inconvenience of the course which the Government have adopted. I must say that the opinions which I held, and which I endeavoured to express at the beginning of the discussions on this Bill, have been confirmed and strengthened by what has taken place; and I feel more strongly now than I did at the beginning of the discussion that redistribution ought to have been made part of the measure, or, if not actually made a part of the same Bill, it ought to have been proposed in such a form as to give a clear understanding as to what it was to be. When that was refused, and we were told we must go on and pass this Bill before seeing what redistribution was to be, the next position we endeavoured to take up, was, at all events, to secure for us and for Parliament an opportunity of seeing the redistribution scheme before this Bill should become law; and, therefore, my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) brought forward his Amendment with a view to secure that the enormous alteration of the franchise now to take place until the redistribution had been settled. The House did not agree to that, and we were then

left to discuss the Franchise Bill by itself as well as we could. The other day the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) brought forward a Motion, to which reference has been made. That was not a Motion which, in itself, secured the object we have in view, or which was expressed in the Amendment of my right hon. and gallant Friend. We listened to the discussion that was raised by the hon. Member for South Northumberland; but it certainly seemed to us that there was very little to be gained, if there was anything at all to be gained, by putting in any date into the Bill, unless, indeed, you put in such a date as to carry the Bill over the necessary effects of redistribution, which, I suppose, nobody would propose or anybody would accept. That would be fixing a date which would have some reason about it, because we should have been sure there would be no appeal to the newly enfranchised voters until some other measure had been passed, or until redistribution had taken place. Now, with regard to what passed on the occasion when the hon. Member for South Northumberland brought forward his Motion. It is said I expressed some approval of the course which the hon. Member adopted in withdrawing his Motion, and that I had done so because I was satisfied with the approval of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. That was not at all the case. What I said was that, looking at the Motion of the hon. Member for South Northumberland, it did not seem to me to have in it any security whatever for effecting the object we had in view, and that the only security we had was the word and the pledge of the Ministry. I do not undervalue the word and the pledge of the Ministry; on the contrary, I said I was quite sure that these pledges were given honestly, and that the intention of the Government was to redeem them, either then, or on some other occasion. I made the remark which I now repeat, that it is not altogether what may be the intentions of the Government, but what may be in the power of the Government; and it is extremely doubtful whether circumstances may not arise which, with all the good-will of the Government, may prevent their bringing forward, or at least passing, a redistribution scheme next Session. Then there is the

consideration that they may bring forward a scheme which may indeed be a redistribution scheme, but which will make matters worse than ever. The hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) has given us to understand that what he and his Friends want is the manipulation of the constituencies. If they cannot gain that, they may say—"Very well; then we decline to allow any Bill whatever to be passed. You will then be thrown over to a new Parliament which will be elected by the new constituencies, and when we get the new Parliament to work then we shall see what we shall see." There is no concealment about it. The hon. Member for Ipswich is perfectly honest and frank, as he always is, in making his statements. He does not conceal anything. With regard to another point to which reference has been made once or twice—the idea of passing a Registration Bill to give effect to this Bill at an earlier date than would naturally be the case. If no such Registration Bill is passed it seems almost certain that the words of this Amendment will be mere surplusage; because whether they are in or not, unless this Bill passes into law by the 31st of July, they will be of no effect. We are told that such a Bill was passed by Mr. Disraeli's Government in 1868. It is true there was such Bill for the purpose of carrying out registration in order that an appeal might be made to the new constituency rather than to the old. But that was in very different circumstances, and meant a very different thing to that now suggested. That was not to make an imperfect scheme take effect. It was to make a perfect scheme take effect. The Dissolution was caused by circumstances which had nothing whatever to do with the question of Reform, and the effect of the vote was to render it necessary or desirable that there should be a Dissolution and an appeal to the people, and then the Government of the day and the Prime Minister, Mr. Disraeli, thought it right to provide that the appeal should be made to the new constituency which had been established by the Act of 1867-8, their scheme of Reform having been perfected and completed. But that was a wholly different thing from any new registration to meet an incomplete scheme of Reform, and giving it where the franchise has been extended and the redistribution of seats

has not been settled. Therefore, I am thrown back on the consideration that it is impossible to suppose that a new Registration Bill could be passed under the circumstances of the present time, and that if it is not passed the words of this Amendment are mere surplusage and not worthy of high consideration. We are told that if the Amendment is mere surplusage we may as well have it as a sort of record. Yes; but we are also told that by accepting it we are implying that we are satisfied with it. That is not the case, and we should be deceiving the House and the country. We are not in the least satisfied. My right hon. and gallant Friend made a proposal which did satisfy us; but this does not.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, that if he went into the Lobby alone he should be glad of the opportunity of doing so against this clause, for it seemed to him to be not worth the paper upon which it was written. As a matter of fact, this clause would have no operation whatever, because there was no chance of this Bill passing through all its stages by July 31. Registration would begin on the 10th of June, which had now been a week passed; and long before the Bill could receive the Royal Assent the facts which went to make up registration would have become known, and, therefore, this clause was really worth nothing. It was an attempt to deceive the country as to the concession made by the Government. It would be better to divide on the clause, and not encumber the Bill with this Amendment.

MR. TOMLINSON wished to make a few remarks, not in repetition of any of the arguments which had been advanced, but in reference to the important statement which the Prime Minister had just made. The Committee might recollect that on the Motion to go into Committee on this Bill he had called attention to the question of boundaries, and he had put on the Paper an Instruction to the Committee giving them power to insert clauses for the purpose of appointing a Boundaries Commission. On that proposal he obtained the best Division yet given on this Bill; and, therefore, he wished to express his satisfaction in finding that the Prime Minister had come round to his view. On the occasion he referred to the right

hon. Gentleman had said that the Government did not think the question of boundaries belonged to a Bill dealing solely with the franchise; but that it belonged to the delimitation of areas. He ventured to think that a Commission might be set to work at once on some of the boroughs which no possible scheme of redistribution would deprive of Members. He did not know whether that was what the right hon. Gentleman intended; but he understood him to state it to be the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill to appoint a Boundaries Commission this Session. [*Interruption.*] What he was now asking was that the Prime Minister having now made this declaration, they should have some further information as to how he meant to deal with the subject. [*Continued interruptions.*] As these interruptions continued, he begged to move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I trust that that Motion is not intended to be pressed, and I rise to answer the question of the hon. Member. The hon. Gentleman is mistaken. I made no reference to the introduction of a Bill to appoint a Boundaries Commission this Session. We entertain no such idea; nor did I understand the question of the noble Lord to refer to such an idea. The point in my mind was this—I said it was quite evident that the work of such a Commission could not be completed; but the question was whether a Royal Commission should be appointed by the authority of the Crown. That was the course taken in 1831, before the passing, or even the introduction, of the Reform Bill.

MR. PELL said, he regarded the Motion to report Progress as justified by the noisy interruptions of his hon. Friend's remarks. The answer of the Prime Minister had no meaning whatever for him, because he was unable to hear the remarks of his hon. Friend, and such a Motion as this was the only means that Members had of insuring freedom of debate. The hon. Member was perfectly justified in making the Motion; but Liberal Members were not justified in their interruptions.

[*Tenth Night.*]

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he thought that at times it was desirable to have a moral *clôture*; but that was not so on the present occasion. The hon. Member was not endeavouring to obstruct Business, and therefore he thought the Committee might tolerate the hon. Member.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he understood the Prime Minister now to state that a Boundary Commission could be issued by the Crown without coming to Parliament for authority to do so. He thought he was right in saying that in the Act of 1868 there was a special clause inserted for the appointment of a Royal Commission; and as the Assistant Commissioners who would be required to work out the details did not, he believed, work gratuitously, it would, he thought, be necessary to come to Parliament to authorize their appointment. He wished to impress upon the Committee that this was no trivial matter. It was dealt with as a serious matter on going into Committee, and the Prime Minister had brought it forward now to meet a suggestion that Parliament would have great difficulty in dealing with this subject next Session. He thought the Committee had a right to know something more as to the intentions of the Government with reference to this matter.

MR. LEWIS said, he was sure the Committee would like to know something more about this Boundary Commission. This matter was like that of the Registration Bill the other day—it crept out by degrees. Looking at the matter practically, if the Boundary Commission was to be appointed by the authority of the Crown, and not by Act of Parliament, then what were they to inquire into? The boundaries of all the boroughs that might be created? A question had been asked as to what were the intentions of the Government, and the Prime Minister had replied that the Government had not yet decided; but they appeared to entertain the idea of issuing a Boundary Commission, in order to take a step ahead of redistribution. He did not think it was possible to have a Boundary Commission, unless the Government had previously defined the constituencies; but the Prime Minister had stated that the Redistribution Bill

had not been practically considered; that the Government had only got to certain lines, and yet it now appeared that they had been considering whether they should issue a Royal Commission to determine the boundaries of constituencies, about which they had not yet made up their minds. That seemed to him to be simply trifling with the question, and he held that the Committee had a right to be dealt with more considerably. He assumed that the Attorney General had no answer to the objections and the suggestions he (Mr. Lewis) had made with regard to registration; and he was justified in assuming that, because the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to him on Friday as one who was experienced in the subject. It was clear neither the Attorney General nor the Government had attempted to make any answer to his objection, and next year the House and country would find themselves in the same difficulty as now with regard to registration.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he wished to say one word, and one word only, in regard to what had fallen from the Prime Minister—that they were to have a Royal Commission to make inquiries and advise Her Majesty's Government in regard to the boundary question. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that the same thing had occurred in 1831; but, as a matter of fact, something more than that had occurred in 1831, and he (Lord John Manners) ventured to say that there was no part of the Reform Bill that gave rise to so much angry disputation, and so much accusation of unjust and partizan action, as the mode in which the boroughs to be disfranchised and enfranchised under the recommendation of that very Royal Commission were to be dealt with. He would point out that in 1867, in order to avoid any imputation of any kind, it was determined to have a Boundary Commission, and that Commission was not only settled by Act of Parliament, but the name of every one of the Commissioners was inserted in the Act and submitted beforehand to the judgment of the House. This was done so that there might be no imputation as to the fairness and impartiality of the advice and recommendation which the Boundary Commissioners might give to the Government and Parliament. But now it seemed that they were to revert

to the less satisfactory system of 1831, and were to have this immense redistribution of political power virtually settled by a Commission, in the nomination of which Parliament would not be consulted, but the Members of which would be virtually the nominees of Her Majesty's Government. He ventured to say that a settlement of that kind would go no way whatever to reconcile the feeling of the country to the measure, in regard to which the Government were now imposing this fragment of a Reform Bill upon the House of Commons.

SIR ROBERT PEELE: The Committee seems to me to be in such a state of excitement that it is hardly possible to discuss a matter of such great importance at this very late hour of the afternoon. I could have hoped that this discussion would have lasted not only to-day, but would have gone into a considerable part of a subsequent day. The statement of the Prime Minister with regard to the Boundary Commission he contemplated, when he told us himself that he had not made up his mind as to what should be the programme of redistribution, is one of a most startling nature, and one which should engage the attention of the Committee for a much longer period than seems now to be allotted to it. I should like to make an observation as to what has fallen from the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). The speech of the hon. Member for Ipswich was, no doubt, of a very candid character; but it was so candid that I have great apprehension that the Government will not deal with this question of redistribution in a fair and complete spirit. What he said was this. He wanted to avoid the possibility of the Conservative Party having the manipulation of the redistribution of seats. Well, we know that perfectly well. It is very true that the Prime Minister told us some time ago that he was anxious to deal with this question of redistribution in a fair and just spirit, and I believed the Prime Minister. But we heard also from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) that this question of redistribution was not one of principle, but one of Parliamentary tactics. That is exactly what we feel, and it is upon that ground that in the few observations

I made upon the second reading of the Bill I pointed out to the House how important it was that we should have, as in 1832, and as in 1867, a complete scheme before us, when we should be able to deal with the subject in a practical manner. And what is the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton? This afternoon he says—"Fix the date when you can pass your Redistribution Bill next year, and then; if you do not pass that Bill, you will be able to go to the country upon the extended Franchise Bill of the present year." Sir, I do not think the House of Commons is desirous of proceeding upon those lines. Quite the contrary. The Government have told us that they wish to introduce a Redistribution Bill; but it certainly appears to me that it would be unconstitutional to tie the hands of Parliament as to when the fragment of a Bill should come into operation if the remaining fragment is not passed by the House of Commons. I look with the greatest suspicion on the conduct of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. I have the highest opinion of their integrity when they are able to exercise their integrity free and unfettered; and I say now that I do not know that I ever saw a Party sitting below the Gangway such as is now sitting there. They do not even allow a measure to be discussed. When an hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Tomlinson) got up to make an observation as to the most important statement of the Prime Minister, he was, I may say, hooted down in his place, and not allowed to make the remarks which he fully intended to make. Certainly, he moved the adjournment of the debate, and the Committee got into a more temperate spirit and allowed him to proceed in his remarks, and they were supplemented subsequently by observations from the Prime Minister even more startling than those we had heard from him before—namely, that he contemplated a Boundary Commission; but that that Commission would proceed on lines that were not to be submitted to Parliament before the close of this Session. I think I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that. I must say that I do not see how it is possible for a Boundary Commission to deal with this question, unless we have a scheme before Parliament. We ought to have the entire scheme before us, and I cannot accept the

Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, tying the hands of Parliament to a particular course, if they do not think fit to pass a complete measure, whatever my hon. Friend may say about the earnestness of the Government to pass a Redistribution Bill. My opinion is that unless the Conservative Party take very great care they will have this Redistribution Bill thrown in their faces next year, and that if they do not feel disposed to accept it the Election will then go on the Franchise Bill passed this year, giving an extended franchise to 2,000,000 of voters; but not the complete scheme which the right hon. Gentleman has proposed to the House. I am sorry to have trespassed upon the time of the House in this matter; but I do feel it to be of primary importance that we should not tie our hands. I consider that it would be most unconstitutional if we were to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and allow a fragment of a Bill to come into operation before the remaining portions which are promised in another Session are before us.

MR. WARTON said, he had a point to urge which he did not think had been sufficiently considered by hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had referred to a declaration made by a conspicuous Member of the Government, who had said that that question of redistribution was not one of principle, but one of Parliamentary tactics. That was perfectly true. The Conservative side of the House was quite able to see the position in which it was put; they quite understood the alternative offered to them, to have this Franchise Bill passed without redistribution, so that when redistribution was proposed it could be handed to them, as it were, with a pistol at their heads. That was a question of tactics, and to his mind he must say there was only one method of meeting such tactics. They held one trump card; and, with all respect to "another place," he trusted that that card would be played. He hoped the House of Lords would reject the Bill.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 256; Noes 130: Majority 126.—(Div. List, No. 121.)

Sir Robert Peel

MR. GLADSTONE: I now move to report Progress, and in doing so I wish to make an explanation. In answering the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), I am not sure whether I used the words "Royal Commission" or not; but if I did I wish to say that they were, perhaps, not quite accurate, because a Royal Commission has, perhaps, too much the semblance of authority. If the Government should arrive at a conclusion, which I have said it has not, on the subject, we should follow the precedent of 1831, when certain Gentlemen were requested by the Government to undertake certain duties and obtain certain information, but the direct authority of Her Majesty was not put in requisition.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. LEWIS said, he wished to give Notice of his intention to move an Amendment to the clause.

LORD JOHN MANNERS thought the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was not satisfactory, and wished to point out that in 1831 the course taken was afterwards lamented and condemned by Lord Althorp himself.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that in 1831 there was a Schedule to the Bill setting forth those boroughs which were to be disfranchised. There was a scheme before Parliament of which information could be readily obtained; but there was no scheme before Parliament at the present time.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he was afraid the right hon. Gentleman's statement with regard to the Commission was misunderstood in some parts of the House. He understood it to be a Commission, whether Royal or otherwise—["Order, order!"]—he was perfectly in Order—whether it were a Royal Commission or otherwise that was to be appointed to inquire into the Boundary Question, he wished to point out that if the right hon. Gentleman appointed his Commission before he communicated his redistribution scheme to Parliament, that Commission would have to inquire into the boundaries of non-existent constituencies, as to the calling into existence

of which there was no proposal before the country.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not mean that.

MR. LEWIS said, no one could doubt that after the extraordinary revelations now made by the Prime Minister it was a matter of great importance that they should report Progress. It was only fair that notice should be given to the Prime Minister that if no one else when the Committee was resumed asked what his intention was as to whether the Commission should be Royal or otherwise, on Thursday night, at all events, he (Mr. Lewis) would ask him whether the Government had made up their minds on the subject.

MR. GLADSTONE: We have no intention whatever of making up our minds on the subject. It is a question which we have to examine carefully, whether we can obtain information which we think will be useful without authority—whether we can or cannot obtain information which would be worth having as a preliminary measure.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I understood the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to say, in answer to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), that the Government had already been considering the desirability of appointing a Royal Commission. Does the right hon. Gentleman adhere to that assertion? It is impossible for us to deal with it at the present moment.

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday*.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 231.]

(Colonel Colthurst, Mr. Findlater, Mr. Parnell,
Mr. Deasy, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Shaw.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
“That the Bill be now read a second time.”—(Colonel Colthurst.)

MR. BIGGAR was proceeding to object, when—

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes before Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—(PROCEDURE ON WEDNES- DAYS).—RESOLUTION.

MR. STEVENSON said, he rose to call attention to the Rules of Procedure on Wednesdays with respect to Bills in charge of private Members, and to move a Resolution for their amendment. He would not seek to disturb the admirable arrangement which secured to the House and the officials a free evening by the Rule which prevented the House sitting after 6 o'clock on Wednesday. But the Rule had been turned to a purpose never intended, and had been made the means of deliberately wasting the hours of the afternoon. He felt amply justified, therefore, in proposing some remedy for the grievance of “talking out” Bills. He was at a loss to understand how hon. Members could reconcile this practice with the honour and dignity of the illustrious Assembly of which they were Members. It was a great privilege, by the right of a seat in the House, to occupy the precious time of the House by speech which should never be used inconsistently with the dignity of the House and the welfare of the nation. This practice prevented both sides being properly represented in debate, the friends of a measure abstaining from speaking in its support, and the character of the debates was degraded by speeches made to waste time, and not addressed to the judgment and intelligence of the House. Private Members had large privileges on Tuesdays and Fridays of initiating debates; but Wednesday was their day for legislation. The stages of Bills on that day were known long beforehand; Members came down anxious to vote, and the public desired outside to learn the opinion of the House, and the greatest vexation and disappointment resulted from the action of one or two Members. People outside could not understand it. They said—Why not alter the Rules of the House? Any Town Council would be laughed at that wasted a whole afternoon, and did

not finish the first Business on the Agenda Paper. By the Resolution he proposed, the first Order on Wednesday, or any Order coming on before 2 o'clock, would be decided on at 5 o'clock—that was, after at least three hours' discussion. The House might carry the Previous Question, might adjourn the debate, might accept an Amendment, but would, somehow or other, settle the question. The Previous Question met the cases in which "talking out" was defended as a means of getting rid of a question not ripe for legislation; but talking out was the clumsiest possible method. The House must not think that the Resolution would be often acted on. Its existence would take away the temptation to waste time. The debates would be real and business-like; the speeches would be brief and pointed; and although the Rule would be applicable to only the earliest Orders on the Paper, time would be left for useful discussion on the succeeding Orders. He could assure the House of the deep anxiety felt by their constituents on this question of the waste of the time of the House. The people were taking a deep interest in the proceedings of Parliament, and in the increasingly pressing social questions of the day; and he asked the House by adopting the Resolution to rescue itself from the impotence and incapacity from which it suffered. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution which stood in his name.

MR. HASTINGS, in seconding the Resolution, said, that the function entrusted to the House by the people was to consider and decide on the legislative proposals submitted to it; but under existing arrangements this was often impossible. The process that went on from Wednesday to Wednesday was not to meet a Bill with fair arguments, but to go to such lengths of speech that it was impossible to come to a conclusion within a reasonable time. No proceedings more damaging to the reputation of the House could be adopted. The legislative Business of the House could only be dealt with in the future by a continuance of the practice of Morning Sittings; and if the habit of talking Bills out increased, the Business of the House would be greatly impeded. He could conceive no better mode of closing a debate than that of fixing a particular time. If the closing of a discussion was

to depend upon the vote of the majority, there would always be a feeling among the minority that they were badly used; but it would be impossible that that feeling should arise if the debate closed at a time fixed by the House. By taking this step they could apply a remedy to an acknowledged evil, and at the same time would show the country they were in earnest in their resolve to further legislation. He begged to second the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That on Wednesdays, if the Debate on the first Order of the Day, or any Order that has been reached by Two o'clock (not being a proceeding in Committee, nor on the Consideration of a Bill as amended, nor on the Consideration of Lords Amendments) be continued until Five o'clock, Mr. Speaker shall put the Question then under discussion; and, if the Previous Question, or a Motion of Adjournment, or an Amendment to the Main Question shall have been moved, they shall be severally put, and afterwards the Main Question shall be put without further Debate."—(*Mr. Stevenson.*)

MR. WARTON said, that a great agitation was now on foot as to private Members' Bills; but he would remind the House that the first duty of Parliament was to attend to the Estimates, and all this cry about legislation arose from personal vanity on the part of Members and a desire to make themselves conspicuous. In the short time he had been a Member of the House he regretted to have seen that first duty of Parliament subordinated first to Government and then to private Members' legislation. Last year 19 of the Army Votes were taken on the last Saturday of the Session, and the Indian Budget was not taken till quite late; and he put it to private Members opposite whether they considered their own precious little Bills of more importance than the Army and Navy and the great Indian Empire? ["Question!"] That was the Question, and he contended that hon. Members who were under the impression that to push forward their own paltry little Bills was of more importance than such Business as he had mentioned were utterly mistaken as to their most elementary duties. Almost invariably on Wednesdays five or six Private Bills were on the Paper, and yet the interest taken in them was measured by the fact that Mr. Speaker had to wait for a time, varying from 20 to 50 minutes, before he could take the Chair. He did not

Mr. Stevenson

scruple to say that the Bills brought forward by private Members were usually utter trash. For instance, 14 or 15 county Bills had been brought in in regard to temperance. If the Members who brought them in cared twopence for the principle, they would coalesce in some practical measure. Then, again, the drafting of the Bills was disgraceful, and the grammar wretched; and that defect was even apparent in the terms of the Resolution submitted to the House by the hon. Member opposite—so much so that it was difficult to understand what on earth he meant. There was a spirit of tyranny abroad. The majority wanted to ram their opinions down the throats of the minority. The real truth was that Wednesday after Wednesday a succession of absurd measures were brought forward either from a motive of personal vanity or tyranny. It was the privilege of the majority, when a question came to the vote, to prevail; and it was the privilege of the minority, by every fair means provided by the Rules of the House, to defeat propositions which they did not approve. He objected to every kind of *clôture* as an infraction of the fair Rules of the Parliamentary game. The hon. Member assumed that a person rising late in the debate had no arguments to bring forward. But it often happened that a man who had listened to the whole debate and caught all its lights and shades would be able to make a very valuable contribution to the discussion. A really practical *clôture* would be the shortening of speeches. He had noticed that Liberal Members repeated the same arguments over and over, and that they could not speak without notes and water. But if a man could not speak without notes, it was plain that he knew very little about his subject. The most effectual way to shorten speeches would be to banish notes and water.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that this was not a Motion upon which the Government could press the House to take any particular course. The Mover of the Motion had done him the favour of communicating with him, and he had looked at the matter as impartially as he could. With respect to procedure in general, when proposals had been made for introducing particular Amendments, or what were believed to be Amendments,

he had adopted the conclusion that it was not expedient to open the question except as a whole, and with the opportunity of surveying the entire field. But, in arriving at that conclusion, he was governed by the consideration that the Government were supposed to have a special interest in the matter. There was, however, something peculiar in this case; because as the Motion was framed, as well as the Amendment of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), the Government had no interest in the subject. It was an isolated Motion, touching an isolated portion of the Business of the House—namely, the legislative work of private Members. Now, the great bulk of the work of private Members was not done on Bills, but on Motions and Amendments in Supply. He could not but admit, however, that the case of Wednesday legislation was a very pressing one. Whereas the Business of the Government was carried forward under enormous difficulties, and only a small portion of that which, perhaps, the country might desire was realized in each Session, independent Members had reached a stage in which nothing at all was done. Therefore, his hon. Friend was justified in raising the question. There was only one point about which he entertained a doubt, and that was making it a Standing Order. He thought it would be better to adopt it as an experiment during the rest of the Session. He did think, however, that his hon. Friend had made out his case—that the difficulties attending private legislation were now so severe and hostile as to require special treatment. He did not see anything objectionable in the mode of relief his hon. Friend proposed, which, while it would allow a reasonable time for the discussion of the Order of the Day, would have a considerable effect in preventing the talking out of Bills which had been fortunate enough to secure a favourable position on the Wednesday list. The first question was whether there was a case for doing anything, and to that he could not but answer that there was. The second question was whether it was right on the part of the Government to recommend the House to look favourably on private Members endeavouring to promote legislation apart from the general question in which the Government might have a special interest? To that ques-

tion he would answer that he thought it was right. The third question was whether the mode proposed by his hon. Friend was reasonable and moderate? His hon. Friend shut out certain stages from the operation of his proposal, such as proceedings in Committee and on Report, and Bills as amended coming from the Lords, the stopping of which at the hour named would not be reasonable; and he applied his remedy to stages where lengthened discussion and the opposition of a few might be so used with regard to Private Bills as to prevent their second reading being disposed of, or the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair, or the third reading. That also he considered reasonable. Therefore, as far as the general Motion of his hon. Friend was concerned, the Government concurred in it, and wished to allow it a fair trial. But with regard to the general question of procedure, the more the time drew near when he should have a less personal interest in the matter the more was he convinced that it would be necessary for the House to take effectual measures, not of a coercive kind—he believed that very little could be done by coercive means—for making its procedure more effective. His hon. Friend intended to except Government Bills. The first observation it occurred to him to make on that point was that Government Bills rarely appeared on the Order Book on Wednesday. To attempt to make Government Bills take priority on Wednesday would be so justly and universally resented that it could not be done. But towards the close of the Session the three or four last Wednesdays were generally placed at the disposal of the Government. That was at a time when it was felt to be for the general convenience, and when private Members were in despair of pushing on their Bills, and saw that nothing could be done by their individual and unaided exertions. If Wednesdays were to be given to the Government, it was better it should be done at the end of the Session, when the Prorogation was near, and when the passing of measures desired by the Government might, on the last Wednesday or two, be arrested by one or two Gentlemen watching the hand of the clock. He thought it better on the whole, then, that Government Bills should not be included in the Motion. He could not agree with the

hon. and learned Member for Bridport that no good was to be done by private Members attempting legislation. In former times a great deal had been done by private Members. But the difficulties which now fell so severely on the Government fell still more severely on private Members; and, therefore, the Government were inclined to look with a favourable and friendly eye upon any proposition like that of his hon. Friend, which appeared in itself well considered, moderate in its operation, founded on a real necessity, and which he believed his hon. Friend was ready to adopt as an experiment, so that if the House thought it did not work satisfactorily they might retrace their steps.

MR. ANDERSON said, he thought his Friend ought to be very much satisfied with the speech of the Prime Minister. They were glad that the right hon. Gentleman had assented to the proposal, and the only thing he did not quite like was the desire of the right hon. Gentleman to confine the Rule to the present Session. Private Members were placed under extreme difficulties, and if this proposal were only passed for the present it would lapse at the end; and his hon. Friend would, at the beginning of next Session, have to go through the whole process of balloting for Tuesday after Tuesday, and perhaps might never get an opportunity of bringing it forward again. For his part, he would like to see the Resolution made a Standing Order, or, if not, the Rule should at least last for one Session beyond the present, in order to give it a fair trial. The Prime Minister had not alluded to other Amendments on the Paper; but, perhaps, as he was about to move one, the right hon. Gentleman would offer some remarks upon it. He agreed with one remark that fell from the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), who said there ought to be some limit to the length of speeches. That was a matter he had advocated for the last dozen years in that House, and he believed that the House had arrived at the opinion of the necessity for it. But the hon. and learned Member for Bridport spoke of other things, for he alluded to the lateness of the hour at which they got a House on Wednesday. Considering the well-known efforts made by the hon. and learned Member to prevent his Friends getting into the

House on Wednesday at 12 o'clock, he wondered he was not ashamed to allude to the subject at all. Then the hon. and learned Member read them a lecture, and urged them to go in for Supply on all occasions; but he must point out to the hon. and learned Member that it was not the practice to discuss Supply on Wednesdays. The hon. and learned Member also said that all Private Bills were brought in from personal vanity. The hon. and learned Member occasionally brought in Private Bills himself; and therefore, when he said they were brought in out of personal vanity the hon. and learned Gentleman must be judging other people by himself. [Mr. WARTON: Quite so.] He (Mr. Anderson) denied that private Members' Bills were brought in from any such motive. He was surprised to hear the hon. and learned Member for Bridport oppose the proposal, because it would be a benefit to him in bringing in his Bill with regard to patent medicines; therefore the hon. and learned Member was standing in his own light. Undoubtedly, the great sin—perhaps the worst institution of the House—was that of talking out. There was talking out on Wednesday to reach a quarter to 6, again on Morning Sittings there was talking out to reach 10 minutes to 7, and on every night in the week but Wednesday to reach half-past 12. All this gave rise to a lot of useless talk, much of it not really meant for the subject under discussion, but for no other purpose than to prevent some subsequent Bill being proceeded with. Under these circumstances, he thought they ought to be obliged to his hon. Friend for attempting to deal with the matter, though he only touched one point, that of Wednesday; and if they got that they would have gained a very great step, and possibly some other day they might make a further step. He had an Amendment to move to the Resolution, but in no sense a hostile one, but really to complete the Resolution. His proposal was in substance passed through one of the most important Committees of the House that ever sat upon the question of the Business of the House—namely, the Committee of 1871. A Resolution identical with his, though not confined to Wednesday, was proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, and was carried

unanimously by that Committee. The object of the Amendment was to give facilities for the passing, not of unknown Bills, but of Bills which the House had already stamped with its approval by reading them a second time. It did not attempt to facilitate the position of second readings; on the contrary, it made it far more difficult to pass them through that stage, because after the 1st of June it gave preference to those Bills on which the House had stamped its approval. An hon. Member opposite proposed another Amendment to widen the scope of his Amendment, giving place to those that had passed through "another place." He did not think they need care what was done in another branch of the Legislature—his object was to facilitate the passing of the Bills of this House. He would like to tell the hon. Member how his Amendment would work if adopted in addition to the one he (Mr. Anderson) proposed. For instance, if he, at the commencement of a Session, was unsuccessful in the ballot in getting a good place for a second reading, he should withdraw the Bill and take it along the corridor, and ask some noble Lord to introduce it. If it passed the other House, he would put it down for the first Wednesday in June, when it would take precedence of all other Bills, even those that had been read a second time. Even in the month of May it might be possible to pass a Bill through the other House, and then obtain precedence for it in this House on the first Wednesday of June and on subsequent Wednesdays over all the Bills to which this House had already given much labour, if the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite were adopted. He did not believe the House would like that position of affairs; and he thought it was an abundant reason for rejecting the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member. There was no other point that he need notice; and he would therefore move to add to the Resolution of his hon. Friend the following:—

"When several Bills (other than Government Bills) which have passed different stages have been appointed for the same Wednesday, on and after the 1st day of June they shall be arranged on the Paper in the following order:—1. Consideration of Lords' Amendments. 2. Third Readings. 3. Consideration of Bills as amended in Committee. 4. Bills in Committee. 5. Bills standing for Committee. 6. Second Readings."

Mr. SPEAKER suggested that it would be more convenient if the Resolution of the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. Stevenson) were first disposed of, as that course would prevent complication; and if the Resolution were agreed to, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) could then be moved as an addition when the Amendment was put as a substantive Motion.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, he approached this question with an impartial mind, for he sometimes supported and sometimes opposed Wednesday Bills. He sympathized with the good intentions of the hon. Member; but he believed the matter was a graver one than might be assumed from the simple words of the Resolution. The framer of this Resolution had unconsciously invented a new form of talking out an important measure, by holding out to Members an inducement to keep up a discussion upon any trifling Bill which happened to precede it. It would also make the House of Commons more of a debating society on Wednesday afternoons than ever. Wednesday Bills were most generally only Bills in their form; but, in reality, only Resolutions cast into that shape to show what they looked like. They were germ Bills, which it might often be very desirable should be discussed, while it was exceedingly undesirable to force the House to a premature decision. It would often be equally undesirable to cut short a discussion which might be extremely useful and interesting in threshing out a question, and to invent a new and arbitrary *clôture*, which would not advance useful legislation, and would burden the Division Lists with a great deal more rubbish than they at present contained. He objected to any Member who had bestowed an essay on the House in support of any particular crotchet having the power, before the subject was fully discussed, of pressing the question to a Division, and thereby bringing about a sterile and ridiculous result. [Mr. COURTNEY interrupted, pointing out the alternative of the Previous Question.] He repudiated the suggestion. Nobody would be hoodwinked by a technicality like that, as a decision on the Previous Question would be taken as one on the matter itself. The Prime Minister had agreed to accept this proposal as

an experiment, which was to last for the present Session only; but he protested against making an experiment in fads. They had already quite enough of crude and premature action in that House, and he hoped there would be exhibited that night a sufficient amount of good sound common sense to secure the rejection of the hon. Member's insane proposal.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, that since the short speech, and the equally short visit, of the Prime Minister, this discussion had lost all interest. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Mover of the Resolution had made out his case, although the right hon. Gentleman did not happen to have heard the hon. Member's speech. The right hon. Gentleman, however, had said that he would not consent to the Resolution being carried as a Standing Order, but merely assented to it being tried as an experiment for the rest of the present Session.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he was anxious that there should be no mistake upon this point. It was true that the right hon. Gentleman had announced that he could only assent to this proposal on the understanding that it should endure for the present Session only; but, on reconsideration, he was willing that it should remain in force until the end of next Session.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, that that was the most extraordinary statement that he had ever heard from the Government Benches. The House was asked to accept an assurance on behalf of the Prime Minister directly contrary to the words that had been used a short time ago by the right hon. Gentleman himself. The Resolution would only apply to seven Wednesdays during the remainder of the Session. He did not admire the practice of talking out Bills. It not only interfered with the Business of the House, but it was often a great tactical mistake. It was not only those who were opposed to the Bill who were anxious to have it talked out. Certainly, the course of Parliamentary proceedings would be more straightforward if they always took a Division instead of talking out a Bill. But this did not dispose of the question, for this Motion would place an arbitrary limit on the length of a debate; and he believed that of all methods of shortening debates

the arbitrary limitation of the length of a debate was the clumsiest and worst. They could not say who should occupy the three or four hours that were to be allowed; and it might be that the supporters of the measure might occupy it all to themselves, and when the Bill was rejected or carried there would have been no statement of the arguments against it. A short time ago a Minister of the Crown occupied three hours and three-quarters in one speech. In the same way, it would be in the power of the Mover and Seconder to occupy all the time until 5 o'clock, and then insist on a Division being taken. The Secretary to the Treasury said the Previous Question might be moved. No doubt it could. But those who voted for the Previous Question thereby ranged themselves as opponents of the Bill. This proposal was evidently directed against the full and free discussion, and absolute threshing out, of Bills connected with the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sundays, which were frequently presented to the Notice of the House on Wednesdays. He himself had more than once proposed that Bills should be carried on from one Session to the other; but the course now suggested would result in the selection by accident of a few measures which should inevitably receive the decision of the House. The proposal before the House meant the selection in a most ridiculous way of what might be the very worst measures before the House, and which would have this exceptional advantage. True, the proposal, as it had been limited by the Prime Minister, was a very trivial matter; but, trivial as it was, he believed it would be a mischievous example, and he would therefore vote against it.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he had been amused at the speech of the hon. and learned Member, for he had hitherto been so much in favour of rapid legislation that he had brought forward a proposal that Bills should be carried over from one Session to another. The hon. and learned Member, however, was so enamoured of his own proposal that he looked with jealousy on any rival proposal for securing the same object, and which he (Lord Randolph Churchill) ventured to say secured that object in a much better way than the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Ply-

mouth. The proposal before the House was undoubtedly intended to enable the House to come to a decision on Bills submitted by private Members, and from his experience of the House he was not in the least opposed to the proposal. He thought that if some Resolution of this kind were not adopted they would run the risk of having all the time of private Members monopolized by the Government. Bills were brought forward on Wednesdays which were of great interest, not from a Party point of view, but socially and nationally; and a small clique in the interests of small classes were enabled, by one manœuvre or another, to prevent the House coming to a decision, and the day was completely and entirely wasted. He was very much disposed to doubt the utility of a debate which did not wind up with a Division. This was not a bad opportunity to allude to the proceedings which marked Wednesdays in the Commons. He had seen Mr. Speaker sitting in the Chair at the Table for three-quarters of an hour, while Members refused to come in and make a House. He had also seen the most extraordinary artifices used by Members in the Lobby to dissuade Members from coming in. The time had come when antics and manœuvres of that kind should be put a stop to, for they were a disgrace to the House. Another reason why he thought the House should consider the Resolution with favour was, that in spite of the alterations which the Government had made in the procedure of the House, the time and rights of private Members were getting more and more limited. Another reason was that private Members always seemed to think it necessary to occupy an hour of the time of the House, though that night appeared to have been a remarkable exception. He had no doubt that if a Member knew that the House was to come to a decision at 5 o'clock he would recollect that other Members had something to say, and would endeavour to compress his remarks. He had one fault to find with the words of the Motion — "When a debate has been continued until 5 o'clock." He did not see the use of putting in that particular hour, because it was quite clear that if a Division were taken at 5 o'clock, the Division taking something like a quarter of an hour, no time whatever would be left for

other Business, except practically unopposed Business. It seemed to him that it would be better to make the hour 5.45 instead of 5. This would, perhaps, lead to large reforms in the hours of the House, and it would be much better if they could come to some agreement that the House should rise at a certain hour; but that before doing so, where the opinion of the House was strongly in favour of coming to a decision, it should not be put in the power of a private Member to prevent the House so coming to a decision. That, he believed, would be a most beneficial reform. He looked forward to the time when the House would perceive the folly of the proceedings which regulated the time at which it met now, and to which it sat, and that it would adopt a more rational proceeding, when it would be the rule for the House to meet regularly at 2 o'clock and rise at a definite hour. He would be glad to see the House adopt the Resolution, because it would show that they were not bound by an iron band to those proceedings which had been in force for a long time past; but that the Business of the House would be carried out in a manner which would render them less liable to the criticism and ridicule of the public. On those grounds he was in favour of the proposal of the hon. Member, and was very glad to hear that it met with the approval of the Government.

MR. W. FOWLER said, he would certainly vote in favour of the Resolution. Any hon. Member who now brought forward a Bill on a Wednesday was next door to an idiot, as it was absolutely ridiculous now for a Member to take the trouble to bring in a Bill. As to the proposal of the noble Lord, he would suggest that when a quarter to 6 came they should have the Division, whether on the Main or on the Previous Question, and should go on dividing until the matter was exhausted. This would avoid the waste of time involved in dividing at 5 o'clock. He agreed with the remark of the noble Lord that the present conduct of Business in the House on Wednesdays made them ridiculous. They were constantly having long discussions without arriving at any decisions, and then the House rose with great regret that, through the freak of some hon. Member, no decision could be come to. He thought this abuse of the

forms of the House should be stopped without delay.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, he thought the difficulty as to the delay in making a House on Wednesdays could be got over easily by providing that the House should be made by Commission. When a House was made by Commission, the Speaker in the Chair, and even one or two Members, constituted "a House." If that were agreed to there was not the slightest doubt that Members interested in a Bill would come down and form a respectable audience. As to the Motion before the House, he should feel it to be his duty to record his vote against it. He regarded it as the most odious form of the *clôture*. It would oblige the House to divide on a Bill and come to a decision upon it whether it desired to do so or not, whilst other Bills of far greater importance were left unconsidered. He could not approve of such a childish idea.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT said, he strongly deprecated any such alteration in the Rules of the House on the mere Motion of a private Member. He agreed that the Resolution was the *clôture* in its most objectionable form; it was, in fact, regularly gagging the House of Commons, and he protested against it. If they were to have this *clôture* on Wednesdays, why not on Tuesdays and Fridays? ["Hear, hear!"] He regretted to hear his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon cheer. He thought he was too old a bird to be caught in this way; but apparently he was prepared to follow the Prime Minister, whether the proposal was in the interests of the country or not. It was, no doubt, very easy for hon. Gentlemen opposite, who did not care what happened—["Oh, oh!"]—to support this proposal. ["Oh!"] Well, he was sorry to say he had come to the conclusion that many Gentlemen sacrificed their opinions for their Party instead of looking after the best interests of the country, and it had even been stated that they voted black was white in the interest of the Government. He passed this by however, and entered his earnest protest against the Resolution.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that he was sorry he could not agree with the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) upon this subject. As to the statement of the hon. Member

Lord Randolph Churchill

for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) that they scarcely ever came to a decision on Wednesdays, he recollected in the last three Parliaments the House coming to many important decisions on Wednesdays. It was by no means a trifling alteration in the procedure of the House that was proposed by this Resolution, for it meant that after four hours' discussion, no matter how important the subject, the House must on a Wednesday come to a decision upon it, whether it was adequately discussed or not. As he understood the Resolution, they were to have on Wednesdays a 6 o'clock *clôture* and at Morning Sittings for Government Business a 7 o'clock *clôture*. What was the general character of the questions which were very often raised by private Members on Wednesdays? He had heard it stated over and over again in the House that private Members were almost invariably the pioneers of the most important questions which came up for discussion. The difficulties of private Members in carrying Bills to a conclusion in that House were exceedingly great. Everybody knew that the main object which they had in view in introducing Bills was to obtain full and ample discussion upon the question with which the House dealt, and to educate the people in the country who were interested in those questions. There was hardly a private Member who was sanguine enough to suppose that by introducing a Bill which was seriously opposed he would be able to carry it into law in one Session. But although he knew he had no chance of carrying his Bill in one Session, he was perfectly aware of the fact that a full discussion upon it on a Wednesday afternoon would enable him or some other Member on a future day to pass the Bill into law. The Resolution now before the House, however, would destroy the opportunities which Members now had of passing Bills. If the principle of the Resolution held good and was worth anything at all, it could not possibly be limited to Wednesdays. If it was good for anything it ought to be applied to all their proceedings. He protested against distinctions being made between the rights of private Members and the rights of Members of the Government. Nothing could be more unconstitutional than such distinctions. As long as he was a Member of the House of Commons

he should do his best to uphold the privileges of private Members. It was because he saw that propositions of this nature would injuriously affect the independence of private Members that he should oppose the Resolution, which he believed was framed on inadequate and insufficient grounds.

MR. COURTNEY said, he had always been jealous of alterations of this kind; but he had said on more than one occasion that with different manners they were compelled to adopt different laws. Things were not now as they used to be. After a long discussion on a Wednesday afternoon, instead of taking a Division as a matter of course, a Member got up at a quarter to 6 o'clock to speak, and the consequence was the question of necessity stood adjourned. Several hon. Members seemed to think that the Resolution, if passed, would compel the House to come to a decision on any subject before a full and ample discussion had taken place upon it. The power of withholding a decision upon the Main Question was amply reserved. This proposal did not compel a Division to be taken on the Main Question if the House of Commons was averse from pronouncing an opinion upon it. It was competent for any hon. Member to move the Previous Question or the Adjournment of the Debate; and if it was thought that the question had not been sufficiently discussed, the House would carry the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate. On the other hand, if the question was one which, in the opinion of the House, was not ripe for decision on account of its novelty or any other cause, and if the House thought that no opinion could be pronounced upon it, then the perfectly fair and legitimate Parliamentary way of meeting the question was to move the Previous Question, which, no doubt, would be supported. He might cite, as an instance in point, the Bill of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) dealing with leases. That was a Bill which raised questions of great novelty and importance; and he thought he did not misconstrue the opinions entertained by a large number of Members, that a Bill proposing a remedy for the evils of leasehold tenure was not one to be considered and dealt with off-hand. The whole point really was as to whether on Wednesday afternoons, on a question

which involved important considerations submitted to the House, and which had been discussed for at least three hours, they were taking a rash step in saying that at the end of three hours the opinion of the House should be taken as to the Question of Adjournment, or whether a decision should be taken on the Main Question. He thought the experiment was one of an extremely moderate character. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) asked why 5 o'clock was proposed as the hour when the decision was to be taken, and not a later hour? Although something might be said in favour of that view, he pointed out that it might be necessary to take three Divisions in a full House before the Main Question was decided upon; and in that case, by adopting 5.45 as the hour, it would stultify the object which the hon. Member for Shields (Mr. Stevenson) had in view in proposing this Motion for the adoption of the House. In reference to the remarks of the Prime Minister, that he objected to this proposal being made a Standing Order of the House, and suggesting that it should be tried as an experiment for this Session only, the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) had pointed out, with his usual acuteness, that the Government would get the benefit of the Motion during the remainder of the present Session. On reflection, however, the Government had suggested that the Order should be made to run to the end of next Session.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I observe that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) has on the Paper an Amendment to exclude the case of Government Bills; but I do not know whether it will be moved, inasmuch as it would make a serious difference in the Resolution before the House. The time is not far distant when the Government will ask for Wednesdays for their own purposes; and if they have this Rule as a Standing Order, it will operate very much in favour of their Business. They will always make sure of having Divisions upon their own matters after a very limited debate. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has said that, after all, there need be no fear that injustice will be done, or that debates will be unfairly curtailed. That may be so; but I can-

not help thinking that the hon. Gentleman speaks from the side of the majority, and that we are answering from the side of the minority; and there is all the difference on a question of this kind between speaking on the side of the majority and speaking on the side of the minority that there is between the man who holds the cart-whip and the man who receives the lash at the other end. It may be true that if the majority are not satisfied that the matter has been fully discussed, they may think it fair that an opportunity should be given for the further consideration of it. That may be so; but it may often happen, on the other hand, that the majority are determined to overbear the minority, and the minority would under this Resolution in that case be shut out from the opportunity of making a full statement of the case they wish to submit. There is great force in what was said by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) just now. He pointed out that these Private Bills that are brought forward on Wednesdays are, to a great extent, pioneers of other legislation; and, no doubt, a great many questions are raised in Bills brought forward by private Members which tend more to raise such discussions than bring the legislation to bear upon the questions with which they deal. It would be frequently a very great misfortune if the discussions raised on those Bills of private Members were limited to three hours, and no opportunity were given for their full examination. They are not brought forward on the responsibility of the Government, and after full examination by Her Majesty's Ministers. They are very often in the nature of tentative measures. Very often they are brought forward with insufficient preparation, only for the purpose of discussion, and the discussions that take place are very valuable as preparing the way for further discussion; but if you have this provision, you will constantly find matters arising which should be discussed for more than three hours, but which will have to be concluded at the end of the period. We must take the matter at its maximum. If the discussion begins at 2 o'clock it must close at 5; and at the latter hour, not only is the Question of Adjournment or the Previous Question to be put, but, when that is disposed of, the Main Question is

Mr. Courtney

to be put without debate. That is a very strong proceeding, and one which the House will feel to be of very doubtful policy even in respect of private Members' Bills. But we cannot forget that if we once admit this principle, and say that after a certain number of hours' debate there is to be an absolute *clôture* in regard to Bills of private Members, we shall very soon have the same proposal made with regard to other Business; and I really do not see upon what principle then you will be able to refuse it. If you admit it in the case of Wednesdays, I do not see how you are to refuse it in the case of Thursdays, or any other day. Therefore, if the time is limited—which is a very serious question—in the one case, so also will it be in the other case. I quite agree with my noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) that there is a great deal of waste of time on Wednesdays, and I think it would be possible to curtail the time that is so wasted; but I think the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wigan (Mr. A. Egerton) went in that direction, and very properly. He suggested that there should be some Rule adopted by which the opening of Business on Wednesdays should take place without waiting an indefinite time till a quorum is obtained—that we should begin Business just as we do when a Royal Commission is announced. If such a Rule were adopted, I have no doubt it would save a great deal of time at the beginning of the Sitting. I must say that I look with very considerable alarm at this introduction of the principle of absolute closure, and I am bound to say that it is a very formidable proposal when we are told that this should be made a Standing Order. If this is done it should only be as an experiment.

MR. COURTNEY: I think the right hon. Baronet has misunderstood me. What I said was, that the Rule should not be a Standing Order, but should be in force until the end of next Session.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: That, of course, would make the arrangement less objectionable than I understood; but in any case I think we should be setting a dangerous precedent, and one which ought not to be set without grave consideration. I really very much doubt whether, by the adoption of this Rule, we shall not be doing evil instead of good, and throwing back

the whole question of the arrangement of our debates.

MR. PULESTON said, it seemed to him that they all concurred in this, that a good deal of difficulty arose out of the waste of time which took place on Wednesdays. There was also a waste of time on other days; and it had been argued that if this Rule were adopted for Wednesdays it certainly ought also to be adopted for Morning Sittings. There was no answering the argument, that they sat here frequently from 4 to 4.30 doing nothing on ordinary days, and that in this and many other ways valuable time was wasted; and he himself had ventured to make a proposal to the House, when they had an Autumn Session to discuss their Rules, to the effect that they should have no questions whatever on Government nights, except such as the Speaker might declare to be urgent, giving the whole of the two Government nights to the Government, and in that way to release the other days to the use of private Members. If a simple Rule like that were adopted it would relegate Wednesdays to its proper place, and it would be thoroughly understood that hon. Members would then have this time afforded them for the ventilation of grievances, and for the passing of private measures of great importance. The hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) had rather surprised him when he said that if, when the proposed Rule came into operation on the Wednesday, they had not had sufficient discussion, all they would have to do would be to move the Previous Question or the Adjournment of the Debate. Every Member of the House knew perfectly well that, however honest might be his desire to support the measure before the House, under such circumstances, if things went on as at present, such a proposal as that of moving the adjournment of the debate would be certain to be ascribed to a wish to oppose or obstruct the passing of the Bill. He felt very much disposed, then, to give effect to what the hon. Member suggested by now moving the adjournment of the debate. After a long and exhaustive series of debates they passed the *clôture* in an Autumn Session. But it had never since been heard of. Neither he nor anybody else had heard of it. Surely it would be better that this should

be put in force by the Speaker, than that they should be called on to come there and pass by a sort of snap judgment a *clôture* of a very intensified form. He felt convinced that that could hardly be the intention of hon. Members on the other side of the House, notwithstanding the remarks of the Prime Minister. He was disposed to give an opportunity to the House to think a little more on the question; and, therefore, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(*Mr. Puleston*.)

The House divided:—Ayes 115; Noes 92: Majority 23.—(Div. List, No. 122.)

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

CHARGES AGAINST IRISH OFFICIALS —MR. FRENCH, &c.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had to move the following Resolution:—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the conduct of the Government with regard to the criminal charges against James Ellis French, County Inspector Royal Irish Constabulary, Gustavus Cornwall, Secretary to the General Post Office, and George Bolton, Crown Solicitor."

As would be seen from the terms of that Motion, he wished to bring under the attention of the House the conduct of the Government in regard to certain charges — not the charges themselves, or the merits of them, but to the conduct of the Government in respect of them. By the word "Government" he did not, of course, mean those individual Gentlemen who sat on the Front Bench opposite. It would readily be understood that he would shrink, as any other Member of the House would shrink, from entertaining for a moment the idea that, whatever might have been done by any subordinate, however highly placed, in the Post Office, the slightest stain could by any possibility attach to a character so noble and so pure as that of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (*Mr. Fawcett*); and although the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was alive to the theory of the Constitution, that he was responsible for the administration of the country, yet, of course, his personal character was far above any stain

that could attach to any misconduct on the part of anyone under him; and as the Prime Minister was in relation to the whole of the Administration, so with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who was responsible for the administration in Ireland. He (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) was very anxious to say this, because he remembered that four weeks ago, when he gave Notice of the Motion which he should have to submit to the House to-night, he observed the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary look up at him with an air of marked surprise. He (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) had felt that the surprise was due, not to the fact that this Motion had been placed upon the Paper, but to the fact that it was he who had given the Notice. He had often thought of that look since, and he appreciated it. He was anxious that the right hon. Gentleman should clearly understand that in placing this Motion on the Paper he did it without for one moment entertaining the notion that the right hon. Gentleman had done anything, or that he was capable of doing anything, unworthy of a Christian Gentleman; and on that point he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would be able easily to accept his assurances. He should conceive it as hard of him to believe of the right hon. Gentleman that he had done anything of the sort, as he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would find it hard to believe it of him. So with regard to the Lord Lieutenant, he was not actuated by any personal feeling towards him. He was opposed to the present Government, he believed, as bitterly as anyone in the House, but his political antagonism never prevented him from appreciating the personal characters of the men to whom he happened to be opposed. He knew nothing of the Lord Lieutenant. He did not even know that he should be able to recognize him if he saw him in the street. It would be impossible to deal properly and adequately with the question of the charges against these three individuals mentioned in his Motion for the reason that there were at this moment actions pending in the High Court in connection with two of them. Bolton and Cornwall had just commenced proceedings for libel against a weekly newspaper published in Ireland, of which all the House was aware. But for these pro-

ceedings it would be a perfectly simple matter to deal with the entire case. As they stood they were in the way of a full exposure of the situation; and, personally, he was very thankful that it was so, because, at least, he would be spared a great deal of mental distress, from which, out of a sense of his duty as a Representative of the people, and out of a sense of loyalty to his Colleagues, he trusted he should not have shrunk, but which would certainly have been one of the most painful experiences of his life. Well, the third individual mentioned—namely, French—likewise brought an action some time ago against the same newspaper, but that action had since been dismissed in default of prosecution, and he was not, therefore, precluded by the same considerations from referring to the case against that individual. He promised the House, however, that he would refer to it only so far as might be necessary for his present purpose. The charge against Cornwall was of a similar nature to that against French; but it rested on evidence which could be entirely separated, and the charge itself was quite different from that which was brought against Bolton. There was one charge, and only one charge, against Cornwall, so far as he was aware, and as it would form the subject-matter of a suit which was now *sub judice* in Dublin, it was not necessary or proper that he should in greater detail refer to it. Neither should he refer to the question at issue in the action now pending at the suit of Bolton. The Court of Justice would deal with both the one and the other. But he would, in the first place, ask leave to draw the attention of the House to matters entirely outside of, and altogether unconnected with, the present judicial proceedings—matters with which the Government were acquainted, and which affected the character of Bolton. There was a lady of the name of Hart, born in 1802. This lady was possessed of a large fortune. She married a Mr. Tivey, by whom she had three children. Mr. Tivey and the three children were all long since dead. In 1860, being already old, she married Mr. Brown, a solicitor. On her marriage with him there was a settlement, by the terms of which complete power over the whole of her property was reserved to herself. In connection with some differences as to the testamentary

disposition of her mother's property, she and her relations became estranged, and it was in connection with these differences that she first, in 1869, became acquainted with Bolton. He then held more than one appointment under the Government. He was a widower, with an income derived partly from private practice and partly from his Government appointments. Being again a widow, the old lady agreed to marry Bolton, and as one of the conditions of the marriage, she stipulated that her property should be settled on her as it had been settled by the marriage settlement when she was married to Brown. She entrusted to Bolton—and though he was a professional man, and ought to have known his duty in such a case, he accepted the commission—the carrying out of this arrangement. When the marriage was celebrated she believed that the arrangement had been carried out by a marriage settlement which he drew up; but when, some years afterwards, the matter came to be looked into, it was found that he had not carried out the agreement in that particular. There had been differences between her and her husband with regard to a female servant, and she left him. Subsequently, she instituted proceedings against him in respect of the marriage settlement. The case came to be tried before Mr. Justice Fry, and the learned Judge thought it right to send a letter to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland in relation to Bolton's part in this transaction. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Trevelyan) said, in reply to a Question put to him yesterday by the hon. Member for Waterford—

“I am not informed of any ground for an allegation of fraud unless it be referable to transactions which occurred five years ago, and were investigated both by the late and the present Governments, and stated by both to furnish no ground for action being taken against Mr. Bolton.”

That was partly correct, and partly incorrect and misleading. As a matter of fact, Bolton simply deceived the late Government. How did he do that? Well, he tried, first of all, to obtain from his wife a letter in which she was to make an admission that the whole affair had been amicably settled by an arrangement which was of the nature of a compromise. She could not conscientiously

do anything of the kind, and she refused, but she did write a letter which answered his purpose, because in its terms it was not absolutely at variance with the theory that the affair had been amicably settled. On the strength of that he maintained his position; but the real nature of the case was never known to the late Government. It became known to the present Government by the Judgment of the President of the Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division on the Probate suit *M'Dermot and King v. Bolton*, Bothmer intervening, tried in January and February of last year. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had with him a report of the long Judgment, from which he would trouble the House with a few extracts—

“The President explained to the jury what in the eye of the law amounted to undue influence, and pointed out that there was much documentary evidence in this case as to the friendship for very many years existing between Mrs. Bolton and Dr. M'Dermot. Dr. Tristram expressed great astonishment at the change of feeling on the part of Mrs. Bolton towards her husband; but it was difficult to see what ground for surprise there was in that circumstance. If the oath of the lady herself was to be believed, she had discovered that the marriage settlement prepared by her husband was a very different one from what she had supposed it to be; and, apart from the question of fraud, it was a most astonishing settlement. How any man, whether solicitor or no solicitor, could have thought otherwise it was not easy to see, for the effect of the settlement was to denude the woman of the great portion of her property. Now, it was the A B C of marriage settlements that a woman should have the first interest in the property which she brought into settlement. But in this case that rule was reversed, for the husband took the first life interest, and it was only when he died the lady herself could take a life interest in it. After that it would go to his children. By that settlement the Countess von Bothmer was entirely ousted. In her statement of claim Mrs. Bolton alleged that the terms of the settlement were contrary to her bargain, and that a large part of the property was left out of settlement, thus charging Mr. Bolton with fraud. Why, then, should we be surprised at a change in her feelings towards him? He had submitted to a decree. He said that he had done so in consequence of the conversation he had had with her, and of what she had said to his daughters; but there was only slender, shadowy evidence on that subject. What compromise had she agreed to? What more could have been gained by a plaintiff than she gained? And did Mr. Bolton rely on any terms or any compromise when he addressed her after the trial? No; he cast himself on her mercy, and she was merciful. He sent her a letter to adopt, which, had she signed it, would have been in direct contradiction to the charges she had made and

sworn to; but she behaved generously, and wrote the letter which had been read that day. In it she stated, what might well be believed, that her only object had been to secure the settlement of her property, and not to act harshly towards him.

“The jury instantly found for the plaintiffs on all the issues.”

The whole case was a record of villainy, and of the charges brought against him the villain stood convicted. The Crown knew it; it could not help knowing it; all the world knew it; it was the talk of Dublin and the Irish Provinces. There were other delinquencies of this man that might be mentioned. There were other proceedings in other Courts, and other Judgments of other Courts, all of which went to make the responsibility of the Government greater; but he had no desire to make his remarks longer than were absolutely necessary, therefore he would pass from that part of the case. Now, the charge against French was, as he had said, of a different nature; compared with it the delinquencies of Bolton were venial. This man was a Director of the Detective Department of the Royal Irish Constabulary, with the rank of County Inspector. As such he had supreme control over the Detective Service at the command of the Government. His character and conduct were indicated and denounced by the newspaper against which he was subsequently forced to bring an action for libel. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) did not know that he could at this moment put his hands upon the first mention of French's name in the paper he had referred to; but, at any rate, early in October of last year there was a statement in this newspaper pointing him out. A paragraph was inserted which was generally understood to refer to him, and was still so understood, stating that a high official connected with the Detective Department at the Castle had been suspended, which would cause a great sensation. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) did not know whether that was absolutely correct; but other paragraphs appeared—whether in consequence of that or not he did not know—in other newspapers relating to this man. Well, there was a writ issued on the 12th of October, 1883. Appearance was entered by the defendant immediately. The plaintiff did not serve his statement of claim until the 23rd of November; the defence was delivered

Mr. Arthur O'Connor

almost immediately afterwards, when the plaintiff served a notice for particulars. Those particulars were furnished to him, whereupon he gave notice for further particulars on the 5th of February, 1884. The Court made an order that the defendant should give further particulars within 14 days, and on that occasion the defendant asked the Court to put the plaintiff under the terms of filing his reply, and serving his notice of trial; and he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had with him copies of the issues of the newspaper, which, if it were necessary, he could refer to, showing that throughout the defendant was anxious that the matter should come to trial, and pointing out that by various means the plaintiff, with delay after delay, was manifesting a totally different inclination. The defendant offered to give further particulars immediately the plaintiff was put under terms with regard to notice of trial. The Court gave the plaintiff an extension of time for the delivery of his reply before the further particulars had been delivered. He might mention that, at the time this order was made, the plaintiff's time for delivering the reply had expired; but the particulars of the plaintiff's claim were furnished, giving date and occasion, and a notice of each offence, specifying these things as briefly as possible—still these statements, condensed as they were, occupied 18 pages of paper. On the 29th February of this year the plaintiff delivered his reply and joined issue. No notice of trial was given, and he did absolutely nothing for six weeks. Accordingly, on the 14th April, having allowed February and March to go by, the defendant at last moved to have the action dismissed for want of prosecution. On the 16th April the plaintiff served the defendant with a copy of a medical certificate signed by some local doctors, stating that, in their opinion, the plaintiff was totally unfit to attend to any business whatever. No reason was given. A motion was duly heard and adjourned by the Court for an affidavit as to plaintiff's condition by a qualified doctor, and on the 17th April the case came on again. It was then certified that the plaintiff was suffering from symptoms of cerebral softening. The Court gave him a month's time, and refused to allow the defendant to have the plaintiff examined by an inde-

pendent medical man. Things went on in this way until, at last, on the 5th June, the plaintiff having made no move, the Court did at last dismiss the action for want of prosecution. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had gone so far in order not to break the thread of the story as connected with the Court; but with regard to the knowledge of the Government and their conduct in respect of this Mr. French and his doings, he wished to say this. The day after the libel appeared, a Government official—no less a man than Colonel Bruce, who was Inspector General of Constabulary—wired for another high official of long standing in the Service, who happened to be in the Provinces, and ordered him to attend in Dublin on the following day in order to furnish information and evidence. On that day Inspector General Bruce was not alone, the Deputy Inspector General Fanning was with him. The Chief Inspector would be puzzled to know how all this information had been obtained by the active energy of private individuals; but the result of it was that the Government did obtain from those two officials very important, not to say complete, information. They were put upon the line of knowing, not only that the charges brought in relation to recent times were true, but that they might have been brought any time during the last 12 years. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had had furnished to him a statement, which he believed to be correct, to the effect that it was French's own declaration, or purported to be, that he received a letter some time after, in consequence of which he went to see the Chief Secretary himself, who told him—so the allegation went—that he must bring an action.

MR. TREVELYAN: I beg pardon; I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Member, but this is very important. I should like to know whether this is a mere allegation, or whether the hon. Member is giving the statement on the authority of any person; I should like to know whether he is going to name his informant, or is stating that which he merely believes to be correct? I do not object to either course.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the right hon. Gentleman would appreciate the delicacy of the position in which he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) was placed. He was obliged, as he went on, very care-

fully to consider what he might safely say, and what he had to leave unexpressed; but he might go so far as to say that this was a statement made by French, which, if the inquiry he asked for was granted, they would be able to prove was made by that person. In consequence of that communication, Mr. French went to see the Chief Secretary, who told him that he must bring an action against *United Ireland* for libel.

MR. TREVELYAN: Who must bring an action?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: French. French replied that he had no money, and made a variety of other excuses; but the Chief Secretary pressed him. French then asked for money and for the assistance of the Crown lawyers; but the Chief Secretary refused him either the one or the other. French then went away and did nothing for a fortnight. He then received another letter, in consequence of which he again saw the Chief Secretary, who told him that he must either take action or retire from the Service. French then found himself driven to do that which he sought to avoid; and when he found he had no option he went straight to the office of Messrs. Barlow and Orr, solicitors, and instructed them to bring an action. French complained bitterly that the Castle had not given him money to fight the case; but yet he refused a sum of £500 which certain of his friends, who did not believe in the charges, offered to subscribe for him to fight the case. This matter had been investigated—as certainly it ought not to have been necessary to investigate it—at the cost and on the responsibility of private individuals. The Government officials in Ireland were bound in duty, from what they knew long ago, on evidence which could hardly admit of question, to take action—they knew that the charges were well-founded. The charges were notorious—the conduct was notorious; so much so that the senior members of the Constabulary Force were accustomed to caution cadets against forming acquaintance with French. Evidence which it had been possible to obtain in regard to this matter by private individuals could have been obtained very much more easily by the Government. They had in their service men to whom the matter was known, who had abundance of the clearest possible testimony, which testi-

mony could have been readily furnished if proper steps had been taken to elicit it. Those who had taken this matter in hand assured him (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that one of the difficulties they had to contend with consisted in this—that men connected with the Constabulary Force, who were ready to make admissions, fell back upon the rule by which they were precluded from giving any information respecting the Force to outsiders. More than that, this man French was at the very head of the very Department which was specially charged with investigating matters of this kind. Moreover, when the persons necessarily employed by a private individual to sound to the depths the real truth of this matter were pursuing the work they had in hand, they were met and worked against by members of the Force under the direction of French. At the time when they were told that French was ill, and unable to attend to his own affairs, and was fit for a lunatic asylum—which was the most charitable thing anyone could conceive—in reality he was busy using the officers of the Force for the purpose of destroying the existing evidence against himself. That appeared plainly from circumstances which admitted of but one interpretation. The defendant's solicitors made special application for a sworn inquiry in regard to this matter; a matter of the very gravest importance in regard to a thing of this kind. But what was the result? It was a proved fact that certain head constables, whose names he had now under his eye, were being employed by French to receive letters at Dublin Castle, and to carry letters to his companions in crime. The Government, or its representatives, were content, on a question for a sworn inquiry into this matter, to accept the mere disclaimer of the head constables, and to refuse the investigation; but the evidence which had been got together was complete, even in such matters as French going down on his knees and saying his prayers before going to bed. The evidence, only a portion of which he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) held in his hand at this moment, was of a nature which was overwhelming and astounding. Admissions—such admissions—confessions—he did not know how many—lengthened, detailed, explicit with regard to time—many times—with regard

to persons—many persons—and with regard to circumstances. It was perfectly impossible for any human being to look over half this evidence without feeling that the Government, who had it in its power to investigate so easily these charges as the Government of Ireland might have done, failed in their duty by not prosecuting the inquiry. He was glad to think that perhaps he had said almost enough to show ground for the Motion which he had put upon the Paper, and he was also glad to state that he had almost got through what he had to say. He had been for 16 years a member of the Civil Service, and during that period he had formed acquaintances and, as he hoped, secured the friendship of a large number of men whom he highly respected and esteemed, and he felt, with hundreds of Civil servants, that the character of the Service, which, for integrity, honour, and morals, was as high as any Civil Service in the world, had not been duly considered by the Government in reference to this matter. He could sympathize with the large number of men of the Legal Profession in Ireland who resented the continuance as Crown Solicitors of men such as Bolton; and, as one of the Representatives of a people suffering under Coercion Law, he thought it his duty to point out to the House the character of one of the chief men who administered that law. He had endeavoured to make the statement which he felt it his duty to lay before the House in few words, and such as should not offend the susceptibilities of the most delicate mind. The House, he was sure, would feel that he had had to discharge a difficult and painful task; and he had nothing to do now but to thank the House for the patience with which it had listened to him, and to move the Motion which stood in his name.

MR. O'BRIEN said, he rose for the purpose of seconding the Motion of the hon. Member for Queen's County, and he should not think it necessary at all to supplement his very able and felicitous remarks, only that there were a few points which his personal interest in the matter rendered it necessary that he should refer to. Two actions for libel—one by Mr. Bolton, and the other by Mr. Cornwall—had been brought against him since he gave Notice of the Motion

which his hon. Friend had just moved. In *United Ireland* he had invited Mr. Cornwall to submit his conduct to the verdict of a jury of his fellow-countrymen several weeks before he had mentioned his name in that House; but he took no action. On the contrary, his solicitors, Messrs. Ellis, distinctly stated that he had determined to take no notice of the matter until he decided on a course which gave it a wider publicity than it would otherwise have obtained. Curiously enough, Mr. Cornwall sought to attack him for contempt of Court. His case was, that *United Ireland* was circulated so largely among the citizens of Dublin that his case, appearing in it, would prejudice the people against him. His action was brought only when his conduct had been brought under the notice of his superiors in that House, and when he knew there was no chance of shirking it. It was exactly the same with the action of Mr. Bolton. If such an attempt had been made to intimidate an English Member of Parliament as had been made to intimidate him, he fancied that Mr. Cornwall and Mr. Bolton would have been standing at the Bar of that House to answer to a charge of Breach of Privilege. He did not want the protection of any privilege; he wanted a jury of his countrymen to stand between himself and the persons in question. If they had gone into these two cases, it was because they had a perfect right to do so. The question he wanted to have decided was that of the responsibility of the Government in respect of the crimes charged; and he thought that responsibility was perfectly clear in connection with the case of French, which was, practically, beyond dispute. He did not mean to go into the details of the evidence in that case, which consisted of statutory declarations, and which, having remained unchallenged for the last six months, had, of course, all the force of evidence. The subject was too horrible to linger upon for one moment, and it was even more so to think that those who were carrying on the system under the walls of Dublin Castle knew well that they had the complicity and protection of the Detective Department. As to the circumstances under which the responsibility rested with the Government, if French's action had been brought, they would have been able to place the Chief

Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the Inspector of Constabulary at the table of the Court; but, unhappily, they had been obliged to fall back upon secondary evidence. This man received from Mr. Hamilton a summons to an interview with the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, at which the right hon. Gentleman ordered him to bring an action. A fortnight afterwards, not having done so, he was summoned again, and was peremptorily told to bring his action, or be dismissed from the Force. Now, why should he be told that if he were an innocent man? And, on the other hand, why, if he were guilty, should the proof of his guilt be thrown upon him (Mr. O'Brien)? Of course, they had been kept in the dark as to the part taken by the right hon. Gentleman in reference to this matter. He had again and again asked for information, and all that the right hon. Gentleman had told him was that the informal inquiries which had been instituted when the charge was made had been dropped, because an action had been commenced against him. Again they had to fall back upon what they believed they could prove if this inquiry was granted. They wanted to know whether Colonel Bruce reported to the Chief Secretary the evidence given by the first witness who was examined; and, if not, why he had not followed up the clue? Nothing would have been easier than to elicit facts about a case that was the common gossip of the Constabulary depôts. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to state that night why the inquiries were dropped. He invited the attention of the Committee to the fact that the first paragraph in *United Ireland*, which referred to French, related to a mere general rumour that an officer connected with the Detective Department in Dublin Castle had been suspected under certain circumstances that would cause a sensation. No names were mentioned, and the paragraph was not actionable; and it was repeated in almost the same words in a Dublin newspaper a couple of days afterwards. It was only when they stumbled into the single erroneous statement made in reference to the matter—namely, that French had left the country, and when their information was supposed to be faulty, and it was thought the proof would collapse

—that this wretched man was goaded on to take action. He asked the attention of the Committee to dates. Their appearance was entered on the 20th of August; the statement of claim was not served until the 23rd of November; fully three months were wasted in fishing inquiries; all the time French was supposed to be incapable he was at work on his case, and he captured with his own hands one of their detectives; he was in the habit of writing letters to his accomplices exhorting them to hold firm, and trying to terrify or seduce their witnesses away. He kept on that system by the help of the Court of Queen's Bench; he kept on that system of sham medical certificates month after month, until the Court of Queen's Bench itself, after giving extensions of time, scouted the ruffian out of Court in disgust. What was the attitude of this crime-abhorring Government all this time towards the man? They allowed him to swear, in his affidavit, that nothing whatever had occurred to damnify his position; they allowed him to retire to the country; they sent down a doctor from Dublin, whose name he (Mr. O'Brien) could give, and whose report they suppressed, or, at least, never published; they allowed the fellow to use their detectives, and when complaint was made of the conduct of those detectives, an inquiry was refused; they continued to the very last moment of the last hour their protection of this man; they continued it until actually one of the Judges of the Court of Queen's Bench—Mr. Justice Lawson—raised his voice in the matter. Then, indeed, they dismissed French; but they dismissed him upon the false ground that he was incapacitated from illness. As a matter of fact, ever since he left work he had been driving about the country to fairs and auctions, and transacting his business just as shrewdly as ever he did in his life. If the Government had thought there really was any ground whatever for believing the man innocent, it was a downright outrage on their part to have dismissed him at the time of a crisis. What could have been more unfair towards the wretched man, if he were innocent, than to have been dismissed; and what could be more shameful than the conduct of the Government in delaying that dismissal until the very last moment? The conduct of the Government in respect to the

man's pension was only an illustration of the miserable, guilty policy they had pursued all through this business. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan), when questioned by him (Mr. O'Brien) as to the pension to be given to French, said his pension would depend upon the issue of the action. Was ever such a thing heard of—that this man's pension would depend, not upon the favour of those who employed him, but upon the liability to prove his case? Well, but there was a still more extraordinary plea put forward by the Chief Secretary, and it was possible he would rely upon it to-night. The right hon. Gentleman had said there were no informations sworn against this man. What did the Chief Secretary mean by that? Did he mean that he (Mr. O'Brien) and his Friends should surrender into the hands of the Crown the evidence which they had been at infinite trouble and risk in amassing, and upon which they relied to justify their action before the jury? Were they to surrender that evidence into the hands of the Crown to be manipulated by Mr. George Bolton; and were they to have the fears and the cupidity of their witnesses worked upon by French's own allies, and colleagues, and detectives? Did the right hon. Gentleman mean that before they submitted their evidence to a Judge and a jury of their fellow-countrymen they should allow men like Bolton and Mr. Peter O'Brien to falsify it? Did he mean to say they ought to give an opportunity to such men to falsify their case, to get at their witnesses, and break them down, or, possibly, to prosecute them—it might be to represent that the whole thing was a conspiracy against a meritorious public servant? He contended that if there was the slightest shred of confidence in the administration of justice in Ireland that would have been at once their course, and it would have saved them from a most onerous and loathsome task. But they knew too well what the prosecution of Irish Government officials like French and Bolton by Government officials would end in. They knew full well that for the last two years Government and Crown officials in Ireland had stopped at no amount of illegality or injustice or foul play in order to calumniate, and wrong, and make victims of their political opponents. If the Government wanted

information to be sworn, it was their business to have it sworn. If the Government wanted proof of the accusations that were made, they could get plenty of it for the asking. But they had, from the very beginning, considered these men innocent; they had not up to this moment repudiated or withdrawn their protection; indeed, they had not done a single thing, or raised their little finger, to deliver Dublin from the horrors of the sink of depravity in which these men lived. If the Government had any defence to make, they ought to be glad to make it before a Committee of Inquiry such as was now moved for. If the Government refused an inquiry, they must not be surprised if the Irish people attributed to Earl Spencer's Government the immunity which this abominable fraternity had enjoyed, and attributed to that Government some of the ignominy and guilt of the whole transaction.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the conduct of the Government with regard to the criminal charges against James Ellis French, County Inspector Royal Irish Constabulary, Gustavus Cornwall, Secretary to the General Post Office, and George Bolton, Crown Solicitor."—(Mr. Arthur O'Connor.)

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) began his speech by giving the House assurances that he was not actuated by any personal feeling against any Member of the Government; and he stated particularly that he did not bring any charge of a disagreeable nature against the action, or throw any imputation upon the character, of my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett), myself, or Lord Spencer. I was glad to find that the tone in which the hon. Gentleman commenced his speech was continued to the end; and I shall certainly imitate him, so far as the tone of my remarks is concerned. I think that when such frightful matters as those that have been touched upon to-night are before the House it is extremely important that we should observe the utmost moderation of language. Sir, I want, at once, to refer to some observations of the hon. Member (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) which I think particularly concern myself. I was surprised early in this Session at some

Questions which were put to me by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), because that hon. Member is always particularly anxious to be sure of the materials with which he comes before the House; but that mystery, for it certainly was a mystery to me, is cleared up by the hon. Member for Queen's County. The hon. Member for Queen's County states that he and his Friends—I do not know exactly what word he used—have reason to think that Mr. French has stated that after the first attack was made upon him in *The United Ireland* he came to see me, and that I told him he should bring an action against *The United Ireland*; that Mr. French asked for money to carry on this action and for the aid of the Crown Lawyers, and that the Chief Secretary refused both; that then, after a fortnight, he saw me a second time, and that I reiterated my wishes in that respect. Now, Sir, all this is pure invention. The hon. Member for Monaghan and the hon. Member for Queen's County have had, I do not hesitate to say, false evidence laid before them, which they are not in the least to be blamed for believing; and I can very well guess whence this evidence comes, because there has been in Dublin for some time past a man of the name of Meiklejohn, who was formerly in the English Detective Force, but who was dismissed from that Force, put upon his trial—a criminal trial—for levying blackmail, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, the circumstances of the offence being such that it was generally believed it was extremely fortunate for Meiklejohn that two years was the outside punishment that could be given. The House may imagine the terrible danger which Irish officials run when a man of this sort is in Dublin trumping up cases against them. How can any Irish official be free from the most horrible charges when a man of this character is in Dublin spying about to the right and left? I do not know what charges he has brought against other Irish officials; but if they are of the same value as that which he has brought against me, I must say that the House must be very careful how it accepts the outcry with which these charges have been published. For what is the fact about myself? It is very difficult and dangerous to say that you have never seen a person; but, I can assure the

House that, to the best of my knowledge, I have never seen Mr. French. But what I am quite certain of is that I did not see him between the time this article appeared in *The United Ireland* and the time when he actually brought his action against the editor of that paper—the article was published in August, and the action was brought on the 12th or 13th of October. First of all, I was in the House of Commons in August; then I went straight on to the Continent; when I came back I spent a short while in England; and though I have not got the exact date on which I returned to Ireland, I feel quite confident it was not before the 12th of October, because I remember very well that in October I had some shooting, and that I then stayed another week to see the Prime Minister. I am certain it was not until the 13th or 14th of October that I returned to Ireland; consequently, the whole story of my interview with Mr. French, from whatever quarter it comes, is entirely and absolutely incorrect. Well, Sir, I now come to the conduct of the Government in this matter. The hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) complains that, instead of ourselves pursuing and punishing people who have been guilty of certain atrocious crimes, we leave it for private persons, at great risk and expense to themselves, to bring the offenders to justice. My answer to that is that I think something may be said of the duty of those who are aware of these horrible crimes, or who think they are aware that these horrible crimes have been committed. These crimes are criminal matters deserving of criminal punishment; and when any person has evidence that such crimes have been committed, he should proceed against the persons who have committed the crimes in the way that the law enjoins, that is, to lay information before a magistrate, whether the offenders be Government officials or not; and it is extremely doubtful whether, when a man had got hold of such evidence, he has a right to use it in any other way until he has tried that first. That is my opinion, and I hope it is the opinion of the House. But that is not all; because it is not only a question of the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) having this evidence, but it is a question of our not having it. ["Oh, oh!"] Mr. Speaker, I must protest against the practice which

is gaining ground in the House, that when a statement of fact is made by an hon. Member, it should be greeted in such a manner, which means, if it means anything at all, that the hon. Member is telling a falsehood. It is absolutely the case that, until I saw in *The United Ireland* the article commencing—"Mr. Gustavus Cornwall, Secretary to the General Post Office, says this is no longer a country in which a gentleman can live," and challenging Mr. Cornwall to bring an action against the paper, neither I, nor any Member of the Irish Government, was in the least aware that any charges had ever been brought against Mr. Cornwall; and, at this moment, I have not the slightest notion of the nature of any charges that have been brought, or can be brought, against Mr. Cornwall, except from the columns of *The United Ireland*. How, then, can the Government act against a man who may be innocent, or may be guilty, when they have no evidence at all of any sort or kind except what is contained in an article in *The United Ireland*? ["Oh, oh!"] I submit that this is not the way in which to conduct a debate. We are not conducting a debate; we are conducting something like a legal inquiry into private character; and in a Court, an advocate is allowed to conduct his case without interruption. In the case of Mr. Bolton, he has been frequently charged in *United Ireland* with being a forger. Well, we have before us the whole of the charges brought against him, and among them we have been unable to find the least particle of foundation for anything that could possibly be construed into a charge of forgery. How can we condemn a man of so horrible a crime when we have no evidence against him whatever, except that he is charged generally with that crime by *United Ireland*? The hon. Member for Mallow complains that Mr. Bolton did not bring his action until the hon. Member and the hon. Gentleman who was acting with him had brought forward in this House a Resolution. That was with very good reason; because, up to that time, Mr. Bolton, although he was bitterly attacked in *United Ireland*, had not been attacked in such a manner as to make it absolutely necessary for him either to bring an action or retire from the society of decent mankind—

because this very reason, placed, as it was, in *United Ireland*, obliged Mr. Bolton to act. I will read a passage from *United Ireland*—

"I beg to give notice that whenever the Government apply for a Vote on Account, I will bring under the attention of the House a charge of felonious practices against French, Cornwall, and Mr. George Bolton, Crown Solicitor, and the conduct of the Irish Government in reference thereto."

And then *United Ireland* had these words put at the top of this announcement—"A precious trio." It is very shocking to me to find that an hon. Gentleman with whom I exchange, at any rate, official communications, should seriously think it is not a very terrible thing that a man—whom the hon. Gentleman himself now says Mr. Bolton was not charged with an atrocious crime, should be placed in the same category as two other men who are charged with an atrocious crime, called with them "a precious trio," and then charged with felonious practices—and that at a time when there is no case of felonious practices charged against Mr. Bolton. The charge that was made in the House of Commons was afterwards continued in leading articles. I find an article, dated the 24th of May, in which it is said that really Messrs. French, Bolton, & Co. ought to have remembered that even an English Lord Lieutenant could not afford to identify himself with unclean beasts who insisted on bringing their profligacy into public daylight. Everyone in Ireland knew, from the columns of *United Ireland*, what was charged against Mr. French. Was it possible, then, for a man, who was coupled with French in that article, not to bring an action? Then, in an article on the same day, allusion is made to the Lord Lieutenant for permitting felons, like French, Cornwall, Bolton, & Co., to continue to act in the service of the Government.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The matter which the right hon. Gentleman is now referring to is *sub judice*, and I abstained from referring to it.

MR. TREVELYAN: I am speaking of the reasons why Mr. Bolton brought this action. I am very sorry this case is before the House at all; but if men's names are mixed up with the charges, and the Rules of the House allow me to do so, I am obliged to state

all and what I know about the facts. I imagine that, as a general proposition, the one course which the Government can take, when an official of that Government is charged in a newspaper with odious, crimes, and when no evidence of those crimes is brought before the Government—the one course that Government can take, unless the charge is manifestly and ludicrously ridiculous, is to insist on the person so charged, clearing his character by an action. I know of no other course they could pursue. Of course, if the charge is an official charge; if the hon. Member opposite stated that he had reason to believe that there had been in a Government Office favouritism, or a misuse of political power, and that cases of a criminal character were very lightly punished, that would be a very different matter. Such a case could not be easily tried by a Court of Law, but was a proper subject for an official inquiry. But when a Government official is charged with felonious practices, then he has the same right as other people to be tried in a Court of Law, where witnesses can be heard and cross-examined, and the Government has a right to insist that he shall clear his character. With regard to Mr. Cornwall, he has taken exactly the course which, in my opinion, an official or a private individual should take. In the case of Mr. Bolton, he has brought an action for libel—I am not quite sure that he has not brought two—against *United Ireland*—and certainly not at the expense of or the desire of the Government. Before I pass to French's case, I will just observe on the remarks of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) as to Mr. Bolton's conduct in 1879-80. The hon. Member stated the case as it appeared to him; but that case, as the hon. Member knows, was laid before the late Government by Mr. Justice O'Brien. The late Lord Chancellor Ball, the Attorney General, and the Solicitor General went very carefully into the matter, and they all agreed that there was no ground for taking any action or official notice of Mr. Bolton's conduct. When the case was again brought to light in the Court of Probate, and questions were asked in this House by the late Lord Chancellor Law, in order to see whether the case stood differently from its position when

examined by his Predecessors, he came to the same conclusion as Lord Chancellor Ball and the Law Advisers of the late Government in Ireland. With regard to Mr. French, his case is, in fact, precisely the same as that of Mr. Cornwall, except that it extends over a much longer period. Mr. French went on sick leave on the 16th of August last year, which, I believe, was anterior to any charge brought against him in *United Ireland*. He went on sick leave on the 6th of August for a month, and the first article in *United Ireland*, of which we have cognizance, appeared on the 25th of August. On the 1st of September the Inspector General first saw this article, and called Mr. French's attention to it, asking what steps he intended to take to repel so foul an imputation on his character? He was not forced or asked to take this action, though we may imagine that this was the original intention of the Inspector General. On the following day, Mr. French replied that he should place the matter in the hands of his solicitor, and take such action as he was advised. About the same time the Inspector General, on his own responsibility, and without communicating with any Members of the Government, commenced an informal inquiry; but nothing transpired to establish a *prima facie* case against Mr. French. On the 8th of September Mr. French was informed that he need not return to his office until called upon to do so; and he then wrote, stating that the facts were in the hands of his solicitor. On the 9th of October he was urged to proceed with his action without any delay. Michaelmas Term begins, I think, at the commencement of November, and lasts till about the 21st of December, and the writs were issued, in this case, on the 12th of October. On the 22nd of October the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) first appeared in the action. He proposed, I think, to remit the action to the County Court, on the ground, I suppose, of its being a sham action, and it was at this stage that Mr. French made an affidavit of innocence in the matter. On the 3rd of November the motion on the part of the hon. Member for Mallow was refused, and judgment was then demanded. I am informed that the delay between that date and the 23rd of November was not due to Mr. French;

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but that is a legal matter, on which I am obliged to speak second-hand. The defence of the hon. Member for Mallow was put in on the 5th of December. This defence was made before counsel, and counsel differed up to a certain point; but it ended by Mr. French asking for particulars of justification on the 18th of December. On the 20th of December the Inspector General, who had again asked Mr. French to hurry on the suit as fast as possible, was informed that no time was being lost in pressing on the case. On the 5th of January, 1884, the solicitors of the hon. Member for Mallow refused to give any particulars. This caused considerable delay. On the 5th of February, 1884, the Court ordered them to give particulars within 10 days; but in consequence of this refusal of the hon. Member for Mallow to give particulars, something like six weeks at a most critical time were lost, so that if there were delays it seems to me that they were on both sides.

MR. O'BRIEN: Allow me to say that particulars were given at once. It was further particulars that the Court ordered.

MR. TREVELYAN: Eventually the Court decided that the action which the hon. Member was unwilling to take must go on. After these particulars were given, 12 days' notice were required, and this practically brought the case up to the 1st March, when the Circuits went out, and it was impossible to go on with the case in the Hilary Sittings. Mr. French remained on sick leave, and on the 21st of February he obtained a medical certificate stating that his intellect was more or less affected, and that further excitement would very likely cause permanent mental derangement. This medical certificate was written by Dr. Curtis, Senior Surgeon of the City and County of Cork General Hospital, and by Dr. Eames, Medical Superintendent of the District Asylum. About this time occurred an incident which has been referred to several times. It is said that the detectives who protected French interfered with the detectives who were employed to watch him. The solicitors of the hon. Member for Mallow wrote several letters to the Inspector General, one of which I will read; and I will also read the Inspector General's answer. On the 28th February, the solicitors of

the hon. Member for Mallow wrote this letter—

"Sir,—Your letter of the 27th completely evades our inquiries. You state, 'The Inspector General has not authorized any proceedings on the part of any members of the Force,' and of course we could not expect you to admit that he had. Be good enough to inform us specifically:—1st. Are you aware that Head Constable Cottingham and Irwin have amongst other matters been in communication with the plaintiff, and have requested him to point out our private detective, in order that they might follow him and watch his proceedings, for the purpose of frustrating his investigations, and also have been watching our officers? 2nd. Is this by the Inspector General's approval? 3rd. If not, what notice does the Inspector General propose to take of their conduct? 4th. Will the Inspector General guarantee that such conduct will be discontinued? 5th. If the above statements are denied, will the Inspector General inquire on the subject? We are, Sir, your obedient servants,
CHANCE & WILEY."

The Deputy Inspector General's answer was as follows:—

"R. I. Constabulary, Dublin,
"11th March, 1884.

"Gentlemen,—I am directed by the Inspector General, with reference to your communication of the 28th ultimo, already acknowledged, to reply to your several queries as follows:—

"1. The Inspector General was not aware of any action having been taken by the Head Constables referred to in reference to Mr. French. Since receiving your letter he has caused inquiries to be made from Head Constables Cottingham and Irwin, and has learned that, in consequence of a communication made to H. L. Cottingham by Mr. French, that some suspicious looking persons had been looking for him, they made inquiries at Mr. French's lodgings, and also at a house opposite, whether such was the fact, and ascertained that someone had been making inquiries for him. The Constables did ask at both houses what description of persons were inquiring for Mr. French, but did not ask to have them pointed out. The Constables made these inquiries solely with a view to the personal safety of Mr. French, and not for the purpose of aiding him in any way in the pending action. The Inspector General has further learned that the Constables were not aware that the persons who made the inquiries, or any of them, were acting as detectives, or engaged in assisting you in the case, or that you had any person engaged for detective purposes; he has also learned that they never watched your offices, and do not know where they are situated.

"The above reply renders a reply to the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th queries unnecessary.

"With reference to the 5th query, the Inspector General (from the inquiries made by him) is satisfied that there is no foundation for the charges made against the Constables referred to. He, therefore, does not consider any further inquiry necessary.

"The Inspector General has no objection to further state that he is not aware of any action

on the part of any member of the Force for the purpose of aiding Mr. French in the pending action. Any such action would have neither his encouragement nor authority.

"I am, &c. (Signed) R. F. FANNING."

On the 18th March, the Assistant Inspector General wrote expressing dissatisfaction at the delay that had taken place, and requiring to be furnished with a statement of the case, and also asking why Mr. French had not brought his case to trial. Then came the letter from Mr. French's solicitors, stating that his condition was such that he was unable further to instruct them. What I would say about the delay is that it is very doubtful whether at the first sittings—the Michaelmas Sittings—there was delay upon the part of French. It certainly is open, to a certain extent, to that construction; but with regard to the second and longer sittings, I think the delay was owing to legitimate legal proceedings. Legal proceedings were set in motion, no doubt, by the solicitors of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien). After that, when we come to the Easter Sittings, there is no doubt whatever of the cause of delay. The cause of the delay was that Mr. French was perfectly unable to take part in any business whatever, least of all in such a terrible business as this. On the 4th of April, the Inspector General wrote that there should be no further delay, and calling upon Mr. French to proceed to trial at the earliest day.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The Inspector General, I presume, did not believe that French was ill?

MR. TREVELYAN: He did not know how ill he was. Three doctors were appointed, as a medical board, to examine into the condition of French—namely, Drs. Eames, J. E. Curtis, and S. J. Gordon. I think the professional character of these gentlemen is such that their certificate will be taken as of some value, and that there is no ground for the statement by the hon. Member for Mallow that this is a sham certificate. Their report is a very strong one. It is as follows:—

"Cork District Lunatic Asylum,

"20th April, 1884.

"We, the undersigned, having been appointed by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to examine and certify, for His Excellency's information, our opinion as to the present state of health of County Inspector James Ellis

French, R.I.C., beg to report that, having this day visited that officer, we are of opinion that he is suffering from mental disease (softening of brain) and great nervous debility with impairment of bodily health, and that from this infirmity of mind and body he is incapable of discharging the duties of his situation, and that such infirmity is likely to be permanent.

"JAMES ALEXANDER EAMES, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.,
"Res. Med. Supt. District Asylum, Cork.

"JAMES E. CURTIS, F.R.C.S.I.,
"Senior Surgeon Co. and City Cork

"General Hospital, and South Infirmary,
"S. J. GORDON, Surgeon R.I. Constabulary."

With that certificate, and hearing that French was unfit for the service, he was struck off the Force as from the 20th of April. The question of giving him a pension was postponed, pending the result of the legal proceedings; but if it is clearly ascertained that his ill-health is undoubtedly permanent, that matter will have to be reconsidered, with that sort of inquiry into his official antecedents as we should make in the case of any officer. On the 5th of June, the action, which is now well known in Ireland, was dismissed on the ground that the condition of Mr. French's health prevented him from prosecuting. I think it was an extremely unfortunate thing that Mr. French was not able to bring that action. I think that Mr. Cornwall and Mr. Bolton are perfectly right in pressing forward, as rapidly as possible, those proceedings, by which they hope to clear their characters; and I can only end, as I began, by stating that the Government have had before them no facts or evidence upon which they could properly have instituted a criminal prosecution against either of these persons. I am glad to think that hon. Members, on the whole, have hitherto conducted the debates of this kind in such a way as not to hamper the responsibility of the Government, or to raise disputed questions which are to be decided elsewhere; and I must seriously beg hon. Members who may yet take part in this discussion to remember that it is a very serious matter to make the House of Commons a Court of Law. We have before had this House made a Court of Criminal Appeal by trying over again cases already tried in a Court of Law; but in the case now before the House, the gentlemen whose names are mentioned in connection with felonious practices are certainly being tried at this moment by the House of Commons on

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what is only too likely to be an *ex parte* statement, without any opportunity of being heard in their defence, and without any opportunity of the evidence brought against them being subjected to the test of cross-examination. I trust I have satisfied the House that in this grave matter the Government has acted as it has always been the practice of Governments to act, and I earnestly hope that the debate will not be continued much longer.

MR. HEALY said, it appeared to him that Joe Brady had one great misfortune—namely, that he could not get three good doctors to certify to his general debility. He (Mr. Healy) felt perfectly satisfied that if that man Brady could have provided the right hon. Gentleman with a certificate from Dr. Eames, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. Gordon, he would not at the present moment be lying calcined in a shell in Kilmainham Prison, because the speech of the right hon. Gentleman practically amounted to this—that a man might be charged with the most frightful, heinous, and abominable of crimes, and if he could get three doctors to certify that he was unable to attend to his business that, in their opinion, covered him from all responsibility. He (Mr. Healy) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman upon taking up that view of the law. He must advert to another peculiar view of the law taken by the right hon. Gentleman, which he (Mr. Healy) trusted they would profit by later on in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had commenced by saying that he was not surprised that terrible charges had been made against the Government officials in Ireland, because a certain man named Meiklejohn, who had been convicted of fraud and sentenced to two years' hard labour, was at present engaged in Dublin, and that in Dublin Government officials ran very terrible risks from the statements of this man. Well, if the Government officials ran very terrible risks from the statements of the man Meiklejohn, when Meiklejohn was only employed by a private individual, who had not the hosts of the State behind him, nor the machinery of the Government and the police at his back, what terrible risks did men run when the Government desired to run down some unfortunate peasant or some political opponent, and when they could scour every prison in

the country and employ characters like George Bolton to extract evidence from them. Was there not terrible risk run by every Member upon these Benches, when a man like George Bolton was the chief criminal investigator, and James Ellis French was the chief detective investigator of the Government? Did they run no terrible risk when they got a man like Patrick Delaney, a convict sentenced to five years' penal servitude for highway robbery, and then to 10 years' penal servitude for conspiracy to murder; then sentenced to death, being convicted of murder, reprieved by the Government because he gave them information; kept in clover in Mountjoy Gaol, and produced after 12 months to swear against other men? Who was this man Meiklejohn, whose operations placed Irish officials under such terrible risk? Why, he was an ex-Government official. Set a Meiklejohn to catch a Bolton. It was a terrible thing that they should employ this man and run the terrible risk of impugning the success of abominable proceedings of persons like Mr. James Ellis French. Was it strange that private individuals in Ireland, to convict these men of fearful crimes, should hesitate to employ a Meiklejohn, when the Government did not hesitate to employ a Patrick Delaney or a James Carey? He had often heard flimsy speeches at the Treasury Table; but he had never heard a more flimsy statement in his life than that which had just been delivered by the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman threw over James Ellis French—his case was hopeless. He was suffering from *locomotor ataxy* or Heaven knew what; but "oh," said the Government, "we have got two men to fall back upon, the true and trusty Bolton, and the right well-beloved Cornwall." They threw over French—he went to the wolves; but they had still in their quiver the arrows of Cornwall and Bolton. Aye, and the right hon. Gentleman spurred them on in this House to bring their actions. [Of French the right hon. Gentleman had no hope. If the case rested on French, the right hon. Gentleman knew that the Government would stand condemned; but he had yet hope. Let Englishmen take courage and support the right hon. Gentleman; all was not yet lost; there were yet two men to bring actions against the hon. Gentle-

man the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) and against *United Ireland*; and then, when *United Ireland* had proved the charges, the right hon. Gentleman would come down, having egged them on, and would wash his hands of the whole matter at the Treasury Table. The right hon. Gentleman made a great deal of the allegation of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that French had been seen by himself. Well, he (Mr. Healy) had watched the right hon. Gentleman very carefully; and he had not said one word, when guarding himself, with regard to whether or not any other official had not seen French. It was the terrible Meiklejohn who had made the statement regarding the right hon. Gentleman and French, and the character of Meiklejohn was such that none of his statements were worthy of credence—the Irish officials ran terrible risks. But what was the instance the right hon. Gentleman gave of the untrustworthiness of Meiklejohn? It was that he had reported that French had seen the Irish Secretary, when, as a matter of fact, no interview had taken place between the two; but did the right hon. Gentleman deny that French had sought an interview; did he deny that he had seen the Under Secretary, Sir Robert Hamilton, or the Deputy of Deputy Jenkinson, or Colonel Bruce, or Mr. Fanning, or even Earl Spencer himself? The right hon. Gentleman made a tremendous point of the fact that he was on his holidays shooting pheasants, and that, therefore, the statement as to Mr. French having interviewed him was untrue. The allegation was truly a terrible one. The right hon. Gentleman might not have seen Mr. French; but there were plenty of Man Jacks in the Castle. If the Government had not spoken with the mouth of the Chief Secretary, surely they were not without mouths in Ireland? But the right hon. Gentleman admitted, later on, that he had written letter after letter—that a regular cat-o'-nine-tails of epistles was written to French, urging him, whipping him, goading him, threshing him on to bring an action, but yet never bringing him up to the scratch. That was the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman, and he congratulated England and the Government on having a Chief Secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland so ingenuous that he could rest upon that position a case of this magnitude, knowing that the position taken up by the Irish Members on those Benches was that an Irish official was endeavouring to crush an Irish newspaper which had been, and please God would continue to be, a thorn in the side of a hated Government. But the right hon. Gentleman said—"Thou canst not say I did it. I was pheasant shooting." But they did not know that Sir Robert Hamilton, Colonel Bruce, or even Lord Spencer himself had not seen French. They complained that all the information they obtained on this subject had to be dragged out of the right hon. Gentleman, as it were, with pincers. Was that the way in which English Members would be treated if at any time they had to make a charge against Colonel Henderson or Mr. Vincent—and Mr. French occupied in Ireland relatively the same position as they did? Supposing that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) or some other Member of the Tory Party brought a charge against Mr. Vincent, or other persons of his rank, and the actions were allowed to rest month after month and term after term, what would be said by English Members? Why, they would have dragged piecemeal out of the Home Secretary all the information he had in his possession. Would they not have made the charge that the Home Secretary was an accomplice in the matter? The right hon. Gentleman was a Gentleman, an English official, an English Gentleman, and he knew not what it was that compelled him to go over to Ireland and screen the conduct of officials like French. He was a Gentleman in feeling, by nature, and by birth; what obligation was there upon him to defend a dirty dog like James Ellis French? Was not all Ireland under the belief that the Government had screened this man? Would they take the verdict of men on the Treasury Bench as to whether the right hon. Gentleman had raised the standard of officialism by the delay that had occurred? The consciences of men were tried in that House by Divisions in the Lobby; but if they were written on their faces he would take the verdict of hon. Members as to whether the right hon. Gentleman had or had not lowered the standard of offi-

Mr. Healy

cial conduct by the course he had taken. He knew not why, when English officials went over to Ireland, they made themselves the defenders or the accomplices of persons of this character, and why, when they stood at the Table, they could not say—"This man has not cleared his name of charges of a foul nature which have been made against him," or "The charges against so and so have not been proved." It did not apply to the right hon. Gentleman to defend a creature of the character of French. There were men who would have quitted the Government before they would have made such a defence as that made by the right hon. Gentleman. But they were told they ought to have entrusted their evidence to the hands of the Government. But they knew too much to entrust them with anything they possessed in the way of evidence. They had before their eyes the precedent of Corry Connellan. And what did the English Government do in relation to him? They were as certain of his guilt as they were certain of the guilt of James Ellis French. Some creature of a former Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had facts before him as clear as those which the present Lord Lieutenant had with regard to French. Corry Connellan was hunted by the Government out of the country for his crimes; but no prosecution was commenced against him, and he was now drawing a pension from the Secret Service Fund. Trust the Government—the protectors and advisers of Corry Connellan! Give proofs to George Bolton! Let George Bolton manipulate the evidence! He would ask English Members to make the case their own. Here was a Government official charged with crime, who, as a matter of fact, if the proofs of it were entrusted to the Government, would decide upon his own case. Mr. James Ellis French would have to say whether Mr. James Ellis French was or was not guilty, and whether he should be prosecuted or not. Why, in that case the Government would be as sure of a verdict as they were with the Green Street packed jury. Sworn proofs, however, had been furnished in Court. A volume—he might almost say half a cart load—of depositions against French were recorded in the Court of Queen's Bench. Did not the Crown Lawyers know the way to the Courts? If it were a charge against some leading Land Leaguer, how quickly

would the sleuth-hounds of the Government sniff out the facts! If any person whom the Government wanted to destroy were the object of these charges, and there was the same amount of evidence in existence as there was against French, how long would the Government have been in finding it out? Take himself, for instance. But this charge was made against a detective—their own darling—and, therefore, the ægis of the Government was flung around him. It was, he said, monstrous to expect the hon. Member for Mallow to supply all his evidence. The Government should be as anxious for their own reputation as a private individual was; like Cæsar's wife, they should be above suspicion; the individual on whom the lives of Irishmen might rest should be a man against whom no one could throw a stone. This man Bolton—forgery, adulterer, wife swindler—he who procured evidence and manipulated prisoners in their cells—did the in-door work of the Government; the out-door work was done by Mr. James Ellis French; they were the two branches of crime detection in Ireland. On the right of the Government there was George Bolton, and on their left James Ellis French. And they were asked to have confidence in the administration of justice! The right hon. Gentleman said that Bolton had been charged with felony; but that, as far as he understood the matter, the crime only amounted to misdemeanour. He thought the right hon. Gentleman might have left that defence to his learned Colleague; an indictable offence was, in the popular parlance of the Press, referred to as felonious. The right hon. Gentleman said in effect—"Mr. Bolton was charged with being a fraudulent trustee; we are advised by an English legal luminary that that is not felony. Poor George has only been guilty of a misdemeanour. He has swindled his wife; as a bankrupt he has paid 6½*d.* in the pound; his dealings with his tenants were most improper; he is a fraudulent trustee and a fraudulent bankrupt; but he has not been guilty of felony." He should have supposed that an English gentleman would have blushed with shame for making that defence in the House of Commons. At what a pass had they arrived, when English Members, asked to vote on this question, had to be coaxed

to follow the Government into the Lobby—that a right hon. Gentleman should be so immured in the incrustations of the Castle as to make a defence of this nature, and that English Gentlemen should be bound to him so closely by the ties of Party as to be willing to back him up in that defence! The right hon. Gentleman stated that Mr. Bolton intended to bring his action, and he then skilfully avoided all reference to Mr. Bolton's conduct; but he made a speech that would, no doubt, be appreciated by a Belfast jury. The right hon. Gentleman had evidently bright hopes of the success of Mr. Bolton's action; but why was the case not to be tried by the special jurors of Dublin, who knew Mr. Bolton so well? Why did he not avail himself of the aid of his friend Mr. Welsh, of the Constitutional Club, with whom he was in the habit of manipulating the panels of juries? A jury which was good enough to try persons accused of the most atrocious agrarian offences was not good enough to decide on Mr. Bolton's case; so he fell back on the clause of the Crimes Act which provided for change of venue, and brought his action in the county of Antrim. He would ask, seeing that Lord Spencer, when there, had to be guarded by Dragoons, what guard would not his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) need? Mr. Bolton, in this act, had practically "thrown up the sponge" so far as his conduct was concerned; but the right hon. Gentleman bade him be of good cheer, because of the people of Belfast. Mr. Bolton, the manipulator of jury panels, who knew the panels of the City of Dublin a great deal better than he knew his prayers, this man had gone to Belfast to have his action tried, not being able to trust to his fellow-citizens in the capital, and upon that fact the Government rested their case. What moral weight would attach to a verdict obtained in such a way? French had gone, Bolton had gone to Belfast, and before very long they would have got rid of Cornwall. Of Cornwall's action it was not for him to speak now, although he might very fairly do so after the manner in which Bolton's case had been treated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. The manifesto of the right hon. Gentleman would be read between the lines by the Belfast jury, and even if Bolton secured

a verdict, he would not be entitled to claim that there was any moral weight attaching to it. The Chief Secretary made a great point of Bolton being called a forger by the *United Ireland*; but Bolton, designated, as he had been, forger, swindler, thief, adulterer, fraudulent bankrupt, had not attempted to bring a libel action. He was called forger, according to the right hon. Gentleman; if so, where was the action for libel? He was called a thief, where was the action for libel? He was called ruffian, swindler, and every adjective that could be was applied to the hound as he was; but no action for libel was forthcoming. Why was that? According to law, a man was not entitled to recover damages for the loss of a character he had not got. Bolton had no character. He relied upon the fact that in the report of Parliamentary proceedings a Motion was given which he said was tantamount to accusing him of disgraceful offences. That was the head and front, the top and bottom, of the action which Bolton proposed to bring before the jurors of the City of Belfast. Finally, he would say that the Government had given them no satisfaction whatever in this matter. September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May, and June had passed away, and nothing had been got out of the Government with regard to James Ellis French. Month after month was allowed to slip away and nothing was done, and at the present moment the Government said that even the question of French's pension was under consideration. With what glee would the Radical economists vote for the pension of James Ellis French? The case of the Government from first to last was of the flimsiest description; and he regretted that a gentleman of the character and position of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary should have been obliged to rely on a defence such as that he had made to-night. That defence would be read closely in Ireland, and the people would understand that, no matter how great the crime, if the offender were a Government official, he would be taken up by the authorities. And this was a Government which put down agrarian criminals, political offenders, men of every description who were opposed to them, while it allowed frightful crimes to be committed

under the walls of Dublin Castle with impunity. They hunted down every political offender, all the machinery of Government was available to hunt them down; but when he and his Friends brought charges of this kind against their own officials, not only did they get no aid, but the Government's police officers were occupied in dogging the footsteps of their witnesses and detectives, and keeping close watch upon the doors of their solicitors and the persons who employed the solicitors. He made the Government a present of to-night's debate; it would ennoble them in the opinion of the Irish people. This discussion had been conducted by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) and the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) in a manner to which no one in the House could take exception. No words had been spoken by those hon. Gentlemen which ought not to have been spoken. The House and the country at large would appreciate what the Government had done. They had had this official under their eyes, they knew his guilt, and knowing his guilt for months and months they had screened him; they now screened him from prosecution, and said that if he got well again they would give him a pension. The Government were doing an evil thing for their reputation. That, however, was a matter for themselves and the country to judge upon. He would only say once more he regretted that a Gentleman of the character of the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, the biographer and the nephew of Lord Macaulay, should be known in history as the apologist of James Ellis French.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he thought the Irish people, who had looked forward with some interest to this debate, would be surprised and shocked at the reply which the Chief Secretary had made to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). For many months this matter had been discussed in Ireland; and if the Chief Secretary had not had his attention drawn to it, and if he had not had an opportunity of making himself acquainted with the allegations which had been made against James Ellis French, it was only another of the many instances of the ignorance of Irish affairs which the right hon.

Gentleman displayed. Almost at the commencement of this Session, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said that the Government were acting in this matter with their eyes open, and to-night he had posed as the advocate of James Ellis French. Everyone, too, who read the observations of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the case of Mr. Bolton would feel that there had been delivered in the House of Commons that which might more properly be delivered by the counsel for Mr. Bolton before the Belfast jury. The right hon. Gentleman had said that independent medical officers were obtained to examine Mr. French. What, however, was the fact? Why, that one of the doctors was the very gentleman whom Mr. French had called in; and he (Mr. Harrington) thought that, in calling in that gentleman, French had, at least, shown that he was capable of exercising his faculty of discretion. The Chief Secretary had said that information was not supplied to the Government in the matter, and that was the excuse which he made for the Government taking no action in the case of James Ellis French. If the right hon. Gentleman had no evidence, could he not, at least, have consented to receive evidence by assenting to the Motion for an inquiry? The allegation of the Chief Secretary was that he had no evidence on which to proceed, and that unless the Crown was put in motion the Crown would not proceed. How much evidence had he required in other cases? How much evidence did he require when he accused him (Mr. Harrington) of intimidating his constituents at Westmeath? Did he wait until action was taken by the constituents themselves? No; he immediately took the prosecution into his own hands; he underlined the observations which were alleged to have been used by him (Mr. Harrington), directed a prosecution, and appointed the gentleman who was to prosecute. A very remarkable incident, as bearing on this case, came under his notice last Saturday evening. While standing at the mail boat at Kingston, he noticed the detectives of the Chief Secretary and his Government engaged in watching the movements of any political persons who were to cross by the boat. He saw them engaged in the effort to keep in the country men who would be very anxious

to escape from being witnesses in this infamous case. From the nature of the offence, the House would understand the extreme difficulty his hon. Friend (Mr. O'Brien) had encountered in getting evidence which would enable him to make a solid defence. The right hon. Gentleman wanted them to place in the hands of the Government officials all that evidence upon which his hon. Friend relied for his defence, while, in the same breath, the right hon. Gentleman admitted it was his desire, and the desire of all the officials of Dublin Castle, that French should do all in his power to crush *United Ireland*. He (Mr. Harrington) had no wish to detain the House longer; he would only say that to the shame and disgrace with which the name of the Irish Government was associated would be added the further shame and scandal and disgrace of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary cloaking, by his words to-night, an offence which every respectable person in Dublin believed to have been committed.

MR. PARNELL: Although, Sir, I am a considerable shareholder in the *United Ireland* newspaper, I have never taken any part in the management of the paper. The management is intrusted by the Company to my hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), who has always shown the greatest ability and discretion in the discharge of his duties. It has not, therefore, fallen to my lot to be acquainted with the particular case of Mr. James Ellis French in any other way, or in any other more intimate manner, than as an ordinary reader of the newspaper. I have certainly looked forward to this debate with very considerable interest, in order that it might be possible for me to see upon what foundation the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) rested the extraordinary and unusual charges which he has made against Mr. French, and which have produced such a sensation and such an unheard of state of affairs in Dublin and in Ireland generally. Well, now, Sir, I have listened with the greatest attention to the statements which were made by the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who brought forward this Motion, and also to the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), and I am bound to say that I think the

Government cannot meet the charges which have been made against Mr. French, their former Chief Inspector of Constabulary. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan) says he has had no evidence presented to him, and, I suppose, he means also that the Irish Executive have had no evidence presented to them, as to the charges which have been made against Mr. French. But I would remind the right hon. Gentleman and the House that the charge in question is a charge of felony of a very grave and gross character; and I would ask the Chief Secretary whether, if such a charge—a charge of felony of this kind, or of any other kind—were made against persons in Ireland not in the employment of the Government, he would not think it the duty of the Police Department to investigate the case with a view of sifting it to the very foundation? It is not yesterday that these charges have been made against James Ellis French. The series of charges which has culminated to-night has been lasting for a period of fully 10 months, and it has culminated in the neglect by Mr. French to prosecute the action against the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), and by the dismissal by the Courts in Dublin of the action. I cannot help thinking that the Government must consider that this is a most unfortunate termination of the action. Is it, or is it not, the intention of the Government in Ireland to investigate these charges against Mr. French? If my hon. Friend the Member for Mallow, with a single detective, with all the disadvantages which must arise to a private individual engaged in such a case as this, with the very power of the Government's detective force in Ireland arrayed against him, has been able to accumulate testimony on the records of the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland, filling, as has been described by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), a volume, is it not possible for the Government, with all their detectives, with all their power, their wealth, and their means of investigating felonies, means which, as regards political offenders, they have not shrunk from using to the fullest extent—is it not in their power, after these charges have been rung in their ears for 10 months, and have now been brought forward in the House of Commons—nay, is it not their bounden

duty to investigate the case with the view of placing this man, if he be criminal, on his trial? I cannot see upon what ground the Government say that it is not their duty to interfere. If the Government maintain their present attitude, Mr. French has it in his power, by refusing to recover, to prevent his conduct from ever being investigated before a Court. If an accusation involving felony had been made against anybody other than a Government official, if that accusation had been made with such persistency, and in such detailed evidence, as has been brought forward in the case of Mr. French, would the Government shrink from a prosecution? I cannot think they would shrink from an investigation, and I believe that if crimes of a political character were so well substantiated as this gross crime has been against Mr. French, the result would undoubtedly be that all the influence of the Detective Department in Ireland, and all the power of the Government, would be used for the purpose of obtaining a conviction against the persons accused. How has the right hon. Gentleman exhibited himself to the Irish people? They know very well what steps the Irish Government have taken for the purpose of detecting and putting down offences of an agrarian and political character during the last two years. They know perfectly well that the Irish Government shrank from no means, expense, or exertion to put down such crimes; and yet, when one of their own trusted officials is accused of an offence of this character—an offence which must be notorious to the police in Dublin, not only as regards Mr. French, but also a great many other persons, I am sorry to say, it is not possible for the Government to shield these individuals without incurring the imputation of one-sidedness and unfairness in the execution of their duty as the upholders of the law and the punishment of offenders in Ireland. In this case the offender happens to be one of their own officials, and one upon whom they have relied for the maintenance of the law, and the attempt to cloak the case throws general discredit on the administration of the law in Ireland. It is utterly impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to maintain the position he has taken up to-night. He has attacked the detective Meiklejohn, and endeavoured to throw discredit upon

him by alluding to his conviction for fraud two or three years ago. I think that is not the tone he should have adopted in regard to this case. If he had not investigated this case, and had not directed it to be investigated in Ireland by the authorities, he ought to have done so; and if he had not directed such an investigation it did not lie in his mouth to speak of the persons who had investigated the matter, and the agents who had been the means of preventing French from trampling on the hon. Member for Mallow, as he had done to-night. Unpleasant as this has been, I cannot see how any other course was open to my hon. Friend than that which he has taken. He could not have gone to French, when a suspicion of French had dawned upon him, and ask French to give him the assistance of his own detective department to ascertain his (French's) guilt. Such a course would have been puerile and absurd in the last degree, and in view of the conduct of the Government and of the strange fatuity which seemed to possess the Chief Secretary; and it seemed a most extraordinary thing that his hon. Friend should have been rebuked by the Chief Secretary, and that the hon. Member's agent should be held up to defamation by the right hon. Gentleman for doing that which ought to have been done long ago by the detective department of Dublin Castle. I suppose the Government would refuse to grant this Select Committee; but an independent inquiry of some kind is necessary in regard to this matter, and unless some sufficient assurance was given that the Government viewed the matter in its proper light, and that they saw the great discredit which would be thrown on the administration of the law in Ireland, and upon the whole Executive Government in Ireland, by their further insisting upon their unfortunate and ill-judged course, I certainly think it will be the duty of Irish Members to recur to this subject until they can touch the conscience of the Government.

MR. FAWCETT: In the position that I hold in the Government, I feel I have no claim whatever to ask the House to allow me to make any remarks on the general issue raised on this Motion; but as one of the persons referred to is an old official of the Department over which I preside, I will venture to say a few

words lest my silence should be misunderstood. As I understand the charge that has been brought against the Government, it is this—and I may say in passing that I think personally, and I think the Chief Secretary would say the same, that nothing could be kinder to us personally than the tone of the hon. Member for Queen's County—the charge against the Government is this: that we had evidence, or ought to have had evidence, which would enable us to proceed against certain officials; that we declined this duty and this responsibility, and left the investigation to be practically carried on by a private Member of this House, who brought charges against these officials in the columns of his newspaper. Now, let me explain exactly my own position in the case, and I think probably a simple explanation will be, after all, the best vindication of the Government. Far from having had any evidence; far from any hon. Members having given me any evidence or even the smallest intimation that they suspected the official of the Post Office whose name has been mentioned of the crimes which have been charged against him, I read in *United Ireland*, on the 8th of May, a certain article stating that there was no official in the Post Office whose character was more free from suspicion. Now, in justice to Mr. Cornwall, let me tell the House that he himself sent this article officially to the Post Office, and directed our attention to it, and this was the first intimation we received of these charges. Mr. Cornwall particularly put himself into communication with a firm of respectable solicitors. They consulted one of the counsel of the Irish Government of the highest standing, and throughout he has acted according to their advice. I think I should have enjoined upon him the necessity—and I did so—of bringing an action in a Court of Justice in order to free himself from these charges, yet, in justice to Mr. Cornwall, I am bound to say that he took that course before he was aware that I was going to enjoin it upon him. He has given me a most positive assurance that there should not be one hour's unnecessary delay in bringing these charges, so far as he is concerned, to an issue; and I can only say that, so far as I am concerned, I will take care, although I am sure that such an assurance is not necessary, that this

promise is fully redeemed. This being the case, as the hon. Member for Queen's County sees, the case is virtually *sub judice*, and I am sure every Member of the House will feel that it would be most inappropriate for me to say a single word further in respect to this case; but I felt it was due to him to say that he did everything which an honourable man—supposing he is honourable, and is as free from these charges as anyone else—could do. He has done, so far as I can discover, everything that an honourable man could do; and I say this without expressing any opinion as to the ultimate decision; but as soon as the charges were first made on the 1st of May, he did everything that an honourable and innocent man could do to vindicate himself; and, that being the case, I am sure everyone will be careful not to add to the painfulness of the position by saying an unnecessary word until the trial has been brought to a result. Now, with regard to the position of the Government in reference to this case, it has been constantly said that we have not availed ourselves of the evidence in our possession; but charges have been brought, and we have no evidence. If the evidence is in the possession of any Member of the Government, then, of course, we are bound to investigate it. If the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), or the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), or the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), had come to me and said that, from evidence in their possession, they were prepared to bring a most serious charge against officials in my Department, then, treating these Gentlemen as honourable men, and feeling that they would not bring these charges, or make such statements, unless they had some evidence to rest upon, I should have said at once—“Tell me your evidence. You may trust me. Tell me your evidence; and, so far as I am concerned, the case shall be carefully, closely, and exhaustively investigated.” But that is not my position, and that has not been the position, as I understand, of the Irish Government in respect to the other officials, although any hon. Member might have told me this. As I said before, the first direct rumour I heard of this charge brought against an official of the Post Office was that I read an article which was furnished to me, not by the person who

brought the charge, but by the person against whom the charge was brought. I can only say, further—although, possibly, it may be considered that I am not the right person to speak on this subject—that it seems to me that there could be no more inappropriate tribunal to investigate a criminal charge of a most grave kind than a Select Committee of this House. A Select Committee may, if the interests of other people were not involved in it, investigate the conduct of the Government, and may censure the Government; but it seems to me—and I think that in this opinion every lawyer will agree with me—that there could be no more inappropriate tribunal before which the innocence can be established, or the guilt proved, of men who are charged with heinous offences than a Select Committee. This being the case, I hope the hon. Member will not press his Motion to a Division; and I will only say, thanking the House for the patience with which, at this late hour, they have listened to my remarks, I am sure the hon. Member for Monaghan, when he reflects upon it, will regret any words which would bear the interpretation that the Chief Secretary had uttered a word in apology of the offences charged against this man. He did not say a word of apology. All he said, it appeared to me, was that he exercised great care, and great tact, and great discretion in not saying anything that could prejudice the matter, or to prejudice the interests of a man whose case is still before the Courts of Law; and, as I have said before, so far as the particular official with which I am concerned, I believe not an hour's delay will be allowed in bringing the trial or action in which he is involved to a decision.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the Postmaster General had, of course, a technical connection with this matter, but really nothing more. No one supposed for a moment that he would screen any offender from any charge; but this was really a Dublin Castle question entirely. The right hon. Gentleman had said that a Select Committee was the worst of all tribunals to inquire into a charge against any man. He admitted that they might inquire into the conduct of the Government by a Select Committee; but that was the very thing which was asked for by this Motion. They did

not want to inquire into the guilt or innocence of these men, but into the conduct of the Government, to see whether they had screened these men. His hon. Friend said he had testimony against these men, which testimony could be seen by the Chief Secretary at this moment; and what they now asked of the Government was that they would now set an investigation going. The charge was that there was a mass of corruption festering round Dublin Castle, and they asked the Government to now take steps to have this matter sifted to the bottom. If the Government would give a promise to do so, this Motion would not be pressed to a Division; but without some pledge they could only ask the House of Commons to judge between them and the Government, and on the House of Commons must rest the responsibility of denying justice in a matter of great magnitude.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 21; Noes 62: Majority 41.—(Div. List, No. 123.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 18th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Considered as amended*—Milford Docks (Junction Railway).*

PUBLIC BILLS.—Ordered—First Reading—Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878 (Districts)* [253].

Second Reading—Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Yorkshire) [34], *debate adjourned*.

Second Reading and committed to a Select Committee—Church Patronage [17].

Second Reading, and committed to the Select Committee on Church Patronage—Church Patronage (No. 2)* [251].

Select Committee—Police Burghs (Scotland)* [167], *nominated*.

Report—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11) (Parishes of Bisley, &c.)* [213]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) (Parishes of Barnwood, and others)* [214]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) (City of Oxford, and others)* [215]; Local Government Provisional Order (Highways)* [226]; Local Government (Ireland) Provi-

sional Orders (New Streets in the City of Dublin, &c.) * [200]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) (Unions of Clonmel and others) * [198]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) (Unions of Cashel and others) * [205]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) (Unions of Delvin and others) * [210]; Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) (Clogher Valley Tramway) * [234]; Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order * [222]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) * [232].

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Districts of Dorking and Hendon, &c.) * [190], and *passed*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.—[BILL 17.]

(*Mr. E. A. Leatham, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Shield.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. E. A. LEATHAM: Mr. Speaker, in asking the House to read a second time a Bill for the prohibition of the common sale of livings, I need hardly state that I am not one of those who place much reliance upon any measure for the reform of the abuses of patronage which does not strike at the root of the evil which we deplore. The root of the evil is not the scandal and impurity which have gathered round the system; it is the system itself—the common sale of a public trust. This is a thing which is abhorrent to all our notions of what is right and honourable, and for the public good. If it were proposed to extend the practice to any other office of trust, the moral sense of the community would revolt from such a proposal; and yet we calmly contemplate the fact that there is no part of England and Wales in which the official oversight of the spiritual interests of every soul in a parish may not be made the subject of common sale or barter; may not be advertised in the newspapers; put up for auction and knocked down to the highest bidder; may not be hawked about the back slums by agents, the antecedents of some of whom are such that their recognized connection with any honest trade would be impossible. If you wish to find a traffic which is a positive disgrace to everyone engaged in it, which demoralizes everyone who touches it, and which is often carried on

in the teeth of law itself, you have only to turn to the purlieus of the great institution which we have established for the glory of God; and if you want to find men who are steeped in all the discredit of illicit transactions, and often in the infamy of offences which are akin to perjury itself, you have only to look for them among those who have taken the most solemn vows upon themselves, and who are commissioned by all the authority of Parliament to undertake for our spiritual necessities. All this has been proved over and over again in debates in this House; and it is no part of my duty to-day to disgust or amuse the House by the repetition of a story, with all the details of which it is painfully familiar. I will only refer to one case, and that because it occurred in the diocese of Peterborough. We may be quite sure, if it had been preventible by the Bishop, that it would have been prevented. The public were startled a few months ago by the announcement that a Race-course Company had purchased an advowson. It appears that it was thought advisable to enlarge the Race-course near Leicester; and for that purpose the Race-course Company rented from the Vicar of Oadby a piece of land which belonged to the glebe. In order to fortify their position, they purchased the advowson. The fact was denied in the newspapers; but the gentleman who bought the advowson was the paid Secretary of the Company. The last stage of the transaction is the most picturesque. I am informed that the Company has been wound-up, and the advowson purchased by an eminent jockey for £1,500, or £5 more than he paid for the "Black Dog" public-house in the same parish. Now, Sir, I do not propose to take up the time of the House by discussing those clauses of this Bill, which also form part of the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). I imagine that no one will stand up in the House as the champion of Donatives or of Resignation Bonds; and if they do we are quite prepared to fight them in Committee—for the clauses abolishing the latter and making the former presentative benefices are by no means the main provisions of this Bill. One of the main provisions of my hon. Friend's Bill is that by which he forbids the sale of next presentations. This is also one of the main provisions

of this Bill. But it is not one about which, by any means, the keenest controversy will be excited. Up to this point I think that we have certainly carried the conscience of the Church—and the conscience of a majority upon both sides of this House—with us; and it is after this point that the Bill before the House begins to take its distinctive character—for it is a Bill not only for the prohibition of the sale of next presentations, but of advowsons as well. My first duty, then, before asking the House to read the Bill a second time, will be to show that its main principle—the prohibition of the sale of advowsons, except under certain exceptional conditions—is just as much called for in the interests of morality and religion as the prohibition of the sale of next presentations—that the one is the logical sequence of the other, and that no real moral distinction can be drawn between the two transactions. I am well aware that attempts have been constantly made to do so; but anything more hazy cannot well be conceived. Even the Bishop of Peterborough, to whom we are all so much indebted for his eloquent denunciations of the traffic in livings, has fallen, apparently, into the common error; and as he has probably expressed, with less vagueness than anyone else, the moral distinction which he thinks he sees between the sale of an advowson and the sale of a next presentation, I will attempt to deal with his argument at once. We shall find it in the right rev. Prelate's examination of Mr. Slocock, who appeared before the Royal Commission upon Patronage, as spokesman of the Essex clerical patrons. He was asked these questions—

(844.) "As to the sale of livings, do you see any difference in principle between sales of advowsons and sales of next presentations?—Yes.

(845.) "What is the difference in your mind?—The one is more the sale of property, and the other is more the sale of the right of exercising a special function."

A reply which the right rev. Prelate regarded as scarcely sufficiently lucid, so he put the argument into Mr. Slocock's mouth as follows—

(846.) "May I put it to you in this way? The owner of an advowson, when he sells it, divests himself completely of that property; and with the sale of that property, he divests him-

self of all the trusts attaching to the property—it has gone clean away from him?—Yes.

(847.) "The owner of an advowson who retains it, while he sells the next presentation, has not divested himself of the property?—No.

(848.) "Nor of the trusts attaching to it?—No.

(849.) "If he has appointed some person of whom probably he knows nothing to come in and do his duty as a trustee, which he was supposed to do, or ought to have done for himself, there is a difference, is there not?—Certainly."

Now, the question which we have to decide is not whether there is any difference in principle between the sale of an advowson and the sale of a next presentation, but whether there is such a difference as to make the one sale right, and the other sale wrong. The fact is, that both sales are wrong; and the offence in the case of the man who sells his advowson is, if anything, the greater, because he puts a rather larger sum into his pocket by the sacrifice of his trust. What constitutes the offence in either case seems to have eluded the grasp of the right rev. Prelate—it is the desire to turn a trust into money. Nor is it true that the vendor of an advowson renounces his trusteeship and all its advantages and responsibilities; but the vendor of a next presentation does not do so. For the remainder of his lifetime, in all probability, the vendor of the next presentation makes just as complete a renunciation of his trusteeship. Old men are not the purchasers of these things, and the fact that some day a man's heirs may again have the appointment does not practically make him a trustee. Again, if we turn to the purchaser, his motive is the same in either case. He makes the purchase, not from a laudable desire to become a patron of the Church, but with a view to the next presentation, and with an eye to a particular presentee; and we must observe this distinction in favour of the man who buys the next presentation, and against the man who buys the advowson. The man who buys the next presentation buys the office for another; but the man who buys the advowson generally buys the office for himself. But the fallacy of the right rev. Prelate's position becomes still more apparent if we examine the illustration which he has selected to show what he means—

(850.) "The difference might be illustrated in this way. Supposing that you, as a trustee to a property, had a right to appoint a solicitor to act under the trust for the benefit of the pro-

perty, you might, if you chose, resign your trusteeship, and get rid of it altogether; but whilst you held your trusteeship, you would not consider it a right thing to do to advertise in the paper that any person might have the solicitorship to that trust on paying you a certain sum of money?—No.”

Yes; and would it be a right thing to do to advertise in the paper that any person might have the trusteeship, including the right of appointing the solicitor, and all future solicitors, on paying you a certain sum of money?

The act of selling a trusteeship, whether involving privileges to the owner or not, is happily regarded in this country as discreditable. Why should the discredit disappear the moment we approach a spiritual trust? One would suppose that it should increase tenfold. To buy or sell a trust, even if the trust be only the ten-thousandth part of the right of returning one of us to the House, is called by an ugly name, and severely punished by law. The odd thing is that we are all blind, even Bishops, to an act of bribery when the trust is not a trumpety share in a political election, but the right of electing in perpetuity to an office the responsibilities of which are supposed to reach into Eternity. And, Sir, I must say it is a fortunate circumstance that no moral distinction can be drawn between the sale of an advowson and the sale of a next presentation; because it is the sale, not of next presentations, but of advowsons, which constitutes the bulk of this miserable traffic. Mr. Stark, who is a prince among clerical agents, in the copy of his *Church Preferment Register* which he laid before the Royal Commission, advertised particulars of no fewer than 110 advowsons, but only of 22 next presentations. The reason is obvious.

When a clergyman wishes to present himself, the law compels him to buy an advowson. The advowson, therefore, becomes the leading article in the market; and it is thus, if we are to believe Mr. Stark, that two-thirds of the saleable patronage of the Church have passed into clerical hands. The clerical patronage in the county of Essex alone has been shown to amount to a capital sum of £324,250, representing 60 or 70 benefices. And, Sir, not only is the bulk of this objectionable traffic a traffic in advowsons, but that portion of it which is still a traffic in next presentations is readily convertible into a traffic in ad-

vowsons; because, as we have abundant evidence to show, the advowson can be sold with an understanding that as soon as possession is given it is to be handed back to the original owner. What I ask the House, then, to bear in mind is this—that if we really desire to arrest this traffic in livings, it is idle to limit our prohibition to the sale of next presentations. We shall be simply shutting the side door to the traffic, while we leave the main entrance obvious and wide open. But, Sir, I shall, no doubt, be told that there are sales of patronage which are not of this objectionable character—I mean the cases in which it is morally certain that the purchase is not made from interested or unworthy motives—for example, when patronage passes with an estate or a substantial interest in the parish; or when it is repurchased by those who have such an interest already, and acquires again the nature of an advowson appendant. I do not think that public opinion demands the prohibition of such sales as these, or when patronage is bought by Boards of Trustees to be for ever withdrawn from the market. This Bill, therefore, does not contemplate the prohibition of such sales; but it very clearly limits the circumstances under which they can take place; and it distinctly prohibits the sale of an advowson appendant apart from the manor. I must confess I should have been glad if, by this Bill, we could have established the principle that patronage not only partakes of the nature of a trust, but partakes of no other nature; that the law should henceforth regard it as a trust for the parishioners, to be exercised for their benefit, and their benefit only, and that no kind of facilities should be given to turn it into money. But I can easily imagine the storm to which such a proposal would have given rise. We should have been told that patronage has passed for centuries by will; that it has entered into every kind of settlement; that the lawyers have treated it as property from time immemorial; and that to deprive it of its character as property by Act of Parliament would be an act of confiscation. Now, Sir, if, as legislators, we are compelled to bow before such a storm as this—and I am far from saying that we are not—we are, at least, bound to see that our compliance is attended with the minimum of public mischief.

The Bill now before the House is an attempt to solve this difficult problem in this spirit. It recognizes the fact that, almost from time immemorial, this kind of trust has been regarded as something from which the trustee might derive personal advantage, but that it has never lost its character as a trust, while acquiring in part the character of property. The Bill attempts to assign their relative values to these conflicting elements, to define the proportion which has practically become the property of the patron, and the proportion which still remains the property of the public; and, in cases in which the proprietor insists upon his rights, by paying off the proprietor to purify the trust. Now, Sir, when I look at the course of legislation generally, with regard to what are called proprietary rights, and when I look also at the history of patronage, and how lax we have been in allowing the claims of the proprietor to overshadow the responsibilities of the trustee, I am not sanguine enough to hope that Parliament will sanction the reservation to the public of more than half the present marketable value of patronage. I believe that the great bulk of patrons would scorn the idea of turning their patronage into money at all; but, to meet the exceptional case of those who feel no such scruple, this Bill provides for the return to such patrons in exchange for their patronage of this proportion of its present marketable value—a value, let us bear in mind, which has been greatly enhanced by the existing irregular and illegal methods of disposing of it. If we are to regard patronage as property at all, I do not think that we can offer them less, though I shall be glad to find the House thinks otherwise. If we are to uphold the principle that patronage is at least as much a trust as it is a property, it is impossible that we can offer them more. Now, Sir, this Bill provides that patronage, thus voluntarily surrendered, and thus enfranchised, should go to the Crown. The Crown is a patron who, in all probability, would be the most willing to surrender it again, if Parliament, in its wisdom, should desire to deal with it otherwise. I wish the House to observe that with what is really a distinct branch of this great subject—namely, who ought to present to livings, if the existing patrons were out of the way, I do not profess to deal.

Hon. Members who desire that patronage should be vested in the parishioners, either directly or indirectly, or in any other hands, must find some other opportunity of pressing their views. For the purposes of this Bill I assume that the best patrons are those which exist. Sir, the Bill provides that when the actual patron is anxious, or compelled, to sell his patronage, and the person I may term the natural patron is unwilling or unable to relieve him of it, then Queen Anne's Bounty Board should be empowered to purchase it at half the present market value, a figure which the actuaries will readily determine, the patronage to go to the Crown, as I have said, and the benefice to be charged, after the next avoidance, with such a sum annually for a term of years as will enable Queen Anne's Bounty to recoup themselves in both principal and interest. In naming Queen Anne's Bounty Board as a public body both able and willing to undertake this duty, I am only giving effect to suggestions made on the best authority in the evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Lords. Mr. Aston, Secretary and Treasurer of the Board, appeared, I may say officially, before the Committee. A scheme for the redemption of patronage, very similar to that which I have had the honour of submitting to the House, was explained to him. He said (1,378)—

"He thought Queen Anne's Bounty Board could undertake these transactions, with the two-fold view of the Board having the settlement and arrangement of the terms of sale and loan. . . . That such proceedings were, to some extent, analogous to many proceedings which Queen Anne's Bounty Board are now engaged in (1,379); that he thought Queen Anne's Bounty Board, in some respects, better qualified than the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for such transactions (1,383); that there is a considerable amount of trust fund which could be applied by direction of Parliament to this purpose (1,384), without any injury to existing interests, under Queen Anne's Bounty Board; and not likely to be wanted at all for any other Church purpose (1,386); and he gives this opinion after having had his attention drawn to such a scheme for several years (1,387)."

Now, let the House bear in mind that Mr. Aston gave this opinion, apparently, under the impression that the great bulk of patrons would avail themselves of the permission to surrender, and that the amount of compensation paid to them would not be, as proposed under this Bill, half the actual market value, but the whole. For my own part, I do not believe that there would be any rush

among patrons to avail themselves of this measure. I think that the vast majority would prefer to keep their patronage in their own hands. And if this anticipation be correct, we need not distress ourselves very much in consideration of some of the objections which are likely to be made to this Bill. What are those objections? We shall be told that it will contract the area of private patronage; further, that the benefices coming under the operation of the Bill will emerge shorn of a portion of income; and, lastly, we shall hear the war-shout of assailed abuses—"Vested interests to the rescue!" Let us examine these objections, and see how far they are valid, when weighed against the shame, the scandal, the injury to public morals, to the morality of the clergy and of patrons, the injury to congregations, to everybody inflicted by a system which has defied all your efforts at reform, and which constitutes an evil so great and crying, that in the words of one of our Prelates—

"It cuts into the very reason for the existence of a Church at all."

That a certain sacrifice of income will eventually be incurred by those presented to these livings there can be no doubt, amounting, on the average, to a sixth, or thereabouts; but the persons who will suffer ought to be the last to complain for the patron being changed—they, at all events, would not have been selected to fill the benefices at all. And if it be said that the Church will suffer, I ask in what? It will lose some petty fraction of emolument here and there; but it will gain enormously in self-respect—in the respect of others; in that moral health without which a Church is doomed; it will gain what millions cannot purchase for it, and which, if ever irrevocably lost, millions cannot restore. But we shall be told that the conversion of private into public patronage is a thing to be deplored. Let us consider, then, what kind of private patronage it is which will pass to the Crown. In the first place, it will be the patronage of the lunatic and the bankrupt. Then it will be the patronage of the spendthrift and the man in embarrassed circumstances, who fling their patronage upon the market for what it will fetch. Further, it will be the patronage of those who care so little

for the Church, or for their responsibilities as patrons, that they expose it for sale, and let the parish get on as it can. Lastly, it will be some part of the patronage which, against all intention of the law, against all interests of the Church, against all rights of the laity, against all well-being of the parishes, has passed into the hands of the clerical patrons. The intention of the law was that the patron should be one person and the presentee another; the law forbids a clergyman to purchase a presentation for himself; and yet, if Mr. Stark be right, two-thirds of the saleable patronage of the Church have passed into clerical hands. Unquestionably, two-thirds of that which floats about in the market have done so. These are the benefices which are advertised in every newspaper, which find their way into the auction mart, with which the registers of the clerical agents are crammed, and the moral density of whose patrons—I borrow the term from the evidence—the moral density of whose patrons, being clergymen, is a laughing-stock to mere men of the world! Is there anyone who has listened to the revelations which again and again it has been my unpleasant duty to make to the House any time during the last 10 years—is there anybody, who is not an enthusiast for everything sacerdotal, who does not desire to see this kind of patronage pass to the Crown, to the Bishops, to anybody who will lift it out of the mire, and make it something which honest men will touch? Sir, the last objection to the Bill with which I need trouble the House is the assertion that it is an unwarrantable invasion of the rights of property. There are some people, I know, who will tell us that the patronage of the Church is something which a man may buy and sell and barter at his pleasure—may invest in when he thinks it cheap, and sell out again when the market hardens; and that the Bill before the House is a daring attempt to burden this species of property with an encumbrance of responsibility which will depreciate its market value. I have seldom read anything more disgusting than the plea put forth by the clerical patrons when the Bishop of Peterborough proposed to limit the dealings in private patronage. It was contended that it was blank robbery to deprive the clerical patron of any portion of that in which he had invested his money. It

was further contended that when a man had once been ordained he was a fit person to be presented to any benefice, and that in the teeth of all the evidence which we have had of the moral worthlessness of many men in Holy Orders as exhibited by their dealings with patronage itself. Sir, to the charge of robbery which was freely brought against the Bishop of Peterborough, and which I daresay will be still more freely brought against the supporters of this Bill, it is not very difficult to reply. Though the law may have winked, times without number, at what was a gross misappropriation of patronage, there are some things which the law would have permitted, if patronage were property, at which it has never winked. It has never winked at the sale of a vacant benefice; it has never winked at the purchase by a clergyman of a next presentation. The most reckless trafficker in livings has all along been trafficking with the knowledge that the law might, at any time, insist upon a stricter application of the principles which he has evaded; and the most greedy of spiritual speculators might always have found enough in the Statute Book to remind him that nothing but an awakening of the public conscience was required to strip him to the skin. And if we turn to what I may call the deliberate and emphatic declarations of public opinion, the carefully framed Reports of Committees and Commissions which have sat on this subject, we shall find the principles for which we are contending set forth in no unambiguous phrases. The Lords' Committee of 1874 say—

“The Committee are of opinion that all legislation affecting Church patronage should proceed upon the principle that such patronage partakes of the nature of a trust to be exercised for the spiritual benefit of the parishioners, and that whatever rights of property originally attached, or in process of time have attached to patronage, must always be regarded with reference to the application of this principle.”

And the Royal Commission, which reported three years ago, expressly re-affirmed in this particular the very words of the Lords' Committee. Nor is the proposal which we make a novel one. Substituting Queen Anne's Bounty Board for the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and fixing, as we do, a rather higher percentage of the whole value of the living as that which represents the trust, our

proposal is very much the same as that submitted to the Lords' Committee by the Bishop of Exeter; indeed, I think the right rev. Prelate almost claims to be the parent of this Bill. I shall be delighted to yield to him my paternal honours—although, if he be the parent, the period of gestation has been unusually prolonged. But, at all events, if it be robbery to claim for the public a percentage of the market value of livings, I may regard the Bishop as accessory to my crime. But I claim a still more powerful accomplice. I claim the complicity of public opinion. I assert that public opinion demands from Parliament some such Bill as this, if only to declare that the patronage of the Church of England is no mere marketable chattel, but one of the most solemn trusts which can devolve upon any man; that the first duty of a patron is to his parish and not to himself; and that considerations of private gain are to be made subordinate to the gain of the parishioners, and not, as they too often do now, to ride rampant over them. In my humble opinion, and in that of many who are better Churchmen than I am, it is a misfortune that the rights of property are, in any measure, allied, or intertwined, or entangled with the duties of a trust; but it is tenfold a misfortune—it is a disaster—if these rights are to be set up as an insuperable barrier to the purification of that trust. Nor is the history of patronage in the Sister Kingdoms such as to warrant these high views of the property rights of patrons. In Ireland, you have disestablished the Church and paid off the patron. In Scotland, you have not disestablished the Church; but you have paid off the patron by the scantiest of compensations; and that was the work of a Conservative Government. Will you wait in England until the public detestation of these abuses, every year becoming stronger, so strong already that it has moved some of my hon. Friends opposite to the spasmodic exercise of reforming zeal, out of a lethargy which a few years ago was so profound that it seemed to be troubled not even by evil dreams; I ask you whether you will wait until public indignation compels you to sweep away, wholesale, the abused privileges which I only request you to curtail? Hon. Gentlemen cannot fail to have observed the shyness with which some hon.

Friends of mine, not remarkable for their attachment to the Church as an Establishment, have approached this question of the reform of patronage. How long will you leave this prodigious weapon in their hands? I have been asked, indeed, why I should seek to deprive them of it? "Who are you," I have been asked, "with Liberationist and Nonconformist antecedents, to seek to build up the Church upon the very side where her defences are crumbling into ruin?" Sir, it is in proportion as the Church is purged from sinister influences that the right feeling will revive and prevail within the Church to which, far more than to any interference from without, I am looking for the promotion of those changes which will ultimately set the Church free. And I find my justification as a Nonconformist in the very sufferings which, two centuries ago, the Church inflicted upon my sect, and in which I am not sorry to think my own family bore their full share. I would repay persecution by compelling the Church to recognize the principles, for the faithful maintenance of which she sent our forefathers to gaol. For if they had been still here to animate us by their example and the heroic meekness of their lives, I am persuaded that they would have sought no ampler, and that they would have found no nobler revenge. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

MR. RYLANDS, as a member of the Church of England, said, he had much pleasure in availing himself of an opportunity of joining in an earnest attempt to remove certain evils, by seconding the Motion for the second reading of a Bill which proposed to put a stop to an abuse which all members of the Church desired to see removed. Similar abuses had been put an end to in relation to public offices and the Army, and now the turn of the Church had come. There was a general public opinion that no offices of trust ought to be bought and sold. He would not say that any abuses had occurred within his own experience; but, from the Report of the Royal Commission, and from general knowledge, he knew that there had been most discreditable transactions, which cast a serious reflection not only on the persons engaged in them, but on the Church at large. Session after Session, and year after year, abuses patent to

everyone arose in the Church. Government succeeded Government, and yet no step was taken to remove those abuses. He did not wish to contend otherwise than that there was a very large majority of clergymen in the Church who did their duties conscientiously; but, while quite recognizing that, he thought it was a reason which added to the strength of the argument—that men actuated by the highest religious motives and fulfilling public duties should be placed beyond the stigma complained of. It was, in some quarters, proposed that there should be free trade in this matter, and that all the present restrictions should be removed. Certainly, the anti-simoniaal declaration was of little use. It only made clergymen stretch their consciences; for they took refuge in a profession that they made it, without understanding it, or in a different sense from that which it was intended to bear. But the public opinion of this country would not tolerate free trade in the sale of next presentations and advowsons. Another proposal was to do away with the property in advowsons. In the present state of public opinion, that might not be deemed right. There would be considerable opposition; and no such measure could be carried, except with a proposal to give very considerable compensation to the holders of this class of property. It was suggested that they should merely place restrictions on next presentations, and require a declaration from the patron and the presentee, and prevent a resale within a limited time. There might be some safeguard in preventing the resale within a certain time; but, as to the declaration, it was quite worthless in matters of this kind. He quite agreed with the opinion of his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) that they should go farther than the sale of next presentations, and apply themselves to the consideration of the sale of advowsons under considerable limitations. Every argument that applied to the sale of next presentations really applied to advowsons; for advowsons would be sold for the purpose of the next presentation, and then re-conveyed. This Bill did not meet the wishes of some of his hon. Friends, who considered that he (Mr. Rylands), who was known to be in favour of a large measure of Church reform, was somewhat inconsistent in

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supporting it. But he believed that the Bill had been drawn with great care and judgment, and was one well calculated to meet the wishes of hon. Members on both sides of the House; and that it would afford, to some extent, a practical remedy for the present state of things. The subject, however, was one of such importance that there was very little hope of its being settled by the efforts of independent Members; and while, personally, in favour of a measure of Disestablishment, in his opinion, both the late and the present Government were equally responsible for the abuses which had occurred; and, therefore, he would say that they ought to deal with this question in a practical way, with a view of devising a solution. They might not suggest a mode which would obviate every objection; but if they suggested a mode which would, to a large extent, prevent the evils which now scandalized the Church, they would have done a work which would be very satisfactory and advantageous to the Church and to the benefit of the country at large.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. E. A. Leatham.*)

MR. ALBERT GREY, in moving, as an Amendment,

"That this House, affirming the principle that Church Patronage is a trust to be exercised for the benefit of the parishioners, is of opinion that no reform in the Law affecting Church Patronage will be efficient or satisfactory which does not enable the parishioners to veto the presentment to a benefice of any clergyman whom they consider unsuitable,"

said, that everyone must sympathize with the object of the hon. Member for Huddersfield (*Mr. E. A. Leatham*) to prevent the immoral and indecent traffic in a sacred trust, which stood out as a reproach and scandal to the Church of England, and the country at large was indebted to the hon. Member both for his admirable speech, and for his exertions in awakening the national conscience to a recognition of the evil which the Bill sought to remove. He believed no one in the House was in favour of a continuation of a system which the hon. Member had described as an indecent traffic in a sacred trust. It was not, therefore, because he was less anxious than the hon. Member for Huddersfield to remove the abuse, that he had ventured to put down a traversing Amendment to the Motion

that the Bill be read a second time. He did not wish, in any way, to postpone legislation on this question. He was anxious, on the contrary, to hurry on legislation; but he was still more anxious to secure that, when the House did proceed to legislate, it should go straight to the very root of the malady. The hon. Member for Huddersfield described the root of the malady as being the common sale of a public trust. He (*Mr. A. Grey*) ventured to disagree with his hon. Friend on that point. The root of the impurity was not the common sale of a public trust, but the right of the patron to ignore and disregard a public trust. The chief evil was not that the trustee should be able to sell his trust, but that he was under no compulsion to exercise his trust in the interest of those parishioners in whose behalf he held it. If the sale was abolished, the root of the impurity would still remain, for it would still be in the power of the patron to appoint to a parish a minister who might be altogether unacceptable and objectionable to that parish. That was the real evil with which they had to deal. The evil of which they had to complain was not that there was a sale, but that there was a something to sell. The evil, in short, was that whereas the right of presentation should be regarded and exercised as a trust, it was regarded and exercised as a property. It was unnecessary to explain how the right of presentation came to be regarded as property and not as a trust. The law took no care to secure that the patron should be a fit and proper person—that was, a person who might be expected to take an interest in the well-being of the parish and in the efficiency of the Church. As the law now stood, anyone, excepting a Roman Catholic, might exercise the rights of a patron of the Church of England; and the Royal Commission had recommended that the Roman Catholic should be taken out of his exceptional position, and placed in the position of every other Nonconformist. While the law took no care that the patronage should be vested in the hands of proper persons, it also took no care that the trustee, whoever he might be, should exercise his right of presentation as a trust for the benefit of the parishioners. The patron might put into the living anyone he pleased, and the man who was thus put in might do exactly what he pleased. That being so, it was no

wonder that Church patronage came to be looked upon, not as a trust, but as private property. The Bill of the hon. Member proposed to restrict the sale of the right of presentation to persons who might be expected to take an interest either in the welfare of the parish or in the efficiency of the Church. Thus, the Bill would do something to remove one of those causes which had led to Church patronage being regarded as property. But the Bill did nothing to remove the second and principal cause—for even if the right of presentation was confined to the big landowner, what security was there that he would exercise that right for the benefit of the parish? It seemed monstrous—and, were it not true, almost inconceivable—that it should be true that a patron could force a minister on the back of an unwilling parish, and that the parishioners should be bound to submit, and should have no power to resist or control his choice. It was just because a patron had at present the power of forcing upon a hostile parish his fancied nominee, that the right of presentation was so valuable. That value in the market had been created by the power of the patron to ignore his trust; and if this power had been properly guarded and curtailed, he believed that the market value would be largely diminished, if it did not altogether disappear. He objected to that part of the Bill which dealt with compensation. He did not understand on what principle the hon. Member based his demand that the patron should be able to exact as compensation half the present value of the living. If patronage was to be regarded as a property, and if it was thought right, for State purposes, that that property should be abolished, they could not in fairness give only half its value. On the other hand, if it was to be regarded as a trust, they would be acting most unfairly in giving as compensation half that value which patronage possessed at a time when it was unfettered by any trust conditions. Either they should not be compensated at all, or they should be compensated fully. But they ought not to be asked to admit the right to compensation, and, at the same time, to declare that the limit of compensation should not exceed half the value of the property interfered with. If, moreover, it were true, as he contended it was,

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that the present value of advowsons was caused by the power of the patron to ignore his trust, ought they not, before they talked of compensation, to secure that the right of presentation should be exercised as a trust. It was very possible that when the patron was compelled to exercise his trust under conditions imposed in the interests of the parishioners, the value of advowsons would sink to something far less than half their present value. If, then, they agreed with the Royal Commission in regarding patronage as a trust, let them take care to secure the fulfilment of the trust. This should be the first step in any patronage reform, and it was because it was not taken by the Bill that he had put down his Amendment. How, then, were they to secure that patronage should be exercised as a trust in the interests of the parishioners? There was only one way that seemed to him to be at all satisfactory, and that was by allowing persons who knew the wants of the parishioners to have a power of veto on the appointment of the patron. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) proposed to give the Bishop a veto on the appointment; but, in his opinion, the parochial veto was preferable to the episcopal veto. The organization of the Church was already far too aristocratic. What it needed was the introduction of the lay and popular element into its government and into all its arrangements. The question of patronage must be looked at from the standpoint of the parish. It was worse than a scandal; it was an abominable injustice to appoint a man to a parish without the assent or consent of the parishioners being in any way consulted. They called the Church National! But how could the Church be National when the people were carefully kept out from all part in the direction and management of its affairs? The Church was National in so far as it was directly under the control of the State; but in its local aspect the National Church was only the parson and the patron. The patron could appoint what man he liked, and the parson, when appointed, could do what he liked. He wished to see the Church and the people synonymous terms, and that could only be done by admitting the people into the management of the affairs relating to the Church in their respective parishes. By

unjust laws, by a carefully guarded and aristocratic system, the people had been kept out of their rights in their own parish churches; and this was the cause of the comparative weakness of the Church. It was time that this should cease, and that the people should be admitted to some share in the government of their Church affairs. This was a favourable opportunity for asserting the rights of the laity. As the parishioners had no control over a clergyman once he was appointed, let them have some voice in deciding whether he should be appointed. It might be said that to give a power of veto would be an interference with the property of the patron; but he asked whether it was an interference with property to say that a trust should be effectually guarded? They had a right to demand that the patron should use his power of presentation as a trust. If the present value of his property consisted in the power to ignore his trust, then that value ought not to be regarded. On the grounds, then, that patronage was a trust, and that that trust could only be efficiently guarded by giving the parishioners power to prevent an unacceptable clergyman from being forced upon them against their will, and because the Bill did not proceed on that principle, he begged the House to declare itself in favour of the policy enunciated in the Amendment which he had the honour to move.

MR. BRINTON, in rising to second the Amendment, said, the evil was admitted, and was peculiarly unfitted both to the spirit of the Church, and to the popular impressions as to the duties and responsibilities of the Church at the present day. Outside the House there was a strong feeling that if both sides would come to some compromise, and do away with this very serious scandal, it would be a great benefit to the Church. If that was done, it would be very gratifying to all members of the Church of England, and not unacceptable to the Nonconformists. There was much in the Bill of the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) which he approved. He thought the provisions with regard to the financial part of the question were just, and that no better selection could be made than the Commissioners of Queen's Anne's Bounty for carrying the object of the Bill into effect. He could not help

thinking that it was necessary, in order to approach the question in a proper spirit, that they should be prepared for the compromise suggested in the Bill of the hon. Member for Huddersfield—namely, half what the livings would fetch, if brought to sale in the open market. There was one important point, however, which had been overlooked, for nothing whatever was said in the Bill about the persons most interested in those appointments—namely, the parishioners, who undoubtedly ought to have some voice in the matter. With regard to the appointment itself, there could be no question that patronage vested in the Crown was the best way of dealing with the matter; but the parishioners should be given the right of veto, and he believed that if such a power was given them in these matters, it would do more to upset the scandal of which they complained than anything else. He objected to appeals being made to the popular vote when the appointment of a clergyman was concerned. He ventured to think that, if his hon. Friend would withdraw the Amendment, and agree to refer it to a Select Committee together with the Bill, it would perhaps be the wiser course to follow. In dealing with these questions, a great service would be rendered to the country if they endeavoured to induce the clergy and the laity to work together in the cause of religion, social order, and progress. He hoped the House, with that object in view, would refer the whole matter to a Select Committee.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, affirming the principle that Church Patronage is a trust to be exercised for the benefit of the parishioners, is of opinion that no reform in the Law affecting Church Patronage will be efficient or satisfactory which does not enable the parishioners to veto the presentment to a benefice of any clergymen whom they consider unsuitable,"—(*Mr. Albert Grey.*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he need hardly remark that he was deeply interested in this question. It was just 14 years ago since he passed through that House a Bill to prevent the sale of

the next presentation; but he was sorry to say that that Bill met its death-blow in "another place," as it failed to pass. He was, at the time, exceedingly sorry for that circumstance; but he would admit that it might have caused heart-burnings which would not result from similar legislation now. Indeed, he was not sure that, in proposing his Bill in 1870, he was not in advance of public opinion; but since then the question had progressed so greatly that he believed if such a Bill were now passed by the House of Commons it would become law. They now had the advantage not only of the evidence taken by a Committee of the House of Lords upon the subject, but also of the labours of a Royal Commission. The late Government was not open to the censure of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) for having neglected this question. So far as he was concerned, he had a complete answer to the charge, for he himself had signed the Royal Commission that inquired into the subject. That Commission did not make its Report until the end of the Session of 1879; and as the late Government, unfortunately, in his opinion, were driven out of Office in 1880, he thought there was not much blame to be attached to them for not having acted on the Report of the Commission. He thought that the public mind was fully made up that patronage was not a property, but a trust, although there was, no doubt, something of the nature of property deeply involved in it; and in 1870 he called the attention of the House to the law as laid down by Chief Justice De Grey and Chief Justice Best, showing that this matter of property was clothed with a trust. He felt strongly that the evils complained of arose more from the sale of the next presentation than from the sale of an advowson, provided they could make it certain that the sale of the advowson was not used as a scheme for selling the next presentation. He looked on the principle of the Bill as being directed to check what was admittedly the cause of very great abuses; and it was upon that ground alone, though he objected to many of the details of the Bill, that he would be willing to assent to the second reading. If read a second time, the Bill could not possibly become law this Session, and he should, therefore, strongly recommend

its reference to a Select Committee; because, after the careful sifting it would receive before such a Body, it would have a much better chance of becoming law than if it were to be dealt with in Committee of the Whole House. The hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) had moved his Amendment in a very proper spirit; but he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) doubted whether the method he proposed would accomplish the object he had in view. He thought the suggestion contained in the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) would be much better—namely, giving power to the Bishops, or rather reviving the power of the Bishops, to refuse to accept the nomination of clergymen to whom serious objections could be raised. The Bishops unquestionably had this power by law; but it had fallen into disuse, and it would be difficult now to refuse to institute anyone except on the strongest and plainest grounds. He had no objection to the wishes of the parishioners being considered; but how were those wishes to be ascertained? If the right of presentation were altogether intrusted to the parishioners, he doubted whether the best men would be selected. No doubt, if the Bishop had a Council to assist him, his hands would be strengthened, and, at the same time, the parishioners would have a voice in the appointment. The real question before them was what they were to do with this Bill? He was glad to find that there was a general agreement that something must be done to put a stop to the system of selling next presentations. There were, however, many clauses in the Bill, especially the clause dealing with compensation, to which he strongly objected. In all the circumstances, his course would be that he should vote for the second reading, in the hope that the Bill would be referred to a Select Committee, together with the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire.

Mr. CROPPER said, he had great pleasure in congratulating his hon. Friend (Mr. E. A. Leatham), the Mover of the Bill, on the tone of discussion that had taken place. On previous occasions, when this subject had been discussed, there seemed to have been two opinions prevailing in the House—one, to treat the subject as being too bad to be

amended; and the other opinion, represented by the hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), that it was too good to be touched. There could be no doubt there was a general agreement that the subject required amendment, and that the time was drawing near when it would be found necessary to amend the whole subject relating to patronage in the Church of England. There could be no doubt that, just as the system of buying and selling commissions in the Army very frequently produced efficient officers and heroes, and just as they had sound and legal decisions when Lord Chancellors took bribes, so, in the present system of patronage in the Church, while men had been appointed to advowsons in ways they did not like to refer to, men of the highest character had filled the benefices to which they had been appointed. He believed, however, that the subject was beginning to be cleared up, and that the debates in the House in years gone by had had a marked effect on the sale of advowsons in the market. Indeed, he had been told that the sale of first presentations and advowsons was now very dull indeed, and the way had been prepared for some measure which would solve the whole question. In regard to the Bill now before the House, he felt that the money question was one of great difficulty. He could not congratulate the hon. Member for Huddersfield on the manner in which he proposed to get rid of patronage by giving the advowsons purchased by Queen Anne's Bounty to the Crown for distribution. The patronage dispensed by the Crown was not always dispensed in the most desirable way. He agreed with the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) that the most effectual method of putting an end to the abuses complained of would be to give some veto to those affected by these clerical appointments. Speaking from experience, he, for one, should desire to avoid any connection with a system by which the election of their clergymen should be in the parishioners' hands, for such proceedings were objectionable and most disagreeable; but if they could distinguish between veto, which his hon. Friend proposed, and popular election, and if they could give the veto to some Body representing the parishioners, he believed the proposal would be got to work. While

approving the effort made by this measure to solve the difficulty, he thought the Bill of the hon. Member for Huddersfield and that of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) should be passed through the crucible of a Select Committee; then a result might ensue in the present state of public opinion towards a solution of the matter. He believed that this question would not be shelved much longer.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had listened to the debate with much interest and with great satisfaction, because no one had proposed, and he did not think anyone was likely to propose, a negative to the principle which this Bill contained. That principle, as he understood it, was that it was a scandal and a disgrace to the Church of England that the system of selling the cure of souls should exist. He doubted if there was any man in the House who would deny that proposition. As a member of the Church of England, and a supporter of the Establishment, he believed that that practice was one of the greatest dangers to the Established Church of England that could possibly exist. He thought it was a thing that no one could defend. How it ever began he did not know. Why it was continued was still more unintelligible; and that it should not be put an end to was a thing he could not comprehend. If any Corporation were to insist on doing the thing which was done every day in the sale of livings, there would be an outcry against it which would be irresistible. Some 50 years ago they had a system of property by which men had exactly the same property in rotten boroughs as they now had in advowsons. They went with the estate, and they sold them at an average price of £5,000 a Parliament. A rotten borough was just as much a property as an advowson; but the House of Commons had no hesitation in dealing with rotten boroughs, and when they were done away with, so far as he was aware, did not grant any compensation for doing away with them. Therefore, that question seemed to him to stand entirely by itself, as a sort of solecism and outrage on the civil and ecclesiastical system of the country. He did not know how it was that, in ecclesiastical affairs, we were tolerant of the thing which everybody condemned in all other relations of life,

Such a practice as that under notice would not have been tolerated under any other system of property in the country; and he could not think there would be any difference of opinion in the House upon the proposition that it ought to be put an end to. In that respect he confessed that he was inclined to be more Radical than his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham). He did not quite understand, if that was a trust, why a man should be allowed to sell a trust at all. If the House were disposed to take the view that patronage of livings and cure of souls constituted a trust, why should it not be dealt with by the Courts of Law in the same way as any other trust, and why should they not prevent the trustee from improperly disposing of that trust? The hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) had raised a very important question. Church patronage was, no doubt, a very difficult subject. The hon. Member for Kendal (Mr. Cropper) had said—and he very much agreed with him—that it was not desirable to increase the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown. The ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown, in his opinion, was valuable and necessary in respect to the highest posts in the Church as long as they had an Established Church. It was absolutely necessary that the appointment of the Bishops and higher dignitaries of the Church should be in the Crown. That asserted the principle of the supremacy of the Crown in the Church, which seemed to be an essential principle of the Protestant Establishment. Therefore, as regarded the patronage of the Crown in those respects, it had been requisite that the higher appointments in the Church should remain in the Crown. But when they came to the disposal of the cure of souls, it was a totally different question, and he could not conceive of anything more undesirable than that the patronage of the Crown should be multiplied in that respect. Indeed, it would be a retrograde step, because two years ago a measure was passed—not very consistently with the principle of this Bill—by which the Lord Chancellor was allowed to sell certain Crown livings in his gift. He was not prepared to say that that was a right proceeding; but its effect was to diminish the patronage of the Crown, rather than to increase it in

those respects. There was another Body quite as unfit to become the recipients of an increased amount of the patronage of the cure of souls, and that was the Bishops. Nothing would be a greater evil, in his opinion, than to put the gift of the cure of souls in the hands of Bishops. That would destroy the independence of the clergy altogether. He thought it was a good thing that, to a certain extent, the Bishop should have the power of rewarding a hard-working and deserving clergyman in his diocese; but if they gave the appointments to the cure of souls to the Bishop, they would make the clergy of the diocese the mere creatures of the Bishop, holding the same shade of theological opinion as he did; and that would be a great evil in itself. Then he came to the question of lay patronage, which he was by no means averse to. As long as they had a National Church, what they must desire was that the clergy should represent, in a rough way, the average opinion of the laity; and, therefore, as long as they adhered to the principle that the laity, having that patronage, could exercise it, not as a matter of pecuniary benefit for themselves, but as a trust for the Ecclesiastical Body with which they were connected, he thought they would on the whole obtain a tolerably satisfactory arrangement. They might not arrive at the result very perfectly in theory, yet, practically, they secured that the appointment of the clergy would be, as it were, a sample of the general opinion of the laity. He entirely sympathized with the hon. Member for South Northumberland in his view that the laity ought to have a predominant voice in the Church. He had always protested, and always would protest, against the enormous evil of their popular phraseology, by which, in speaking of the Church, they talked of the clergy. It was said that the Church thought so-and-so, and they were told that that was what the clergy thought. The clergy were not the Church; they were the ministers of the congregation. It was the congregation that was the Church; and it was the opinion of the congregation that ought to prevail, as it was the Church. He had always, on that ground, supported a measure which he knew was not very popular with the clergy, and which was intended to give the laity a proper voice in the transaction of their

ecclesiastical affairs — he meant the Public Worship Bill—because the object of that Bill was that the laity should insist on the clergy doing that which the law of England had guaranteed to the Church that the clergy should do. The object of that measure was to give a veto to the laity on any attempt on the part of the clergy to depart from the Act of Uniformity, and other guarantees. He could not, however, altogether agree with the hon. Member for South Northumberland in thinking that how the thing was to be done was a matter of detail. It was really the important matter in the whole question. How were they to give the laity a veto in that case? He had not himself taken part in one of those contests; but he had heard of elections where the laity chose the clergyman, and he understood that they were principally transacted in public-houses; and, therefore, they would have to add a second Bill to the one now before the Grand Committee, and have a Bill brought in to prevent Corrupt Practices at Ecclesiastical Elections. That would not be a good work to embark in. In England they were not so fortunate as Scotland was in her ecclesiastical organization; because, in Scotland, the Presbyterian Church had a regular and very elaborate organization, by which the opinion of the particular parish could be obtained in a manner in which it could not be done in this country. Therefore, unless the hon. Member for South Northumberland could put before the House a practical scheme, he hoped that he would not insist on pressing his Amendment, but would allow the Bill to be read a second time. In now assenting to its second reading, his view of the matter was that they were not called upon to approve of the measure in all its details; they were merely asserting the principle that the sale of livings for money was, in point of fact, a violation of what was regarded as a sacred trust; was the thing which the House of Commons condemned; and that they desired to get rid of a practice which was most injurious to the people in its operation, and which could only be considered as a grievous scandal to the Church of England. For those reasons, he should support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, that he could not altogether accept what had

been said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) as to the Church being the congregation, meaning by that the laity, and treating the clergy as if they were only a set of ministers brought in from outside, to do the work. He did not believe that that view of the Church was to be supported, either by sacred or by secular history. In assenting, as he was prepared to do, to the second reading of the Bill of the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham), he must not be understood to agree in the interpretation which the Secretary of State for the Home Department had put upon the matter—namely, that, by assenting to the second reading, they objected to all sales of advowsons. That was not, he thought, a policy which could be sanctioned by a great number of hon. Gentlemen sitting on that (the Opposition) side of the House. The Royal Commission on the subject had reported that they had determined not to recommend an alteration as to private patronage in advowsons and the right of presentation. That Report had been signed by some who were certainly good Liberals. While he could not agree with the version of the right hon. Gentleman, on the other hand he would say, at once, that he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), that it would be advisable to limit in some way the sale of advowsons. He would ask hon. Members to turn their attention to the opposition with which the Bill brought forward in 1881 by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) had been met by a small section of Nonconformist Members. He contrasted the tone of the present discussion with that of the former, and congratulated the House upon the alteration. He considered that now they had a great and admitted evil, and they had had the Secretary of State for the Home Department saying that it ought to be grappled with. He thought that the means of doing so would be best discovered by submitting this Bill to a Select Committee. What were the proposals before them? The hon. Member for Huddersfield, instead of allowing the patrons to have the full value, proposed to allow them only one-half. But if the practice was to be held as absolutely wrong and sinful, it should be

taken away altogether. It must be borne in mind that there was no class in the country whose income, considering the appearances which they were bound to keep up, was so small, on the average, as that of parochial incumbents. Taking them altogether, there was no class who were expected to do so much with so small an income; therefore to tax the incumbents in cases where the patrons sold the livings was most unjust. As to the patronage of the Crown, he did not know any function of the high Officers of the State which was more conscientiously discharged than that of the appointment of the officers of the Church; and, in his opinion, no Prime Minister had ever discharged this duty more conscientiously than the right hon. Gentleman who now held that Office. The hon. Member for South Northumberland was anxious for a popular veto; but a popular veto was very much the same as a popular election, and would be sure in time to degenerate into it. In a Bill which had been brought in by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire a *bonâ fide* attempt was made to avoid the grievous evil of forcing improper people upon the sacred duties of the ministry in any parish. The hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) went a great deal further, and made a proposal which was full of difficulty. He thought that if the hon. Member would look into his proposals, he would see that, although they might be very nice in theory, they would not be so in practice. If, for instance, Dr. Hook had been subject to a popular veto or election, he would not have had much chance of being appointed Vicar of Leeds. That was only one of many cases. A clergyman who made himself conspicuous by his energy in any particular direction was almost sure to have opponents amongst the parishioners. If there were veto by majority, then the minority would be oppressed. They were all agreed as to the existence of evils; the difficulty was to find the proper remedy for them. He suggested that not only this Bill, but the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire should be referred to a Select Committee, in the hope that a reasonable and practical scheme would be framed. The Bill of his hon. Friend contained provisions against forcing an incompetent or unworthy presentee on a

parish, and that at least went some way in the direction suggested by his hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland. He would ask to be allowed a word of personal explanation. From the Division which would probably be taken, he regretted that he must absent himself in consequence of an engagement to his constituency; but he had intrusted his Motion to the care of an hon. Member who had consented to take charge of it.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he repudiated the statement which had been made out-of-doors by the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), that he, and others who acted with him, were guilty of obstructing every question of ecclesiastical reform. No statement could be further from the truth. What he had done was only guarding the rights of the House as to full debate, in objecting to the practice of smuggling Ecclesiastical Bills through the House at 2 o'clock in the morning without discussion, thereby avoiding scandal; and of one in particular, where the hon. Member in charge of it had hid himself behind the Chair, and only presented himself at the last moment to move the second reading by merely lifting off his hat. [Mr. STUART-WORTLEY: No, no!] He had been present at transactions of that kind over and over again, and he had taken means of securing for the House of Commons and the country a fair opportunity of debating these very important ecclesiastical questions. He was not ashamed of that, but was rather disposed to glory in it, as a guardian of the right of Members of the House of Commons to discuss every question brought before them. Moreover, the charge did not come well from the quarter in which it had been made. The right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope), if he were present, would himself bear him (Mr. Illingworth) out, when he said that when Bills for the relief of Nonconformists had been discussed in the House of Commons over and over again, and had even passed a second and third reading, and had been sent to the House of Lords to be rejected, and were afterwards brought forward in the House of Commons, these Bills had been met on the opposite side of the House by all sorts of obstructive Motions. He did not com-

plain of hon. Members exercising their rights to fair discussion. But, so far as he was himself concerned, he believed he had the courage to meet any ecclesiastical question that might come before the House on its merits, when a fair opportunity occurred for giving it due consideration. He could not refer to the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) without expressing the gratitude which the House and the country, and, most of all, he thought the Church of England, as a religious community, owed to him for the immense service he had rendered, by the attention he had given to the scandals arising out of the system of Church patronage. His hon. Friend had devoted himself for many years to an interesting investigation of these scandals, and he (Mr. Illingworth) did not hesitate to say that, through his individual effort, this matter had been far more advanced than by all the speeches of all the Bishops and all the zealous Churchmen who had taken the question in hand. It was true that his hon. Friend had been obliged to go into disagreeable details. But he (Mr. Illingworth) wanted to know how public opinion was to be roused upon this matter, and how the scandal was to be removed, unless it was to be laid naked before the House and the country? The evil of the present state of things was admitted by all, except, perhaps, the House of Lords. It was not the House of Commons, or men of the most advanced views upon ecclesiastical questions, who had really been troublers of the episcopal Israel in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had said that he had carried a Bill through the House of Commons which was a much milder proposal than the present. But where was it strangled? It was in the House of Lords, whose Members, as a matter of fact, held by far the largest share of the bulk of this patronage in their private hands, the value of which was enormous, and of which they were not likely to be contented with receiving half its value as now proposed. If his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield had proposed to give them value and a-half, he would have been more likely to have carried them with him. He agreed thoroughly in the opinion that, in any scheme of

Reform short of Disestablishment, it was essential that the rights of the parishioners should be guarded; and he trusted the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) would be pressed to a Division. His hon. Friend's Bill was defective in this respect. He hoped that the Amendment of the hon. Member would receive such support as would show that opinion was leading in the direction of giving increased rights to the parishioners. He believed that opinion outside was far more advanced than it was in the House of Commons. Still, he could not help thinking that this question was not yet ripe for settlement. It was going through a process of development which would lead before long in the direction of Disestablishment. Public opinion was growing, and he looked with confidence to the future. What had happened in Ireland? There had been numberless measures passed to remove abuses, but no good seemed to come of them, until, in the end, the overwhelming majority of the people of the country demanded Disestablishment. What had been the result? He did not hesitate to say that, even among Churchmen themselves, after more than 15 years' experience of the working of religious equality in Ireland, there was only a small minority who wished it to be in their power to restore the Church Establishment. Of course there were differences between the two countries; but the condition of this country ecclesiastically was such as to make it most difficult to deal with Church Reform in that House. Even among Churchmen, he found little disposition to come to Parliament in the expectation of obtaining a return to ascendancy. Although he did not frequently attend Church Congresses himself, he was a diligent reader of what took place at them and he found, at one of these meetings, the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Home Department advising Churchmen not to come to Parliament, because very often they did not get the thing they asked for, but they got something that they did not want.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was sure the hon. Gentleman did not wish to misrepresent him. He had only said this—"Never go to Parliament unless first you are agreed among yourselves."

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he believed that the right hon. Gentleman had gone so far as to say to his Friends—"Go to Parliament as seldom as possible." If that were so, how could Parliament have opportunities for promoting Church reforms, and what was to be the future of the Church? There were crying acknowledged evils in every branch of ecclesiastical administration, and in every branch of spiritual work, belonging to the Church; and, on the other hand, the time of the House was so occupied with its secular Business that it had no time for ecclesiastical legislation. Then there were so many schools of thought, or, as he might more properly describe them, so many antagonisms within the Church of England, that it was impossible for Churchmen to agree upon any substantial proposal dealing with real difficulties; and, if they did, it was impossible for Parliament, with so many claims upon its time, to deal with the numberless details of ecclesiastical measures. By all these discussions the right course would in the end be indicated; and, for that reason, he should support the Amendment on the second reading of the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield, which he looked forward to with interest. At the same time, he was bound to say, with the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that, in some respects, it was a faulty measure, and was very far from meeting the necessities of the case; and he must say it did not come up to what his hon. Friend had himself so often pointed out as being required to meet the necessities of the case in the way of remedy. Under it, buying and selling might go on as usual. [Mr. E. A. LEATHAM dissented.] His hon. Friend had been absolutely silent as to the probable effect of the measure, which was permissive in some respects; and it only touched the fringe of the question. Parliament, if the Bill were passed, would be compelled to return to the subject again and again. He did not agree with the suggestion that the patronage should be handed over to the Bishops, which would make matters worse than ever. The Prime Minister of the day, who appointed the Bishops, would be able in such a case to control the ecclesiastical guidance of hundreds of parishes. In fact, there was no place that Parliament could ap-

point where patronage ought properly to lie. Reference had been made in the course of the debate to the case of Dr. Hook, Vicar of Leeds, who, it was said, might never have attained the promotion due to his peculiar merits but for private patronage. Why, if Dr. Hook had belonged to any other Church in the country, there would have been no difficulty in his finding his way to the most suitable sphere for his work. But the Church of England, as an Establishment, was out of harmony with the times in which we lived, and its members must feel that the present system of patronage was full of difficulties and anomalies and hindrances to the proper working of the Church as a spiritual institution. He did not believe that there was any cure for the evils which were bound up with the system of the Established Church, excepting Disestablishment. He believed that if the people were polled, the great majority would be found in favour of Disestablishment ["No, no!"] That was his opinion. He was convinced that the majority of the people of this country would be found to be on his side. All these attempts at tinkering only touched the sores. At the same time, he should not much regret if the measure reached a second reading, and were referred to a Select Committee, because, as he had said, out of all these discussions and antagonisms, the right course would in the end be indicated. No man in the Church of England itself had more real regard and sympathy for the Church as a spiritual institution than himself; but, to his mind, in view of the teachings of history, the progress of enlightenment, and the spread of the democratic spirit in this country, he believed the day was not far distant when Parliament would be obliged to disestablish both the Church of Scotland and the Church of England.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he thought it was a curious fact that they always got the largest amount of advice on Church questions from those who were the enemies of the Establishment. He was really surprised that the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Illingworth) should seriously expect that his interest in this question should not be seen through by those who were earnestly desirous of forwarding this matter. He regretted that the hon. Mem-

ber's remarks made it necessary for him to recur to the transactions which had occurred in that House some two or three years ago. So far as the hon. Member's description was intended to relate to those transactions, it was totally inaccurate. The hon. Member knew very well that this subject of Church patronage had in 1881 already been exhaustively discussed on a Tuesday Motion of the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham). The Prime Minister on that occasion, having before him the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), said that if the non-controversial clauses of the Bill were taken out, and put into a separate Bill, the Government would offer no objection to its being further proceeded with, and might possibly give it assistance. The expression of that feeling by the Prime Minister justified the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire in taking the course he did; while it deprived of all justification the course taken by the hon. Member for Bradford, the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. H. Richard), and those acting with them. Nothing would have prevented the second reading of the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire in 1882, if it had not been talked out by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil. On that occasion they received a promise from the Government that the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire and the present Bill should go to a Select Committee, and be considered together. If that course had been taken, the question would have been materially advanced. But what happened? The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, about a quarter to 6, arose and moved the adjournment of the debate. On that occasion the hon. Member contented himself with simply moving the adjournment of the debate. Indeed, no time was left for any remarks, as the debate would then have closed. But in the published account of the hon. Member's speech certain reasons were adduced for his conduct, which he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) would be prepared to assert, in a more solemn manner than he was now asserting, the House had not really heard at all. It was entirely owing to that circumstance, that they were discussing a subject, in 1884, on which a conclusion might have been arrived at in 1881-2. After that, they might be

allowed to have their own opinion as to the elaborate disclaimer of the hon. Member for Bradford, who said it was his desire to reform the Church of England, instead of injuring it, though it was unfortunate that his speech produced exactly the opposite impression on those who listened to it. Now, to come to the Bill before the House, what was the practical thing to be done? He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) hoped he might be allowed to give his opinion, because, as the House knew, he had acted as Secretary to the Royal Commission in 1878, and had not only been a witness of its deliberations, but had conducted the business of the inquiry. To the Bill of the hon. Member for Huddersfield he intended to give his support; and, indeed, on several abstract theories, he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) would be inclined to go even further than the Bill proposed. He was of opinion that, in regard to patronage, it was wrong that the patronage should be vested in private hands, because they could not separate from private ownership the power of alienation; they could not separate from the power of alienation the power of sale; and, from the power of sale, they could not separate the power of selling with the greatest secrecy to a man who might possibly be a totally unworthy and unfit character. Well, having said so much, it was quite clear that his ideas went even further than those of the hon. Member for Huddersfield. The question was, how far they could go as a matter of practice, and how far they could go without raising the question of compensation. The hon. Member for Huddersfield wisely abstained, in his Bill, from touching that part of the patronage system which might be theoretically indefensible, but which he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) found had worked very well in practice. The hon. Member also recognized, to a certain extent, the principle of compensation. With that he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) agreed; because if you did not give compensation, the hardship would fall on widows and children. As to the compensation which the hon. Member proposed to give, he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) did not think it would come to more than half the actual value. Still the proposal, on the whole, seemed just; because, if the other Bill which was before the House were to pass into law, its effect would be at once, without

any compensation, to diminish the value of the patronage, probably, by more than one-half. Therefore, the hon. Member for Huddersfield sought simply a right scale of compensation, when he proposed the scale which he did. The only question of detail on which he and his hon. Friend differed was as to whom the patronage was to go when it was taken away. He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) did not agree that the patronage ought to be given to the Crown ultimately; but it might be right to vest it in the Crown, in the first instance, because it would be easier afterwards to take it by Parliamentary action from the Crown. Not much, in his opinion, had been done to forward this subject by the discussion. His own belief was that patronage should be vested, if in anybody, in some local authority. He did not by that mean any existing authority, but a sort of trusteeship, consisting of persons acquainted with the locality and the character of the benefice to be filled up. If a veto were given to the parishioners, the result would be that where there were differences between the patron and the parish, the parish would go on objecting to the appointment, and that ultimately the patronage would lapse to the Bishop. The House had been engaged in discussing impurities; but he should like to point out that when they took away the secrecy, they removed all the motives for improper action. He was sorry his hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) had complicated the question by bringing forward his Amendment. He thought it would be well if the House availed itself of the willingness of the Government to allow the two Bills to go to a Select Committee, which was the only means of making progress on this question. He supported the Bill, not for the reasons advanced by the hon. Member for Huddersfield, but because he thought it would lead to the prevalence of a better spirit in the Church, which would then be able to live in a higher sphere of usefulness, and would not be subject to the assaults of the hon. Members for Bradford and Merthyr Tydvil. It would remove from the Church the only reproach which could be cast upon her, and which would not have existed so long but for the action of her enemies.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he should support the Amendment of his

hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), because he thought it was necessary to supplement the Bill, and to secure a real remedy for the grievances from which the parishioners suffered. The presentment of livings for the cure of souls should be made a trust. He regarded the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) as being likely to be effective in abolishing the sale of patronage in livings; whilst the other measure before the House, and which he was prevented by the Rules from going into, would not be a practical remedy of the existing grievances. If they wanted to remedy the mischief resulting from this buying and selling of livings, he would rather act upon the lines of his hon. Friend's Bill than adopt any other scheme that might be before the House; but he must object entirely to an important part of the Bill, which dealt with the way in which the future patronage of the livings was to be disposed of. The hon. Member only opened up three vistas of future patronage—in the first place, the Crown, which was the Prime Minister, who must have too much work to do to enable him satisfactorily to determine the claims of persons to Church livings; in the second place, a body of trustees, who might give a certain colour to Church services in a parish totally at variance with the wishes of the parishioners; and, in the third place, the squire, or the lord of the manor. Very frequently the latter was but a territorial name; and it would have a very mischievous influence on the Church, if such a person had a preponderating power, and were to be the one person allowed to pay the full price of a living. The Established Church was, and would remain until disestablished, a strong political institution, with a strong Tory bias, and therefore had not a very strong hold on a very large section of the people. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that in theology, and according to the Thirty Nine Articles, the Church was the congregation; and he held that the maxim, *Ubi tres laici ibi ecclesia*, was sound. The parishioners were the people most interested in these matters, far more than the patrons and the Bishops or the Crown, or anyone else; and he held that, so long as they kept up the patron-

age system, so long was it essential to protect the people, who might have to suffer under the administration of certain clergymen. It was said that to give the parishioners a veto, would frequently mean, when the patron and the parishioners were at logger-heads, handing over the appointment to the Bishop; but the Bishop's nomination would be equally subject to the parochial veto. The present Bill was not expected to become law. Simply by giving it a second reading, they would affirm its principle, and, it would become law in some future Session. They must also read the proposal of the hon. Member for South Northumberland in connection with his proposal for the constitution of Church Boards.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, he held that every Member of the House, whether Churchman or Nonconformist, was interested in the well-being and purity of the Church of England, as it was a portion of the Constitution. He, therefore, welcomed the contribution which his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. E. A. Leatham) had made to the consideration of a difficult question, as an attempt to settle it; but, while fully admitting that scandals had occurred, he thought the hon. Gentleman had hardly given the true effect of those scandals. The scandal of the auctioneer's eloquence in conducting the sales was short-lived; but the real scandal was, that men who were not qualified, either by acquirements, conduct, or education, had been intruded into the Ministry. He admitted that the question of the exercise of patronage in the Church did raise a very real and important grievance, as no one could deny that Church patronage ought to be looked upon as a trust. If everyone who had been admitted under the present system had been of the character of Dr. Hook or John Keble, very little would have been heard of the manner of their appointment. It was, after all, the man who was in question, and not the mode in which he reached the position. No good could arise from calling a sale of patronage a sale of souls. Such an expression was merely nonsense, for nothing of the kind took place. What was sold was not souls, but merely the pecuniary value of the legal power of presentation to a living; and he held that the Bishop should have the power of rejecting the person so presented, if

found not to be efficient; and, in that respect, he thought the Bill before the House was imperfect. He regarded it as only a partial measure of relief, because, amongst other things, it ignored the paramount consideration of the possession of proper qualifications on the part of the individual to be presented to a living. Therefore, glad as he was to support the second reading of the Bill, he could not venture to do so, unless it were agreed that the two Bills should be sent to a Committee together. As to the sale of advowsons and next presentations, he thought that was mainly a question of degree. If a man sold the next presentation, he sold one appointment; and if he sold the advowson, he sold several. The Secretary of State for the Home Department had appeared to think that lay patronage was altogether an abuse; but, as a matter of fact, the creation of lay patronage was of the simplest possible character; and nothing could be more reasonable or just than that the owner of a property, who was naturally interested in the people living on the property, should have not so much the privilege as the responsibility of presenting the clergyman to the Bishop for institution. He thought it always tended to the harmony of the ecclesiastical system when the patron and the clergyman were of the same class in life; and, therefore, he should feel it his duty not to permit an accumulation of ecclesiastical appointments in the hands of the Crown. The Crown meant the Prime Minister, or the Lord Chancellor, and he thought those functionaries had quite enough of such power in their hands at present. As to the question of compensation to the patron for depriving him of the right to exercise his patronage, if it was a scandal to sell Church patronage at all, he did not quite see how a man could be compensated for taking away his right to sell. He believed that very much good would be done by the power being given to the Bishop to veto the appointment of unqualified persons. In the hope that the Bill and that of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) would also be referred to the same Committee, he should vote for the second reading.

MR. RICHARD said, that members of the Church of England were in the habit of charging Nonconformists with

systematically obstructing all Bills introduced to remove abuses in the Established Church, in order that by maintaining the abuses they—the Nonconformists—could obtain a greater leverage for the exercise of their power in assailing the Church. He positively and emphatically denied the justice of that charge; and when it was repeated in an eloquent speech last year, by the Bishop of Peterborough, he took some pains to look into the matter, and found that of nine Ecclesiastical Bills then before this House and introduced by members of the Church of England, presumably to promote the advantage of the Church, every one had been blocked, not by Nonconformists, but by members of the Church. The Bill with respect to Church Patronage, introduced in 1870 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton-Cross)—and everybody would admit that it could not have been in more fitting and competent hands—was opposed in that House mainly not by the Nonconformists, but by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Beresford Hope) and the right hon. Gentleman the late Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Henley). In the House of Lords it was introduced under the sponsorship of the Duke of Marlborough; on the second reading it was treated with a good deal of severity by Lord Cairns and Lord Salisbury. But when the time came for going into Committee, the Duke of Marlborough said that so many and such formidable objections had been raised against the Bill from all parts of the House, that he had lost heart, and moved to discharge the Order. *The Morning Post*, the chosen organ of the Church and the Conservative Party, declared bluntly—

“Most of their Lordships are patrons of livings, and many of them sell their patronage in their lawyer's office or in the auction mart. They have a sort of vested interest in the abuses which the Bill was framed to remove.”

The Bill of the Bishop of Peterborough, in 1875, was so mutilated in the House of Lords that the Archbishop of York said he feared this abominable traffic was beyond the reach of legislation; and the Bishop of Peterborough gave up the matter in despair. At length, when members of the Church of England seemed disposed to abandon the ques-

tion, his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) took it up in 1877, and again in 1878. He gave his support to his hon. Friend; and as an indication of the spirit in which he did so, he asked permission of the House to read two or three sentences from the speech he made on that occasion—

“If I were the enemy of the Church of England, I should say to my hon. Friend—‘Leave this matter alone.’ No weapon can be so effective and formidable in the hands of the enemies of the Church as the perpetuation of such scandals as these. But I am not an enemy of the Church of England. I wish, indeed, to see it separated from the State, as in my belief likely to conduce to its own freedom, purity, and efficiency. But as a religious society, as a spiritual institution, I can, with the utmost sincerity, say that I wish it all possible prosperity. It has done, and is still doing, inestimable service to the cause of Christian civilization in this country; and God forbid that I should be moved by any sectarian jealousy to desire the continuance of anything that tends to impair its usefulness or to mar its glory as a Christian Church.”—(3 *Hansard*, [237] 1502-3.)

He also denied the justice of the assertion that had been made by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), that he had proposed to strangle the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) on a former occasion by moving the adjournment of the debate. The Bill came on for second reading in the middle of a Sitting on Wednesday, after a long previous discussion on another subject; and, as only two Members had spoken, he did not think it an unpardonable sin to move the adjournment of the debate. He also denied the truth of a further assertion made by the same hon. Gentleman—that he had inserted in *Hansard* a speech which he had not made on that occasion. He desired, as heartily as any member of the Church of England, to see that Church relieved of the scandals now existing in the matter of the sale of advowsons and next presentations.

Mr. CUBITT said, he did not wish to follow the hon. Member for Merthyr Tynvil in his detailed defence. The fact remained that his action in a previous Session had prevented the offer of the Government to refer the Bill to a Select Committee being carried out. But as a Member of the late Royal Commission, he felt it incumbent on him to say a few words upon this occasion. As he under-

stood the tone of the discussion, the House was prepared to give a second reading to the Bill, on the understanding that it was not committed to the clauses, and that the measure was to be taken simply as a protest against the present sale of advowsons. Some regarded this patronage as a property, others as a trust. He believed the truth lay between the two opinions. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department said he did not think that compensation should be given; but, for his own part, he (Mr. Cubitt) did not believe that the matter could be settled without compensation. As to the special clauses of the Bill, it appeared to him objectionable, first of all, to reduce the value of advowsons one-half, and then to make the payment a charge on poor livings which could hardly bear it. He believed the clause which vested the patronage in the Crown would really place most of it in the hands of the Lord Chancellor. There was one unfortunate thing connected with the Lord Chancellor's patronage which did not, apparently, speak very well for it—he did not mean that of the present Lord Chancellor, but all Lord Chancellors—and it was that a good many of their livings were under sequestration. Therefore, it was not a good thing that the Lord Chancellor's patronage should be increased. With regard to the question of sequestration itself, he was of opinion that an act of bankruptcy should involve a forfeiture of the living. Respecting the Amendment, he might say that the Royal Commission had various instances brought before them of scandals which had taken place in consequence of the appointment of clergymen being vested in the parishioners. Since the Commission reported, a very great scandal had taken place in the appointment of a clergyman to St. Saviour's, Southwark; but he was glad to say that the election had resulted in the parishioners handing over the patronage to the Bishop. With reference to the appointment of a committee to present the clergyman, it was difficult to see how such a committee could be formed. In his opinion, the appointment of a committee would be as objectionable as the appointment of a clergyman by the parishioners. In any Bill upon this subject, the difficulty of transferring livings from private patrons to the Bishop caused by the necessity of

obtaining a licence in mortmain ought to be dealt with. There were many points in the Bill of which he approved, and he was, therefore, quite prepared to support the second reading with certain qualifications.

MR. LABOUCHERE said he hoped there would be a Division upon the Bill, although, at the same time, he might say that it was not his intention to vote for or against either the Bill or the Amendment. He had no doubt that the Bill dwelt with a very gross abuse; but he could not help thinking that, from a Radical standpoint, it was undesirable that there should be an Established Church at all; and there seemed to be no reason why they should be continually trying to tinker up and remedy this and that abuse in connection with the Church. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had taken a more advanced view of this matter than he usually did on such questions, and he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman; but this Bill did not go far enough, if it granted compensation in the case of those who now held livings. To sell a cure of souls had always been regarded as a most monstrous iniquity, and why should they give compensation to those who were enjoying what was wrong? They might as well suggest that Simon Magus himself should have had compensation. There was another preposterous clause in the Bill. These advowsons could only be sold to the great landlords and the lords of the manor. If the livings were sold at all, they should be sold to anybody who might be ready to buy them. But why should the great landlords—the race he should be glad to see cleared off the land, for he had always held it a sound doctrine that the landlords were the greatest burden upon the land—why should the great landlords and lords of the manor be allowed to buy livings, while other persons were not? The Amendment of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), so far as it went, was reasonable. There was no doubt that matters would be infinitely improved, if the parishioners had the right to veto the appointment of clergymen. But the Amendment did not go far enough. Why was there only to be a veto? Why not allow the parishioners to elect any clergyman they liked? Why

was the Bishop to be the only person to have a veto? If the majority of people in a locality were Dissenters, he thought they should not be compelled to elect a Church of England clergyman. He was opposed to all this tinkering of the Church of England, which should be disestablished and disendowed; and if his hon. Friend (Mr. E. A. Leatham) wanted his (Mr. Labouchere's) support, he should institute legislation in that view. He was quite ready to leave the Church such amounts as had been given to it within the last 20 years; but he had seen calculations made that, deducting those amounts, a sum of about £5,000,000 per annum ought to come to the public. That sum was the property not of a sect, but of the English people who paid it, and he should like to see a Bill introduced to enable the English public to enter into their property. He should also like to see a Bill introduced dealing with glebe lands. These glebe lands were, he believed, the worst cultivated in the country, and it would be infinitely better to distribute them in allotments amongst the deserving labourers of the village, than leaving them in the hands of the clergymen. When his hon. Friend brought in a Bill dealing with the glebe lands, and giving back to them the £5,000,000 of which they were now deprived for the benefit of a sect, then he would give him his most cordial support.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, that had the proposal made on Tuesday evening for introducing the *clôture* at 5 o'clock on Wednesdays been carried, he should not then be allowed to address the House. This admirably illustrated the absurdity of such a proposal. He quite agreed with the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that the parson should exist for the benefit of the parish, and not the parish for the benefit of the parson; but he differed from him entirely as to the advantages conferred by the Public Worship Regulation Act. He saw no substantial difference between the sale of next presentations and the sale of advowsons. If one was wrong, so was the other. He believed there was nothing absolutely wrong in either; but he did think that, in the present state of the public mind, the sales gave occasion for the enemy to sneer and blaspheme, and that, in the interests of the Church, it

would be wise to abolish them. He was in favour of sweeping the whole system of sales away; but he objected to the Bill, because it proposed to give only half the value as compensation. If they abolished by law, in the interests of public morality, certain private rights which had belonged to private patrons for very many years past, how could they turn round and refuse to pay the last owner for them? That was not a fair way of dealing with property which they had in recent times created. What he suggested should be done was to fasten upon the living whatever sum was found to be the value of the right of the presentation to the lay owner. With regard to the sale of the livings themselves, he objected to societies having the power to buy up the whole patronage of a district, and in that way endeavouring to establish a monopoly of their own school of thought, and to prevent any body of persons in a given area having any other form of worship within the limits of the Church of England. As to compensation, he pointed out that the Secretary of State for the Home Department had compared the property in these advowsons to the property formerly held in rotten boroughs. But there was a distinct difference between the two cases. The sale of rotten boroughs had never been recognized by the law of the land. It was an illegal sale from beginning to end; but the sale of the advowson had always been recognized by the law, so much so that when the law was passed for forming Corporations all over England, there was a positive Order in the Act of Parliament by which Municipal Corporations were constituted, providing that all the livings in the possession of the Municipal Corporations should be sold, and that the money should go to the benefit of the Corporations. They ought to abolish, in the interest of the Church itself, and with fair compensation, the saleability of Church livings. There were two precedents in favour of this course—one the Abolition of Purchase in the Army, and the other the Abolition of Slavery. Those two cases were analogous; but he maintained they ought to throw upon the living itself the cost of its enfranchisement. He would support the second reading of the Bill. He thought it was a preferable measure, on the whole, to the Bill of the hon. Mem-

ber for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). Both Bills contained many valuable provisions; and if, after they had passed through a Select Committee, they were to lead to the abolition of the sale of livings of all kinds, he thought a very valuable work would have been done in the interests of the Church.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 141; Noes 83: Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 124.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee."—(Mr. E. Stanhope.)

MR. ALBERT GREY proposed that it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to insert clauses in the Bill, having the effect of the Amendment which he had moved to the second reading.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member would not be in Order in moving an Instruction to the Committee without Notice.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

MR. ALBERT GREY gave Notice that he would to-morrow move the Instruction to the Committee to which he had referred.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (YORKSHIRE) BILL.

(Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Barran, Mr. Caine, Mr. Isaac Wilson, Sir Matthew Wilson, Mr. Pease.)

[BILL 34.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(Mr. Charles Wilson.)

MR. WARTON said, he did not know whether the hon. Member seriously intended that a measure of this importance was to be pressed to a Division at that period of the Sitting. This was a measure affecting the great county of York, and they would have expected figures to show the great preponderance of opinion in favour of it. But it was in that respect a worse Bill than the Cornwall Bill, which was rejected yesterday by the House of Lords, for they had no figures to show that there was even a majority of the people of Yorkshire in

favour of the measure. In Cornwall they knew that there was a majority in favour of such a measure, and he referred to that county because they knew what had taken place in regard to the Cornish Sunday Closing Bill on the previous day. He put it to the hon. Member whether, when such a Bill had been rejected by the House of Lords, backed as it was by a majority of the people, there was the slightest hope of passing a measure which was not backed by a majority of the people concerned? The Opposition had been charged with wasting the time of the House; but it was really a tremendous waste of time to bring in these Bills one after another, when only the day previous one of them had been rejected in "another place." There was not time to go into the whole question; but so far as time would allow, he must take the opportunity of stating the principle which underlay his opposition to the measure. The principle was that of individual liberty and freedom. He said, as an honest, respectable Englishman, he had a right to Sunday, and meant to have it, and he did not mean to be deprived of his freedom. He thought that, at the present time, the temperance people were much to be pitied. They had advertised an extraordinary reward of £700 for anyone who could find a single temperance drink fit to be compared with beer. They had offered this prize to all the world, and the limit of time was rapidly drawing near; but at present there was no indication of any person coming forward to claim the prize. They had not been able to find anything so good as beer. That was because beer was the only drink of this country.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

—o—

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1878 (DISTRICTS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HASTINGS, Bill to enable Local Authorities to transfer the whole or certain parts of their Districts for the purposes of "The Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878," to the Districts of neighbouring Local Authorities, ordered to be brought in by Mr. HASTINGS, Sir EDMUND LECHMERE, Lord MORETON, Sir EARLEY WILMOT, and Mr. DUCKHAM. Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 253.]

POLICE BURGHS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Select Committee on Police Burghs (Scotland) Bill to consist of Twenty-seven Members:—Committee *nominated* of,—Mr. ANDERSON, Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK, Sir EDWARD COLERROOKE, Admiral Sir JOHN HAY, Mr. CRUM, Lord ELCHO, Mr. BOLTON, Mr. NEWZAM NICHOLSON, Mr. BARCLAY, General ALEXANDER, Mr. ARMITSTEAD, Mr. ORR EWING, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. HOULDSWORTH, Mr. WEBSTER, Mr. ARTHUR BALFOUR, Mr. RICHARD CAMPBELL, Lord ALGERNON PERCY, Lord COLIN CAMPBELL, Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH, Mr. DICK PEDDIE, Mr. DALRYMPLE, Mr. SELLAR, Colonel MILNE HOME, Mr. ANDREW GRANT, The Lord Advocate, and Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, with power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

House adjourned at five minutes
before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 19th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Improvement of Lands (Ecclesiastical Benefices) * (131); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) (Districts of Dorking and Hendon, &c.) * (132).

Second Reading—Benefices (Tiverton Portions) Consolidation Amendment (72).

Second Reading—Committee *negatived*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2). *

Committee—*Report*—Summary Jurisdiction over Children [(Ireland) * (104); Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) * (101); Sea Fisheries Act (1868) Amendment * (125); Metropolitan Police * (118).

Report—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders * (70); Great Seal (83).

Third Reading—Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer) * (114), and *passed*.

CORK BUTTER MARKET BILL.

(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."
—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

LORD EMLY: My Lords, my excuse for troubling your Lordships about this Bill is that, as the Cork Butter Market rules the price of butter throughout the South of Ireland, it can hardly be dealt with as an ordinary Private Bill. It excites the interest of the Munster dairy farmers much more than the great measure which next week will probably occupy

your Lordships' attention for many days. I must say, at the outset, that I am quite as anxious that this Bill should become law as my noble and learned Friend the Lord Justice of Appeal (Lord Fitzgerald) who has charge of it. My object is to induce your Lordships to agree to an addition to it which will, I feel sure, conduce to its well working, and would satisfy—I think I can show—all the reasonable requirements of the butter producers. The Cork Butter Market is a peculiar one. In it the producer of butter does not deal directly with the exporters, but sends his butter to a broker who sells it for him. The market has been governed by a close Corporation, consisting of brokers and merchants. Irrespective altogether of the quality of the butter, the broker is paid on each cwt. he sells 1s. 3d., and the exporter 1s. 4d., besides certain other perquisites. The butter when received is inspected by officers appointed by the Trustees, and the Inspector who values and classifies it is always accompanied in his inspection by the broker to whom it is consigned. The same price is paid for all the first-class or second-class butter, so that there is no inducement to the producer to make butter of any higher quality than that which will entitle it to the first brand. Some attempt has been made to establish a higher class butter; but its operation has been slight. The result of this system has been disastrous. There certainly is not in the United Kingdom—I doubt whether there is in the world—land capable of producing better butter than Limerick and some of the adjacent counties; yet while the import of Danish butter has in 20 years increased from 300,000 lbs. to 2,000,000 lbs., Irish butter has been almost entirely cut off from the London Market. The Duke of Richmond's Committee had reported—

"The present arrangements of the Cork Butter Market have evidently tended to reduce the value of the higher classes of butter and to unduly raise the value of the lower classes."

It has been well described as the best market for bad butter and the worst for good. Under these circumstances, a deputation of a most influential character, headed by my noble Friend (the Marquess of Waterford), waited on Earl Spencer, and the result of that deputation was the introduction of the present Bill, framed by my noble and learned

Friend the Lord Justice of Appeal, by the Corporation of Cork, except in one particular. The Bill seems to be an excellent and admirable one. It creates a new Governing Body. It requires that within six months a new code of bye-laws, to be approved of by not less than two-thirds of the Trustees, be formed; and it gives power to the Privy Council, in case these bye-laws are not framed, to direct the Local Government Board to prepare them. It requires, also, that an open market be established, to which all who wish it may carry their goods. But, my Lords, my experience teaches me that the best laws, if not administered by those who desire to carry them out in the spirit as well as the letter, avail little. I cannot consider the constitution of the Board of Trustees fair to the producers of butter. There are to be six representatives of the brokers, six of the merchants, three of the Corporation, and six appointed by the County Cork Grand Jury, 15 to represent the non-producers, six to represent the producers. I cannot think that this is a settlement, to use Earl Spencer's words, satisfactory to the producers of butter. The only change that I desire to be made in this Bill is to add to the Board of Trustees three dairy farmers; selected by the Grand Jury, having each in their possession for the last year at least 30 cows. That change will, I think, give confidence to the farmers in the fair working of the market.

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD said, he thought that the Bill was most decidedly a step in the right direction. Although some of their Lordships, by merely reading its title, might imagine it referred to only a small matter, yet it was one of the greatest possible importance to Ireland. The Cork Butter Market, in fact, regulated the price of butter throughout the country, which, as their Lordships were aware, was one of the most important productions which came to this country from Ireland. Last year he attended a deputation to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on the subject; and he (the Marquess of Waterford) believed the present Bill was in some respects due to, and was an answer to, that deputation. The state of the Cork Butter Market, in its present form, left much to be desired. It was governed entirely by a close Corporation; in fact, their Lordships would

hardly believe that seven exporters and seven brokers possessed the entire control of the market. Butter was often stored away by these buyers for some time, and then it was sent into England branded as Cork "firsts," with the inevitable result that the Irish butter got a bad name. The Bill under their Lordships' consideration, although it promised an improvement on the present system, was not, he was afraid, altogether satisfactory. There was, however, a distinct improvement on the old Committee of seven brokers and seven buyers. They were to be reduced to six each, and members, to be nominated by the Grand Jury, were to be put on the Committee. For his own part, however, he thought the producers should be represented as well, and this had been recommended by his noble Friend (Lord Emly), who urged that three producers should be nominated to serve on the Committee. He thought the thanks of people in Ireland were due to his noble Friend and the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Fitzgerald) for the trouble they had taken in the matter. He hoped the noble and learned Lord would accept the very moderate proposition that had been made; and he would further recommend that any decisions arrived at by the Committee in regard to the regulation of the market should be laid on their Lordships' Table.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT cordially endorsed the views expressed by the noble Marquess, and expressed a hope that the Bill would not meet with any opposition at their Lordships' hands.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, there was a very considerable feeling as regarded this Bill. It had a peculiarity as an Irish Bill, and that was that everybody appeared to wish it well. He wished to point out that the Irish landlords joined with the farmers in expressing a desire to increase the number of the Committee of Management of the market by adding three Irish butter producers to it. He hoped that the Bill might become law, but that the Amendment would be introduced into the measure in the interests of the consumer and producer.

LORD FITZGERALD said, that he desired to explain his connection with the Bill in a few words. Complaints had been made of abuses alleged to

exist in the Cork Butter Market, and a weighty deputation, headed by the noble Marquess, waited on Earl Spencer. The Lord Lieutenant had taken the matter into his consideration, and had stated to that deputation that the matter was one which ought to be dealt with by the Corporation of Cork in conjunction with the butter merchants and exporters. His Excellency suggested that they should come to such an agreement as would remedy the evils complained of, thinking it undesirable that the Government should interfere in a matter of this sort except in the last resort, and then only in the event of its being proved that substantial injustice was being done to a class of persons unable to look after their own interests, or that the existing arrangements were such as materially to retard the development of an important branch of industry. The Corporation, acting on His Excellency's suggestion, promoted a Bill against which many Petitions were presented. He (Lord Fitzgerald), having been requested to act as arbitrator between the parties interested, had at first refused, but finally, at the request of the Lord Lieutenant, consented to act, and having received the statements of witnesses before the Richmond Commission, and a variety of Reports, he proceeded to Dublin, and there held a careful and full inquiry. From the evidence it seemed that the parties were agreed that legislation was expedient, and he decided that it was essential that the market should be established on a firm legal basis, and for that purpose receive the sanction of Parliament, but that it should be left as far as practicable to the guidance of its Governing Body—a body untrammelled by unbending Legislative Rules. The noble and learned Lord then gave, in effect, the terms of his award upon which the present Bill had been founded. If the question had come before a Select Committee of the House, its consideration would have occupied months, and although a great deal of money might have been spent, no result might have been obtained. Such had been the fate of a Water Bill promoted by the Corporation of Newry, upon which £14,000 had been spent. No one up to the present had said a word against his award; the Bill founded on it had passed the House of Commons without opposition, and there had been no

Petitions against it. The city and the county of Cork, and the county of Kerry, the two most important counties concerned, were in favour of the measure. The Amendment proposed by his noble Friend (Lord Emly), to add three producers of butter to the Board of Trustees, he could not accept. The old Management of the market consisted of 21 persons, annually elected, seven by the butter merchants and 14 by the export merchants, a Body voluntary and unincorporated. This Body had managed the market, and made it a success, and had dealt with butter amounting to £1,500,000 in value every year. The property in the market was theirs, as were the profits of the management, and Parliament could not interfere with them against their consent without giving them full and fair compensation. Under this Bill there would be a new Governing Body, and one which he considered would be unexceptional. It had been formed under a compromise. Among the principal objects to be obtained were increased production of pure butter, improvement in its manufacture and quality, increased facilities for its sale in the butter market, careful and impartial inspection and classification, prevention of frauds and adulteration, the collection and diffusion of intelligence respecting improvements in the production, manufacture, and sale of butter, and the establishment of a market or markets containing, as far as possible, the advantages of a free market, with such regulations or restrictions only as experience had shown, or might prove, to be necessary or useful. Six of the new Body would represent the exporters, six would represent the merchants, and six would be selected by the Grand Jurors of the county of Cork, and three more would be selected by the Corporation of Cork from the merchants of the highest respectability not connected with the butter trade, making in all 21 members of the Committee to manage the market; and he might remind his noble Friend that those elected by the Grand Jury would represent the butter producers, and so would the exporters or brokers, whose great object would be that the best butter should be produced and brought to market, and the largest quantity of it sold and exported. Under Clause 34 provision was made to secure competency and skill on the part of the Butter Inspectors.

Lord Fitzgerald

Penalties, would be imposed for counterfeiting brands and the power of issuing search warrants given in cases where fraudulent practices were suspected. Provision was also made for the auditing of the accounts of the Trustees. The Bill had been prepared with great care; it had been improved in the House of Commons and also by the Chairman of Committees; and he had no hesitation in saying that he entertained a hope that if it passed in its present shape it would establish the Butter Market of Cork as the best and the largest in the world. The Bill represented an experiment of importance—that was, whether local Bills of this and a similar character might not be investigated by a local tribunal, the facts ascertained, the character of the measure agreed on, and then brought before Parliament for its sanction. The expenses of the investigation in Dublin had been *nil*, and the cost of the promotion of this Bill before Parliament would be represented by a few hundred pounds in place of many thousands.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD regretted that the noble and learned Lord who had just spoken was opposed to the proposal that the constitution of the Board should be moderately fortified in the way suggested. He hoped that before the stage at which Amendments could be moved was reached the matter would be reconsidered.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that it was important for those who knew the extreme necessity for some reform in the Cork Butter Market to consider that this was a Private Bill; and he had every reason to believe that if their Lordships altered it in the way proposed, the promoters, the Corporation of Cork, would withdraw it, and things would be left as they were before. That would be a great misfortune.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed.

BENEFICES (TIVERTON PORTIONS) CONSOLIDATION AMENDMENT BILL.

(The Lord Bishop of Exeter.)

(NO. 72.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE BISHOP of EXETER, in moving that the Bill be read a second time,

said, that it was intended to provide a remedy much desired by the clergy and parishioners for certain evils in a parish in his diocese. The parish was very large and had four rectors, who had charge in turn of the whole parish, and of the principal church, and also of a chapel of ease. The result was a good deal of friction, things did not go on well, and the people were very much dissatisfied. The practical object of this Bill was to extend the general law to this particular case.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(The Lord Bishop of Exeter.)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly.

GREAT SEAL BILL.—(No. 83.)

(The Lord Chancellor.)

REPORT OF AMENDMENTS.

Amendments reported (according to order).

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he wished to direct their Lordships' attention to the more Constitutional view of the measure. It was admitted, he believed, that the Bill involved the abolition of the Office of Lord Privy Seal. He held that that Office was of great value, as it was one of those Cabinet posts to which a small salary was attached; and as there had lately been a great growth of Public Business, that growth had a tendency to increase, and it was very difficult for any Cabinet Minister to keep abreast with the mere routine work of his Department. If they added to that work the business of Deputations, the business of the Cabinet, and the Business of Parliament, there remained no time whatever for the consideration of larger and graver questions. The remedy put forward, they all knew, was the division of work and the increase of Cabinet Offices. Anyone, however, who knew anything of Cabinet work must know that a small Cabinet could accomplish more than a large one. The Office of Privy Seal had been especially held by old statesmen, who were not capable of undertaking the heavy labour of a large Department; and it would have been unfortunate if the men who had held that Office in recent years had not taken a part in the Councils of the nation. This was a matter for the Government of the day to decide; but he was sure that a majority of those

who were likely to take part in the Government of the country in the future would regret the unfortunate change brought about by the Bill.

Bill to be read 3^a *To-morrow*.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PARISHES
OF ROTHWELL AND YETMINSTER.

RESOLUTION.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in rising to call the attention of the House to the action of the Education Department in forcing a School Board, without notice, on the parish of Rothwell, in spite of the vote of the ratepayers, and at a time when there was no actual deficiency of school accommodation, and when the managers of the National School had offered to provide any additional accommodation which might be necessary; also, to the conduct of the Education Department with respect to Yetminster, Dorsetshire; and to move to resolve—

“That, in the opinion of this House, such action is contrary to public policy and to the intention of the Education Act of 1870,”

said, he would state the facts of the Rothwell case. There was in the parish a National School with 510 children, and classed “excellent,” also a British School with 175 children. The National School managers offered to supply any extra accommodation needed, and the School Board was negatived at a poll of the ratepayers, notwithstanding which a School Board was ordered to be formed. This order was maintained, notwithstanding remonstrances. A majority of Churchmen had been returned on the Board, and it was now determined to do what was originally intended—namely, build an additional school by voluntary subscription. Mr. Mundella thus failed in his avowed object, but had succeeded in forcing heavy expenses on the parish for Party purposes. Mr. Mundella had objected that the acceptance of the offer of the National Society would have allowed one religious body to monopolize the whole of the school accommodation; but he was fully aware that no religious teaching could take place during school hours. If the conduct of the Education Office had been bad, their arguments were worse; for it had come to this—the Vice President maintained that religion was taught in Board Schools, and the cost of teaching School Board reli-

gion was paid out of the rates; whereas the whole cost of teaching religion in Voluntary Schools was paid by private contributions. The country had been wheedled into endowing either a Non-conformist or a new religion in Board Schools, while it had disestablished the Church of England, the Catholic, and the Wesleyan religion in every public Elementary School. In the case of Yetminster, the action of the Education Office appeared to have been even more uncalled for than at Rothwell. The boys were provided for by Boyle’s Endowed School, and formed no part of the present contention, which regarded only the girls’ and infants’ National School. Here the Vicar, owing to his age and infirmities, had been the cause of a School Board being formed. He died six months after this, and the new Vicar and managers were prepared to carry on the school. The School Board offered to accept a transfer of the National School sufficient for the district; but the managers refused to transfer it. The Education Office, declining to accede to the views of the majority of the Board, insisted on their building a new school. The Education Office asserted that there were 120 girls and infants to be provided for, whilst the Vicar could not find more than 70 of school age. Could the Lord President explain this discrepancy? At Staines the Education Office had insisted on room being provided for children of three years old, for which there was no authority under the Act. Complaints were made that the conduct and language of the Education Office was disingenuous. Would anyone, after reading Dr. Crichton Browne’s letter in *The Times* of Monday, say that the replies of that Department in this or the other House were candid? And was it candid of the Vice President, on Monday last, when replying to remonstrances against over-pressure, not to state that in future over-pressure would be greatly diminished, since that very day the Law Courts had decided that compulsion as to home lessons was illegal?

Moved to resolve—

“That, in the opinion of this House, the recent action of the Education Department with regard to the parishes of Rothwell and Yetminster is contrary to public policy and to the intention of the Education Act of 1870.”—(*The Lord Stanley of Alderley.*)

The Earl of Carnarvon

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he was glad to be able to give an explanation of the Rothwell and the Yetminster cases. He did not think the Rothwell case raised any difficult controversy; indeed, both were simple cases, in which no new departure had been taken by the Department, and in which it had maintained the policy of the Act of 1870 in conformity with the practice adopted since 1870. He could not go into the question of over-pressure then, but should be ready to do so on a future occasion if desired. The Rothwell case was the creation of a School Board contrary to the view of the majority of the ratepayers. In the case of Yetminster no question was raised, or could be raised, as to the necessity for the creation of a School Board; and the question was, whether a Board having been created, it was to be required to supply the school deficiency, or whether it was to be at liberty to accept the accommodation from a Voluntary School. The parish of Rothwell, for the last 20 years, had been supplied with education by two schools—a Church School and a British School, a Nonconformist School—which supplied education to a considerable minority of the parish. The Education Department were compelled to address requirements to the British School, which the latter were unable to fulfil. More accommodation was wanted, which the British School could not supply. The result was that the British School closed its doors. In these circumstances, the Education Department adopted the ordinary course of requiring the parish to set up a School Board. Then followed two important facts. First, the managers of the Church School professed themselves ready to undertake the schooling of the whole parish; and, secondly, a majority of the ratepayers—310 to 255—voted against setting up a School Board; but that majority represented the friends and supporters of the Church Schools; and it was not the duty, and had not been the practice, of the Department to be absolutely governed in such cases by the vote of the majority. The only way in which they could insure that sufficient school accommodation should be provided without delay was by taking the course they had taken. In “another place,” Mr. Forster had given a long list of cases in which the Department had acted

in opposition to the majority of the ratepayers. In a parish under the circumstances of Rothwell, it would not have been proper to allow the whole management of education to be centred in one religious body, which, in that case, happened to be the Church of England, but in other cases might be a Dissenting body, or might be the Roman Catholic Church. Such a course would have completely changed the conditions which had existed for 15 years, and would have raised much ill-feeling, and caused grave difficulties in the parish. It had even been stated that if they were to increase the Church School, it would be impossible to compel Dissenters to send their children, and that many of them would be fined rather than do so. If, in such a case, when the creation of a School Board was the best way of dealing with the matter, they had instead provided one Denominational School, they would have outraged the feelings of a large portion of the parishioners. The case of Yetminster was a singular one. The managers of the National School, which was a girls' and infants' school, unanimously determined to close the school. The clergyman of the parish was chairman of the managers, and being unable to execute repairs, proposed to hand over the education of the parish to a School Board, which was accordingly set up. That clergyman died, and his successor wished to carry on the school again on the voluntary principle. The School Committee and the School Board applied to the Department to be allowed, instead of the School Board's carrying on the school, to accept the revived school. The Department had, however, been obliged to decide, in accordance with many former decisions, that they had no power to accept such an offer. Under the terms of the Act, when once a School Board had been created, the Education Department was bound to require that the School Board should itself supply the deficiency of school accommodation on account of which it was brought into being. Doubts had been expressed on this point, and a case had been prepared and laid before the Law Officers of the Crown, who were asked to advise whether there was an imperative obligation on the Education Department to require that the deficiency should be supplied by the School Board, or whether the Department could accept

the offer of volunteers to supply the requisite accommodation. He was confident that there had been no change of policy on the part of the Education Department.

LORD NORTON complained of the action of the Privy Council. They had, in the first place, caused a deficiency of school room at Rothwell, and then, when a body of persons came forward to supply the deficiency, the Department refused the offer on the ground that it was made by Church people, who were the majority of the inhabitants there. Now, he wished to ask what right the Office had to refuse any such offer, and especially upon religious grounds? There being a Conscience Clause to protect all children, it was impossible to say that the minority of Dissenters could not use it, or that their feelings would be outraged. He understood the noble Lord's statement to amount to this—that when Church people were a majority in a parish, and offered to supply any school-room deficiency, the Department had no alternative but to refuse that offer, and compel the formation of a School Board. That was contrary to the spirit of the Act and to the interests of education. The Yetminster case involved a still greater assumption on the part of the Office—that when once a School Board was formed, no other body, however much it was desired by the parish, could afterwards supply any school-room. He could not think the Law Officers would indorse this bye-legislation of the Office.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH said, it was clear, from the Vice President's statement, that a new School Board could always supplant the Voluntary Board. He was glad to know that in the present case many Dissenters had sufficient respect for religion to stand up against the action of the Board in this matter. When once a School Board got into a parish, there it would stay, if the interpretation placed on the Act of 1870 by the Department was correct.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that the Education Department had no confidence whatever in this case that the deficiency of accommodation could have been supplied by the Voluntary Schools; and he believed that, under all the circumstances of the case, they had done their duty by the parish. The noble Earl said it would make no difference what-

ever to Nonconformist children whether they were required to go to a Board School or a National School. But the fact was, that a Nonconformist child in a Board School had religious instruction. [Lord ELLENBOROUGH laughed.] He did not know whether the noble Lord understood what he was laughing at. In a Board School a Nonconformist child obtained religious instruction of a kind which suited it, because creeds and catechisms were not taught; but in a Church School he might have to walk out while the religious instruction was given. The difference, therefore, was between a child receiving the religious instruction he required, and not receiving any religious instruction at all.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH remarked, that he had heard of a case in a Court of Justice the other day of a child nine years of age who had never heard of the Deity, did not know what the New Testament was, and did not know the alphabet.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in reply, said, the Lord President had cited precedents for this arbitrary conduct from Mr. Forster's administration; but could he cite any such under Lord Sandon? Why were popular votes overridden only by Liberal Administrations, and, if so, what was the use of extending the franchise?

EARL DE LA WARR said, with regard to the noble Lord's (Lord Carlingford's) remarks as to the religious education being given in Board Schools, in the Birmingham School Board no religious education was given at all.

On Question? *Resolved in the negative.*

HOUSE OF LORDS — ELECTRIC LIGHTING.—QUESTION.

LORD GREVILLE asked, Whether any steps are about to be taken as to the lighting of this House with the electric light; also, having in view the very great importance of obtaining the best and most economical results, whether Her Majesty's Government will ask the leading Companies in Great Britain to tender for the same?

LORD SUDELEY: In reply to the noble Lord, I am unable to say exactly when this House and Libraries will be lit up by the electric light; but the First Commissioner of Works has at

. *Lord Carlingford*

present got the lighting of both Houses under his consideration. As a considerable amount of money will have to be expended, the plans connected with it naturally require most careful looking into; and, as a portion of the work has been carried out by one Company, the First Commissioner is unable to say to what extent it will be possible to invite public competition, but he hopes he may be able to do so.

MOROCCO—THE SHERIF OF WAZAN—
A FRENCH PROTECTORATE.
QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL DE LA WARR asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give any information with regard to the present position of affairs in Morocco, and the relations now existing between that country and France; also, whether any Papers and Correspondence can be laid upon the Table of the House? The noble Earl said, that the reports which had reached them relative to the state of affairs in Morocco and the recent action of France could not but cause very grave apprehensions. He wished in no way to sound a note of alarm, as what was stated in that House might sometimes produce a greater effect than was intended, but there were occasions when silence became a fault. He thought that what had taken place was sufficient reason for his asking the noble Earl the Questions on the Paper. He fully recognized the Constitutional principle that the Foreign Policy of this country was in the hands of Her Majesty's Government—that by them Treaties might be made or annulled, and war even declared, without consulting Parliament. He would only say that Constitutional powers might sometimes be pressed too far, and they were not without instances of that in recent times which had involved the country in serious foreign complications. He might be told by the noble Earl opposite that a perfect understanding existed between France and Morocco. It might be so; but he wished to ask whether it was not true that a proposition had been made to rectify the frontier between Algeria and Morocco by extending the territory of France to the River Mulaya, thereby making a very considerable addition to Algeria; and whether the French Minister at Morocco, M. Ordega, had

not recently admitted to French protection and the privileges of a French subject an influential religious leader, the Sherif of Wazan, who sympathized with the discontented portion of the population in opposition to the Emperor; and whether the French Minister had not received several deputations of Chiefs of Tribes soliciting his protection? As showing in some measure the view taken of the present position of affairs in the country, he would read a passage from a newspaper published at Tangier, *The Réveil du Maroc*—

"We are not able to pronounce at present in a definitive manner upon the real bearing of these facts; we may, nevertheless, affirm that the sympathies of Mussulmans for France become more and more keen; the populations, discontented with the administration of their Governors, rally round the Sherif of Wazan, and a movement is caused in Morocco which may lead to an unforeseen result."

Neither did it seem that all this was disallowed in France. *The Journal des Débats* said—

"This is why France desires above everything that a revolution may not take place to disturb the progress of her pacific and civilizing policy in the countries bordering upon her great African Colony."

It sounded very plausible to talk of civilizing and pacific progress, though he confessed he had some doubts of the advantages of European civilization in Oriental countries; but that was the very justification offered for the invasion of Tunis. It was repeatedly stated by the then French Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire, and repeatedly affirmed by the noble Earl opposite, that there was no intention of annexation or permanent occupation on the part of France with regard to Tunis; but what had happened? Why, the French were permanently established there, and everything was under French rule. The Capitulations had been abolished, and British subjects, some 12,000 or more in number, were handed over to the jurisdiction of the French Courts. It was impossible to overlook these facts. He hoped that the noble Earl would be able to explain what had taken place. His own apprehensions were that the same thing now beginning in Morocco would go on as in Tunis. These were no longer diplomatic secrets, as they had been made known and published in Italy, and the French movements were closely watched by Spain,

Though he did not wish to sound a note of alarm, he thought he had not exaggerated the facts of the case, which, indeed, were patent to all, and could not remain unnoticed.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I have no doubt that a considerable feeling of anxiety and excitement has been produced in Morocco and also in Spain and in Italy by the reports with regard to the threatening intentions of the French with respect to Morocco. Complaint is also made by the Sultan of Morocco with regard to the French taking the Sherif of Wazan under their protection. I have no official information in regard to what the noble Earl said about other Sherifs seeking the protection of the French, or as to the manner in which any such advances have been received by the French. But I have received, both from Lord Lyons and M. Waddington, the most formal assurances on the part of the French Government that there is no truth whatever in the reports regarding any aggressive intentions on their part, or any wish either to annex or to protect, or cause trouble in any other way in Morocco. They desire the maintenance of the *status quo*, and the only negotiations passing now between France and Morocco are negotiations with regard to certain affairs in the interior. These assurances are exactly in accord with those which I had previously received from M. Barthelemy de St. Hilaire, M. Gambetta, and afterwards from M. de Freycinet. I have reason to know that these assurances have also been given in the most formal manner to Italy and Spain. We have communicated with our Minister at Morocco, directing him to communicate the assurances in question to the Sultan of Morocco.

AFRICA (SOUTH COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH moved for the production of Reports addressed by the Naval Commander-in-Chief on the Coast of South Africa to the Lords of the Admiralty in reference to the Bay of Angra Pequena and adjacent islands and mainland. The noble Viscount said, that he believed that evidence was now obtainable with reference to British rights in the locality to which his Ques-

tion referred. He had a copy of a list of Islands which were handed over by the Cape Government to an English firm, and a copy of a document from a Native Chief which made over a portion of the mainland and a large portion of the Bay of Angra Pequena to another Company. He thought these matters ought to be taken into consideration in the negotiations with Germany. He was convinced of the importance of the Bay eight years ago; and he then wrote a letter to *The Times*, pointing out the great advantages that would result to the mariners of the country if they made use of the Bay. He regretted now that he did not then urge the Government to assert their rights.

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Reports addressed by the Naval Commander-in-Chief on the coast of South Africa to the Lords of the Admiralty in reference to the Bay of Angra Pequena and adjacent islands and mainland."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth*.)

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: Since the noble Viscount questioned me the other day, I have looked at the Reports from the Naval Commander-in-Chief at the Cape, and I find that there is no professional Report, in the ordinary sense of the word, upon the Bay of Angra Pequena; but there is a Report of a visit paid by one of Her Majesty's ships to the place in consequence of some apprehended disturbance in connection with rival claims to land. This Report is connected with the negotiations which are proceeding between Her Majesty's Government and the German Government; and, therefore, it would not be expedient to make it public at present.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH wished to say that his remarks on a former occasion had been misreported in some newspapers. He was represented in those papers as having said that there was a resident magistrate at Angra Pequena, whereas what he really said was that a magistrate had been appointed at Wallfisch Bay.

In reply to The Earl of CARNARVON,

THE EARL OF DERBY stated that the Papers were in the Foreign Office; but the Government thought that it would not be desirable at present to produce them to Parliament.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: In that case, his noble Friend must wait for some time to come; because the communica-

tions had been going on for some two years already.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS (ECCLESIASTICAL BENEFICES) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to prohibit charges for improvements upon Ecclesiastical Lands otherwise than with the consent of the Patron and Bishop—Was presented by The Lord Archbishop of CANTERBURY; read 1st. (No. 131.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 19th June, 1884.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*) — *Third Reading* — Milford Docks (Junction Railway)*; North Metropolitan Tramways*; South Eastern Metropolitan (Lewisham, Greenwich, and District Tramways),* and passed.

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered—*First Reading*—Trustees of Settlements* [255]; Criminal Lunatics* [256].

Report of Select Committee—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.)* [No. 224].

Committee—Report—Representation of the People [119-249] (*New Clauses*)—[Eleventh Night]: Customs and Inland Revenue [206]; Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Amendment [245]; Settled Land [247].

Report—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 4) (Nenagh Union)* [202].

Considered as amended—Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Orders* [222]; National Debt (Conversion of Stock)* [186].

Considered as amended—*Third Reading*—Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment* [208], and passed.

Third Reading—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4)* [232]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (New Streets in the City of Dublin, &c.)* [200]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) (Unions of Clonmel and others)* [198]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) (Unions of Cashel and others)* [205]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) (Unions of Delvin, and others)* [210]; Local Government Provisional Order (Highways)* [226]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) (Parishes of Barnwood, and others)* [214]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) (City of Oxford, and others)* [215];

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) (Clogher Valley Tramway)* [234], and passed.

QUESTIONS.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS) — CASE OF ANDREW M'CALE (CO. CAVAN).

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, in the land case of Andrew M'Caule, of Gallon, Killinkere, Virginia, county Cavan, the solicitors for landlord and tenant agreed, by compromise of a disputed measurement, that 18 3 4 should be the basis for valuation, and that, in spite of said agreement, the Sub-Commissioners settled the measurement at 19 acres; and, whether he can explain the ground of the decision?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have seen the Chairman of the Sub-Commission before which this case was heard. It was heard several months ago, and he has no recollection, nor any note, of the particular circumstances referred to. I asked him to communicate with the other Sub-Commissioners, and ascertain whether they could give any information on the subject, and this he undertook to do. I may mention that the records in the Land Commission Office show that the difference in the measurement was not what is stated in the Question, but only 16 perches.

MR. BERESFORD: Sir, in answer to the Question of the hon. Member for Cavan, you will allow me to explain, as this is a matter which concerns me. I have the honour to be the landlord concerned in the case about which the hon. Member for Cavan has asked, and I remember the case perfectly well. There was a survey made on behalf of the tenant, which made the area of the holding 18 acres 3 roods 18 perches, and the landlord's surveyor made the area 19 acres 1 rood 14 perches. We threw off the 1 rood 14 perches, and by mutual agreement made the area 19 acres. So that the hon. Member for Cavan will see that he has been wrongly informed.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR.

ALBERT HUTTON (CO. CAVAN).

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

Whether Mr. Albert Hutton, of Rockfield Swanlinton, is about to be appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the county of Cavan; and, whether that gentleman was bankrupt or insolvent in England?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that this gentleman was appointed to the Commission of the Peace by the late Lord Chancellor more than two years ago. He did not then take out his Commission; but he has recently applied for it. There is no information whatever before the Lord Chancellor to show that this gentleman was either bankrupt or insolvent in England at any time.

MR. HEALY: It is a very easy thing to find out whether this gentleman was insolvent or not, if the Lord Chancellor would be willing to make the inquiry.

MR. TREVELYAN said, there was no objection to do so.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TRIM QUARTER SESSIONS.

MR. SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that at last Quarter Sessions held at Trim, county Meath, the cases for hearing (or some of them) were postponed owing to non-attendance of Sessional Crown Prosecutor, Mr. George Keogh, and if, when he subsequently attended, the Chairman severely rebuked him, Mr. Keogh explained, by stating he was unavoidably delayed by unusual train arrangements; whether, when questioned by the Chairman as to his reason for not being at Trim over night, he pleaded pressure of business and a wish to save expense; is it a fact that a case in which Mr. Keogh was interested was also postponed; will the Government sanction such a miscarriage of justice, and permit such hardship to all interested; what is the amount of Mr. Keogh's salary, and what the amount meant to cover expenses; do the Government consider Mr. Keogh can properly and efficiently discharge public duty as Sessional Crown Prosecutor, holding, as he does, at the same time, a multitude of official positions, amongst which may be enumerated Solicitor to Dublin and Wicklow Railway Company, Solicitor to Bray Commissioners (Town), Solicitor to Cemeteries Committee (Glasnevin), with very constant attendance in London, and also private practice; what is the nature and quality of his

staff to transact this crowd of work; and, if the Government will appoint a Solicitor as Meath Sessional Crown Prosecutor who will be better able to discharge the duties belonging to such office?

MR. TREVELYAN: I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to repeat this Question on a later day, as I have not yet received information on the subject from Ireland.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BELFAST WORKHOUSE SCHOOL—ASSAULT ON A PUPIL.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a newspaper report of the proceedings of the Belfast Police Court, of the 10th instant, in which Constable Walsh summoned Mr. John Spratt, a schoolmaster in the Belfast Workhouse, for seriously assaulting a pauper pupil of his school, named Corr, who is only eleven years of age; if it be true that the constable who made the complaint, the boy Corr, Dr. Aicken, and Dr. Corry, were all examined, and testified to the brutal nature of the assaults; the medical evidence particularly setting forth that twelve wounds were still visible on the lad's body, from some of which the blood had flowed freely; if it be true that the presiding magistrate, Mr. Gaffikin (who is also a guardian, and originally ordered Corr to be flogged), dismissed the complaint; is it true that there are twelve other boys in the Workhouse schools who were similarly treated at the same time, and whose cases have not undergone investigation; and, will the Local Government Board retain Mr. Spratt in his situation?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that the prosecution in this case was undertaken by order of the District Inspector; and the magistrates, after hearing the evidence, dismissed it. The presiding magistrate was not Mr. Gaffikin, but Dr. Browne; and he announced the decision. Mr. Gaffikin, who sat with him, is an elected Guardian, and is one of a number of Guardians who recently ordered corporal punishment to be inflicted on several boys for insubordination; but he did not, as alleged, order the boy Corr to be flogged individually. From the Reports submitted to me by the Local Government Board, it appears

that the matter has been specially investigated by the School Committee of Belfast Union. There has been a great deal of insubordination in the school, which rendered corporal punishment necessary. Corr was punished for disorderly conduct, and using very violent language. The punishment was carried out in accordance with the Workhouse Rules. The Committee examined Corr and other boys, and state that none of them present the appearance of having been severely punished. As the Guardians are giving the necessary attention to the state of the school, the Local Government Board do not consider their intervention necessary at present.

MR. BIGGAR: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that beating a boy until the blood flows from his back is within the Rules laid down by the Local Government Board?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Committee state that the boy was not severely injured.

MR. BIGGAR: The sworn evidence in the Court was that he was actually beaten until 12 bleeding wounds were visible.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SPELDHURST NATIONAL SCHOOL.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If his attention has been called to the following statements, made at a meeting of the Tonbridge Board of Guardians, with reference to the Speldhurst National School:—A labourer named Miles, an industrious man earning 15s. per week, with seven children to keep, had a son, nine years of age, at school, who had passed from the third to the fourth standard, and was sent home to procure 1s. 1d. for the books which he required. He was sent back with the message that his father was too poor to send the money. He was sent home a second time, but returned with the same message. Since then he had been to school regularly, but had simply to set on a stool all day without learning anything at all. The same man had taken three girls from the Speldhurst School because they were put to menial work, such as scrubbing floors, instead of being taught. The Chairman of the Board drew attention to the following Letter, addressed by the Schoolmaster to Mr. Miles, as follows:—

“Speldhurst, 18th May, 1884.

“The Master begs to inform Mr. Miles he does not refuse to take your boy at school, only that he cannot work any more than other boys or yourself without proper tools;”

and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the circumstances of the case, and will state if this is the same school which was some time ago brought under the notice of the Department with respect to the flogging of boys for attending a Mission Chapel?

MR. MUNDELLA: My attention has been called to the case referred to in the hon. Member's Question, and the managers of the Speldhurst School state the labourer Miles is in receipt of a much larger income than 15s. per week. In fact, that with his boy's earnings he is in receipt of 26s. 6d. and a garden allowance. They further state that they offered to accept payment for the books by an instalment of 1d. per week, which the parents refused to pay. They deny that the boy was neglected, and state that he was continually kept at work. The Department is of opinion that, having regard to the offer of the managers, there is no reasonable ground of complaint.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ACTION OF POLICE CONSTABLES AT ROSSLEA.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the result of the inquiry into the charges made, four months ago, as to the conduct of two police officers at Rosslea on the 13th of February; and, what is the explanation of the delay?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have not been able to identify with certainty the charges to which the hon. Member refers. If he will mention particulars, I shall have further inquiry made.

MR. HEALY: I must give the right hon. Gentleman credit for the promptitude with which he generally answers Questions; but I must say, at the same time, that when anything is asked as to the conduct of the police in Ireland—

[Cries of “Order!”]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE—EXCLUSION OF TENANTS OF ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General, If he is aware of any decision

whereby persons living in Artizans' Dwellings are excluded from the franchise, either as occupiers or lodgers; and, if so, will the Law in this respect be remedied?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he was not aware of any cases where it had been so decided in reference to artizans' dwellings as such, or in relation to any particular dwellings; but there was a case decided some three years ago which he thought did cover circumstances similar to those attached to artizans' dwellings. He thought there could be no doubt that such occupiers would be occupying tenants so as to be entitled to vote.

MR. HEALY said, it had been decided in Ireland that persons occupying artizans' dwellings were neither occupiers nor lodgers; and he asked the hon. and learned Gentleman if he would have any objection to make the matter clear by inserting a clause in the Representation of the People Bill?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) replied, that, of course, he had not searched the Irish Reports, and he was not aware of their decisions. He should speak to his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF MRS. COLGAN.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the result of the Government inquiries into the charges brought by Mrs. Eliza Colgan against Mr. Thomas Gerrard, Crown Solicitor, Queen's County, in the matter of the trust property of a deceased convict; how many years has the inquiry been proceeding; and, what steps do the Executive intend to take in the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, so long as over 13 years ago Mrs. Colgan, who certainly is much to be pitied, was informed that the Government could not interfere in it. Mrs. Colgan has repeatedly renewed her appeals to the Government; but it is impossible to give her any other reply. She has been advised that if she considers that she has any claim upon Mr. Gerrard, she should place her case in the hands of her legal adviser.

MR. HEALY: This was a trust property of a deceased person to which she succeeded to the title. Is it possible

that there is no way of obtaining redress from the Government for the poor woman?

MR. TREVELYAN: Unfortunately, the Government officer, the former Crown Solicitor, had also been acting in the capacity of her private solicitor when he took the action, which I think quite as strongly upon as the hon. Member. I am afraid there is no means of redress open.

THE MINT—ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPUTY MASTER.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, as Master of the Mint, Whether there is any objection to the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Deputy Master of the Mint being circulated amongst Members in the same manner as the Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Excise and Customs; and, if not, whether he will give instructions for the said Report to be delivered to Members as a Parliamentary Paper?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, that any Member who desired it could obtain a copy of the Report at the office for the sale of Parliamentary papers; but he was very unwilling to add to the quantity of papers circulated.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—BREECH-LOADING GUNS.

MR. M'COAN asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, Whether Lieutenant Colonel Hope, V.C. has offered to supply the War Office with 200 armour-piercing breech-loading "Hope" guns of the following descriptions:—

"100 of No. 1; a Gun of 7 tons in weight, and 18 feet in length, guaranteed to develop an energy per inch of circumference of projectile in excess of that developed by the 38-ton 'Woolwich' Gun, when fired with the maximum charge laid down in the Artillery Manual, namely, 160 lbs. of powder and a projectile of 818 lbs.:

"50 of No. 2; a Gun of about 17 tons in weight, and 23 feet 6 inches in length, to develop an energy per inch of circumference per projectile in excess of that developed by the 80-ton 'Woolwich' Gun, fired with its maximum charge of 425 lbs. of powder and a projectile of 1,700 lbs.:

"And, 50 of No. 3; a Gun of about 30 tons in weight, and 29 feet in length, to develop an energy of upwards of 1,000 foot tons per inch of circumference of projectile, which is in excess of the energy of any gun yet made, or known to be making, in any country in the world, or

about equal to that of an imaginary Armstrong of 150 tons :

"The prices to be, in round numbers, 60 per cent. less than the cost of the Guns they replace, or £1,550 for No. 1, £3,800 for No. 2, and £7,900 for No. 3 :

"The proof to be 10 rounds per Gun, composed of a solid projectile 5 calibres in length, taking the rifling so as to prevent any escape of gas, and a cartridge of powder, of not less than 15 calibres in length, all completely converted into gas within the Gun. The ammunition not to be paid for unless the Gun passes the proof; and no Gun to be paid for unless and until certified as passed;

whether Colonel Hope has also offered to accept any further conditions of trial which the War Office may desire to impose; and, in the event of any objections being raised to his Guns by either the Artillery or Naval authorities, to submit to the absolute and final arbitration of either General Lord Wolseley or the Under Secretary of State for War, with Professor Tyndall, F.R.S. as scientific assessor; and, whether these offers have been accepted by the War Office; and, if not, whether he will lay the Correspondence on the subject upon the Table of the House?

MR. BRAND: The statements that Colonel Hope, V.C., has offered to supply the War Office with 200 armour-piercing breech-loaders of various descriptions are quite correct; but I have to say that these offers have not been accepted by the War Office. Colonel Hope has been told that if he will construct a gun on his principle and submit it with ammunition to the Ordnance Committee, it will be tried and duly reported upon. The correspondence is in Colonel Hope's possession, and he is at full liberty to make such use of it as he may deem proper.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)— EMIGRATION OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

MR. CAINE asked the President of the Local Government Board, What number of children were emigrated to the Dominion of Canada in consequence of the Local Government Board's circular on the subject to the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians last summer; what reports have been received of such children, and whether the Local Government Board are satisfied with the official inspection of cases so emigrated; and, whether it is proposed to continue the emigration of pauper children; and, if so, will any limit of age be fixed?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The number of pauper children sent to Canada by Boards of Guardians during the season from May to August last year was 130, of whom 37 were from Metropolitan, and 93 from County Unions. No official Reports of the inspection of the children by the officers of the Dominion Government have as yet been received by the Board. The Board last month communicated with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the view of being furnished with such Reports. It is proposed for the present to continue the emigration of pauper children to Canada within certain limits. With regard to the age of the children, the Board have stated that, as a general rule, girls should not be sent out above the age of 10 years, and in no case, except under very exceptional circumstances, above the age of 12 years.

POISONOUS PATENT MEDICINES— LEGISLATION.

MR. WARTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, When the Bill for the prevention of the Sale of Poisonous Patent Medicines will be introduced in the other House, as promised on the 26th of March last?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Sale of Poisons Bill has been drawn, and the Lord President is in communication with the Lord Lieutenant as to its extension to Ireland. As soon as this point is decided the Bill will be introduced.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ADMIRALTY CAUSES.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON (for Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is in contemplation to make any further provision for the trial of Admiralty causes in the county of Lancaster; and, if so, what are the proposed provisions?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, that however desirable it might be to make an arrangement of the kind, no power for such a purpose existed at present.

INLAND REVENUE ACCOUNTS— BANKING FACILITIES.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, What amount of Revenue money the Provincial Bank of Ireland generally holds; whether any other Bank

in England or Scotland holds a similar monopoly; and, whether the Provincial Bank of Ireland facilitates the Revenue business by giving attendance of their clerks at the Revenue Offices in Ireland, similar to that given by the Bank of England and its agents, and by the Bank of Ireland at Dublin; and, if not, could he state the reason?

MR. COURTNEY: The Provincial Bank of Ireland holds, on an average, £35,000 of Inland Revenue money. In England the Inland Revenue accounts are kept with various banks; in Scotland by certain banks in rotation. The Provincial Bank gives every necessary facility for the receipt of Revenue money, the arrangements for paying in being the same in the Three Kingdoms.

ARMY—SANITARY CONDITION OF NAAS BARRACKS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Medical Officer of Naas Union with reference to the drainage of Naas Barracks; whether, in reality, there is no other outlet than the Rathasker stream for the present drainage of the barracks; and, whether, in view of the very serious risk to the public health of the neighbourhood from the continued pollution of a water course which affords the only drinking supply to a considerable number of persons, and which is proportionately greater in the hot weather, when the volume of the stream is less, he will give directions for an immediate abatement of the nuisance by the Military authorities, without waiting for the elaboration of any scheme common to the barracks and the whole town?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, the Report of the medical officer of the Naas Union had been brought under his notice. The drainage of Naas Barracks discharged into tanks, from one of which there was an overflow pipe leading into the surrounding soil, and from it the overflow water might possibly at times percolate into the stream. Orders had been given that the overflow should be at once stopped.

IRELAND—INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE—BARROW DRAINAGE.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Report of the Engineer of

the Board of Works in Ireland, with reference to the Barrow Drainage, has been delayed pending the completion of valuation to be furnished by Mr. Fitzgerald; and, whether, as that valuation is now complete, he will cause the Report of the Engineer to be laid upon the Table; and, if he can state the total expense of the preliminary inquiry?

MR. COURTNEY: The Engineer's Report cannot be completed except upon consideration of that of the valuator. When received it will be presented to Parliament. The preliminary inquiries are expected to cost about £1,700, half of which will be paid by the public.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND THE AFGHAN FRONTIER.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If Her Majesty's Government have received any official Report from India, giving an estimate of the numbers of the Russian forces now within striking distance of the Afghan frontier; and, if so, whether it is consistent with the public interest to communicate it to Parliament?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I need scarcely assure the hon. Member that the attention of the Government of India is directed to everything which affects the Afghan Frontier; and information has, of course, been received from time to time as to the Russian troops in that neighbourhood. But no such special Report as the hon. Member describes has been received from the Government of India; nor would it be consistent with the public interest to communicate information of this nature to Parliament.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—CORMEEN DIVISION, CORTEHILL UNION.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the reason of the difficulty interposed by the Local Government Board to granting a sworn inquiry into the late election in the Cormeen Division of the Cortehill Union, respecting which so much correspondence has taken place; and, if it is the fact that in a matter of much smaller public interest the Local Government Board granted a sworn inquiry, on the application of a County Court Judge (Mr. O'Connor Morris), as to the non-collection of rates on a particular holding? I understand now that an

inquiry has been granted; but it is very extraordinary that although the correspondence lasted over two months the inquiry was not granted until a Question was put in Parliament.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Local Government Board deferred ordering an inquiry into the Cormeen election, because they had not the necessary documents and information before them to enable them to decide whether such an inquiry was necessary. It was only a day or two ago that they received sufficient *prima facie* evidence in support of the demand for an inquiry; and instructions will now be issued. With regard to the other matter referred to in the Question, the Board ordered the inquiry into the charge made by Mr. O'Connor Morris against a rate collector, because there appeared to be grounds for the complaint made. They have the Inspector's Report on the inquiry now under consideration.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—MOUNTMELICK UNION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, at the meeting of the Board of Guardians of Mountmellick Union on the 17th May last, the following Resolution was proposed and seconded, and that the Chairman, Colonel H. D. Carden, refused to receive it, or put it to the Board, viz.:—

"That the attention of the Local Government Board be called to the following facts:—

"That Mr. Mathew S. Cassan, prior to the last election of Guardians in Mountmellick Union, lodged a claim to vote out of property situated in Kylecolmanbane electoral division as owner of said property, and voting papers were issued to him on the strength of said claim. At the scrutiny of votes, Documents lodged in the Court of Lunacy were produced and submitted to the returning officer, in which Documents Mathew S. Cassan declared that he had no right, title, or interest in said property, that he was virtually and in reality a pauper;

"The returning officer, on perusal of said Documents, disallowed the votes of the said M. S. Cassan;

"That the Statement of Claim made by Mathew S. Cassan appears to be knowingly and wilfully untrue, and in direct contravention of the law;

"We call on the Local Government Board to hold a full inquiry into same, so that proceedings may be taken against Mathew S. Cassan under Section 12 of General Order dated 26th January 1852, in order that he and others may

be deterred from making false claims in future, and so interfering with the purity of elections;"

whether the Chairman was acting within his right in refusing to put the Resolution; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be held by the Local Government Board into the conduct of this ex-officio Guardian?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that at the meeting of the Mountmellick Board of Guardians, a Resolution as quoted was proposed and seconded, and that the Chairman (Colonel Carden) refused to put it. He did so because he thought it was the duty of the Returning Officer, and not of the Board of Guardians, to deal with the matter referred to in the Resolution. The Local Government Board think that Colonel Carden would have been right in putting the Resolution; but there is no reason to suppose that he did not act *bona fide*, and according to his judgment in declining to do so, and I see no ground upon which I could cause an inquiry to be instituted by the Local Government Board as suggested.

ARMY (ARMY RESERVE)—CASE OF JAMES CUSHLEY.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, If the following complaint is well founded:— That James Cushley enlisted, in August 1850, in the Artillery, and served the regulation period of twelve years; that on the 3rd January 1863, he was enrolled in the Army Reserve, under War Office Circular 514A, of 9th December 1859; that, after serving in the latter force for sixteen years, and having only one year more of service to make up for the full pension, he was, on the 8th January 1879, informed by the Staff Officer at Magherafelt that he was dismissed; that he had never undergone any medical examination previous and with a view to such discharge; that, on application to the War Office for a pension, he received a reply to the effect that he was

"Discharged for physical unfitness before having completed the equivalent of twenty-one years' service, and therefore not eligible for any pension under the gratuities;"

whether he will inquire whether, as a fact, the man was perfectly fit for the service at the time; and, whether he will quote the authority under which a Staff Officer of Pensioners can, of his own discretion, discharge an Army

Reserve man (not an enrolled pensioner), so as to deprive him of a claim to pension twenty-nine years after his original enlistment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In 1878 a Regulation was made for removing from the strength of the Reserve men who were physically unfit for duty. At the time it was not observed that such a Rule could not be made applicable legally to men enrolled under the Reserve Act of 1859, and when this was found out the discharges of such men were cancelled in all cases which were brought to notice. The case of James Cushley was not brought to notice; but as it clearly comes within the same Rule steps have now been taken to cancel his discharge in 1879, and to re-discharge him at the time when his service will count as 21 years. He will thus become entitled to pension.

**PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND)
ACT, 1882—EXTRA POLICE—ARDAGH,
CO. LIMERICK.**

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the district of Ardagh, in the county of Limerick, is quite free from crime or outrage; and, if so, why extra police were sent there; and, to what account has the cost of those police been charged?

MR. TREVELYAN: The district named is free from actual outrage; but it has been considered necessary to strengthen the police-station by two constables for special patrolling for the protection of a gentleman whose life is believed to be in danger. The extra men are a part of the county force and are chargeable as such, and not to the district of Ardagh.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—YEOMANRY RIOTS AT LICHFIELD.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the riotous and disorderly conduct of the Queen's Own Royal Staffordshire Yeomanry at Lichfield on Friday and Saturday last; and, whether he has ordered an investigation?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have received a Report from the Inspector of Auxiliary Cavalry, who was ordered by the General Officer Commanding the District to investigate the

statements which had appeared in some of the newspapers with reference to these occurrences. Lord Ralph Kerr states that as regards the rioting in the streets, and the insubordinate conduct on the part of the Yeomanry, the statements were greatly exaggerated. The Mayor of Lichfield has forwarded to the various newspapers a Resolution, passed at a large meeting of citizens, to the effect—

“That this meeting desires to express in the strongest possible manner its opinion that the reports which have appeared in the newspapers of to-day and last night of serious riots and disturbances in this city are grossly exaggerated, and ought to be contradicted without delay.”

The Inspecting Officer reports that on his arrival he ordered a Board of Officers to examine and report on the alleged rioting between the citizens and the Yeomanry. The finding of the Court is that they

“Are of opinion that there was no riot, as alleged, and that the whole disturbance was confined to what occurred between trooper Smith and the man Ginns, and the attempted arrest of the former.”

I am not, however, satisfied that the extraordinary charges made in the newspapers have been fully and sufficiently investigated, especially as to the alleged conduct of some of the officers of the regiment, and I have directed a further inquiry to be made into the matter.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: Will the noble Marquess also inquire whether, during the Yeomanry week, the magistrates contributed to the peace of the town by allowing the public-houses to be open longer than usual?

ORDNANCE SURVEY.

SIR HENRY HUSSEY VIVIAN asked the First Commissioner of Works, When the remaining maps of the county of Glamorgan on the 6-inch scale will be issued to the public?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Glamorgan sheets will be all published during the next 12 months, excepting about six, which contain portions of Monmouthshire.

**THE WEST INDIES—ISLAND OF
PATOS.**

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, when the Foreign Office proposed to Venezuela the cession of the Island of Patos, they had been informed

by the Colonial Office that that Island was the property of the Crown; whether recent Despatches have shown that it belongs to the Borough Council of Port of Spain; and, whether, irrespective of that question, Her Majesty's Government will now drop their negotiations for the cession of the Island, and inform the Government of Venezuela that it must either fulfil its Treaty obligations and grant redress for all wrongs already inflicted on British subjects, or it must submit all the questions in dispute to the arbitration of a neutral Power?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not understand my hon. Friend to raise any doubt as to the territorial Sovereignty of the Island of Patos being vested in Her Majesty. The recent despatches contain no new information as to the ownership. There never was any doubt at the Colonial Office as to the ownership of the Island being vested in the Council of Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad, and not in the Crown. The Island is known to have been granted by the former Rulers of Trinidad to the Borough Council; but this cannot affect the question of territoriality. In regard to the negotiations, I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave on April 29 last; and I then stated that in regard to the Island of Patos, Her Majesty's Government had confined themselves to informing the Venezuelan Government that, should the other questions in dispute be satisfactorily settled, the wishes of the Venezuelan Government in regard to the Island would receive a favourable consideration.

UNITED STATES—MR. SHELDON, A BRITISH SUBJECT.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has called the attention of Her Majesty's Minister at Washington to the circumstances under which Mr. Alfred Sheldon, a British subject and a native of the borough of Salford, was carried off from his home in Kansas six weeks ago, and for whose release a sum of 14,000 dollars is, together with other conditions, demanded by persons to whom, in letters to his friends containing no indication of the place of his detention, Mr. Sheldon refers as "the Committee," and by whom he states he

is threatened with death if these terms be not complied with?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; in consequence of a communication from Mr. Sheldon's family, instructions were sent by telegraph to Mr. West, on the 4th instant, to inquire into this case. Mr. West has replied that he has acted in the matter; but that some time must elapse before a Report can be received.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)— FARNHAM WORKHOUSE.

MR. BROADHURST asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Canon Hoste, the Chaplain of Farnham Workhouse, has objected to visitors to the workhouse conversing on religious subjects with inmates belonging to the Church of England, and also to some of the aged paupers meeting for Bible reading and prayers without his consent; whether the Guardians have issued prohibitory orders in compliance with the chaplain's request; whether complaints on the subject have proceeded from any other quarter, and whether the practices complained of have in any way interfered with the necessary discipline of the workhouse, or led to any other objectionable result; and, what steps have been taken by the Local Government Board to prevent such an infringement of religious liberty?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The Chaplain of the Farnham Workhouse brought under the attention of the Guardians the fact that young lady visitors visited the wards and conversed upon religious subjects with inmates belonging to the Church of England, and that tracts had been left for the inmates, which he regarded as an interference with his duties, and that some of the men met in an unused ward for the purpose of praying and reading the Bible, the meetings being led by an aged inmate. The Board understand that the Guardians decided that visitors to the workhouse should not be allowed to go about the wards for the purpose of religious conversation, but should confine their visits to the particular inmates whom they came to see. They also negatived a proposal that an arrangement as to the inmates meeting together for Bible reading, &c. should be permitted. But they ordered a supply of large-type Bibles, and directed that every

inmate who wished it should have one for his own use. The Board are not aware that complaints have proceeded from any other quarter, or that the practices complained of have in any way interfered with the necessary discipline of the workhouse. The Board, when their attention was drawn to the matter, suggested, for the consideration of the Guardians, whether it was desirable to prohibit the meetings for Bible reading provided that they were held at times which did not interfere with the arrangements and discipline of the workhouse; that due regard was paid to the proper classification of the inmates; and that precautions were taken that undue pressure was not brought to bear upon inmates who did not desire to be present to secure their attendance. The Guardians, however, declined to alter their decision; and the Board, on the 14th instant, addressed to them a further communication, in which they expressed their regret, and pointed out the inexpediency of prohibiting these meetings if the conditions they suggested were complied with. They, at the same time, urged the Guardians to reconsider the matter.

ARMY (INDIA)—RETIRING PENSIONS.

GENERAL FEILDEN asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Is it the fact that the leave restrictions with reference to retiring pensions retained by the late Secretary of State for India in his Despatch No. 407 to the Viceroy of India, dated 8th December, 1881, are found to impede the retirement of Officers of the Indian Army, and to induce them to serve on for the highest rate of pension, thus burdening the Service with superfluous Field Officers, and throwing a heavy prospective charge on the people of India; and, is it in contemplation to take steps to facilitate the acceptance by Officers of the Indian Army of the pensions fixed in the above-named Despatch?

MR. J. K. CROSS: There is no information to show that a relaxation of the conditions of service for pension would induce officers to retire on the lower rates of pension. The general effect of such a relaxation would probably only be to give a few officers who have obtained an excessive amount of leave their pensions earlier than they should receive them. It is not proposed to make any change in the existing Regulations.

Sir Charles W. Dilke

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—COLONEL DIGBY, J.P., WESTMEATH.

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What decision have the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland come to as to the prosecution of Colonel Digby, J.P., Westmeath, for attempting to defraud the Land Commissioners by making false declarations in connection with the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Act?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Law Officers have advised that the case is one in which a bill should be sent up to the Grand Jury at the next Assizes.

ARMY — BANTRY BAY — FORTIFICATIONS OF BERE ISLAND.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Her Majesty's Government have decided to give up the fortifications on Bere Island, commanding the entrance to Bantry Bay; what is the reason for this decision; why, if these fortifications are given up, those on Whiddy Island, at the head of the Bay, eighteen miles from the entrance, are to be retained; and, whether he can lay upon the Table any Reports or Correspondence on the subject?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Bere Island and the obsolete works upon it are to be abandoned, because the site is not considered to be one suitable for modern works of defence. Whiddy Island, being suitable as a site for such works, will be retained. The communications on the subject are regarded as confidential, and I cannot lay them on the Table.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)— RUMOURED FALL OF BERBER.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that Berber was stormed by the Mahdi's troops, and the garrison and male population put to the sword, owing to the failure of ammunition for which the Governor urgently asked on April 23rd?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There is no information received at the Foreign Office which would enable me to give an answer to the Question asked by the hon. Member. The latter part of

the hon. Member's Question seems to me rather a matter of debate.

EGYPT—DRINK SHOPS IN ALEXANDRIA.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to a Report that has been sent from Alexandria by Mr. Tuffnell, manager for Miss Sarah Robinson; whether it is not the case, as stated by Mr. Tuffnell, that several soldiers at Alexandria are undergoing terms of imprisonment ranging up to two, and in some instances three, years for no real crime, but only for drunkenness; whether many of the drinking establishments at Alexandria are kept by low-class Maltese, who sell to the soldiers stuffs of a horrible nature purporting to be English drinks, and whether the men are not thus drugged rather than intoxicated; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will cause some inquiries to be made as to the cases of those men, who are undergoing such severe punishment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There is no information on the subject at the War Office; but inquiries will be addressed to the General Officer Commanding in Egypt.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—THE BROTHERS DELAHUNTY.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the dying declaration of Patrick Slatery has been submitted to the Judge who tried the case of the "Queen v. Delahunty and brother;" and, if so, whether the learned Judge has expressed any opinion upon its bearing on the case?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the declaration has been submitted to the Judge, and it is at present before him.

FRANCE—GAMBLING AT MONTE CARLO.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the statement in *The Times* of 18th June that, after the stay of Her Majesty at Mentone, Lord Lyons was directed to make representations to the French Government as to the gambling at Monte Carlo, and accordingly did so, is correct; and, whether, if

so, he will lay upon the Table of the House all Correspondence upon the matter; whether Her Majesty's Government is aware that at Nice, Vichy, Aix-les-Bains, and other places in France resorted to by those in search of health or amusement, establishments where gambling is permitted are a source of public revenue, and whether it is contemplated to make representations to the French Government, or to any other Government, in regard to this matter; and, whether any representations have been received, either from the Government of the Prince of Monaco or from any other Government, in regard to the facts that race meetings take place in some part of the United Kingdom almost every week in the year, which are attended by men called "book-makers," who are professional betters, and where public gambling is carried on with the full knowledge and assent of the Police?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; the statement quoted in the 1st paragraph of my hon. Friend's Question is entirely incorrect. The Foreign Office would be going beyond its proper province if it was to make representations about gambling tables in France; and the same observation would apply to the Foreign Office of the Prince of Monaco if it was to make representations about race meetings in England.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD: Is it beyond the province of the Government to make inquiries with respect to the gambling establishment now in existence at Port Said?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That is not a matter arising out of this Question.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—CYCLISTS IN THE PARKS.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether there are any reasons why, in the concessions which he contemplates making to cyclists with respect to Regent's Park, Battersea Park, and Victoria Park, the use of those parks should be allowed to those only for purposes of traffic, and not for purposes of exercise; whether, if so, he will inform the House what these reasons are, and what is a purpose of traffic in contradistinction to a purpose of exercise as applied to cycle riders; whether he will put himself into communication

with the ranger or rangers of the Royal Parks of the Metropolis, and with the ranger of the Royal Park of Richmond, in order to see whether it is either impossible or inexpedient to allow cyclists to use them at such hours and under such conditions as would not interfere with the use of them by those taxpayers whose means enable them to drive in carriages; and, whether he will especially consider whether it will be possible and expedient to permit cyclists to use the carriage road along Constitution Hill, which is maintained at the cost of the taxpayers, but from which all public vehicles, and the private carriages of almost all taxpayers, are excluded?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The deputation which I received on this subject a few days ago represented the great body of cyclists all over England. They informed me that a majority of their body saw grave objections to the opening to cyclists of Hyde Park and the other Parks not specified by them. They also stated distinctly that what they desired was the right of passing through Victoria, Battersea, and a certain part of the Regent's Park; and that until a general Act was passed regulating the use of velocipedes they did not desire to seek any further extension of the privilege which, in the absence of such regulations, they foresaw might be attended with inconvenience to the general public. After careful consideration, I conceded all that they asked, and this, I think, is as much as can be expected, or is desirable at the present time.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked whether the deputation represented the cyclists of the United Kingdom, and not those of the Metropolis?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, they represented the whole body throughout the United Kingdom.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SCOTCH BILLS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has any reason to hope that the Bill to establish a Secretary for Scotland, of which nothing has been heard for some weeks, will reach this House before the Session is very far gone; and, whether, seeing that both the Grand Committees are now without work, Her Majesty's Government will propose to refer the Scotch

Bills pending in the House either to these Committees, with additional Members, or to a Scotch Committee substituted for one of them, or will otherwise devise some mode of dealing with them?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The first part of this Question is one which I have some difficulty in answering. When that particular Bill will reach this House from the House of Lords I cannot undertake to say. I am sorry that the Bill has not been gone on with in the House of Lords. I suppose the press of Business there interferes with its progress. As to the second Question, I do not think that if the hon. Member had made himself acquainted with the position of Scotch Bills he would have put the Question on the Paper. There are three Scotch Bills before the House—the Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill, which has been referred to a Select Committee; the Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Amendment Bill, which is down for Committee to-day, unopposed; and the Universities (Scotland) Bill, which is awaiting a second reading. It is obvious that it is quite impossible to refer any of these Bills to a Grand Committee. They are in a favourable condition for passing, and I only wish the English Bills were in an equally favourable position.

REVISION OF JURORS AND VOTERS LISTS (DUBLIN COUNTY) BILL.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the cause of the delay in proceeding with the Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill?

MR. TREVELYAN: The want of a suitable opportunity prevents me from pressing the Bill forward. On the last occasion when progress was made with the Bill the House was counted out.

MR. HEALY: The Bill has now escaped the Half-past 12 o'clock Rule, and can be taken up at any hour, if the Government so desire.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the following statement appears in the tabulated records of the Registrar General, relating to the

death of the daughter of a glass packer on 1st June, at 82, Southam Street, Kensal Town, W.:—

“This is the second death in my practice within a week, the cause of which was produced from pressure at a Board School.

“(Signed) W. H. BORHAM, M.D.;”

and, whether he has any reasons to believe Dr. Borham's statement to be without foundation?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have had no Notice of this Question, which appeared for the first time on the Paper this morning. I should not venture to express any opinion on Dr. Borham's statement until the cases have been fully investigated and reported upon by the London School Board, to whom they have been referred.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: Has it not been already inquired into by the right hon. Gentleman's Department?

MR. MUNDELLA: Some inquiry has been made; but the whole case has gone to the School Board for their investigation.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—HOME LESSONS IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether in consequence of the Judgment of the Court of Appeal, that a master of an Elementary School has “no authority to impose upon children the duty of studying at home,” he will revise the revised instructions to Inspectors by withdrawing from them that portion of Clause 51 in which it is declared a school marked “excellent” ought to provide “a regular system of home exercises?”

MR. MUNDELLA: I see no reason to modify the instructions. All the Judges decided was, that a child could not be detained against the will of the parent in schools because it had not prepared its home lessons. But this does not prevent managers and teachers from providing a regular course of home lessons for children in the higher Standards.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: If a parent refuses permission to a child to learn home lessons, does the right hon. Gentleman still think that the authorities are justified in punishing the child?

MR. MUNDELLA: As I understand home lessons are not obligatory upon a

child; and, therefore, the child ought not to be punished for not learning them. At the same time, I do not think that one parent in 1,000,000 will object to home lessons.

MR. RAIKES: Will the right hon. Gentleman take any steps to indicate what he has just stated to the School Boards throughout the country?

MR. MUNDELLA: It is not necessary to do so. The School Boards are very well aware of the fact already.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, with reference to the presentation of the Education (New Code) Instructions issued to Her Majesty's Inspectors, and applicable to the Code of 1884, by Command, the said Paper was presented in the form of a blank sheet of paper?

MR. MUNDELLA: In order to save time and to secure an early distribution, I presented to the House the printed title page only of the “Instructions;” but they were actually in type at the time. The printing rests with the Stationery Office, and the circulation with the Vote Office, and I understand they will be delivered to Members to-morrow morning.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

MR. W. LOWTHER asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, If it is a fact that there were only forty-three diseased animals in England on the thirteenth instant; and, whether measures could not be taken for destroying these forty-three animals, and thus stamping out the cattle disease?

MR. CHAPLIN asked, Whether, having regard to the extremely limited number of animals which still remain affected with foot-and-mouth disease in Great Britain, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to exercise the powers vested in the Privy Council for their compulsory slaughter, and to give full compensation for the same?

MR. DODSON: It is a fact that according to the Returns on the 7th of June, not on the 13th of June, there were only 43 diseased animals in England—that is, animals affected with foot-and-mouth disease. On the 9th of June there was the Return of an outbreak among a flock of sheep in Lincolnshire, and on the 12th of June an

outbreak amongst cattle in Kent. Up to the present time 369 animals have been reported affected with foot-and-mouth disease; 338 are sheep, and the remainder cattle. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire will see that the number is not so very limited. Most of the Local Authorities in the various districts already possess powers of slaughtering if they choose to exercise them; the others can obtain them. The Privy Council have power to direct the authorities to slaughter the animals, and to grant compensation out of the rates. The Privy Council are watching these Returns very closely.

MR. JAMES HOWARD: Would it not be possible to estimate the cost of slaughtering these animals?

MR. DODSON: It would be easy to put an estimate on them, though if the disease got among a herd of pedigree cattle the case might be different.

Afterwards,

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether, seeing there are only by the last Returns forty-three animals in the Country suffering from foot and mouth disease, the Privy Council will not take measures to have those animals slaughtered, and thus have the United Kingdom free of this disease?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, that a Circular had been issued some time ago to Local Authorities calling attention to the matter.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY: Three months ago, or recently?

MR. DODSON: Less than three months ago.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—CREW OF THE "NISERO."

MR. STOREY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has any certain information as to the condition of the crew of the *Nisero* later than up to the 31st of March; whether it is not possible to arrange for news from the men of the *Nisero* at reasonable intervals, so as to relieve the dreadful suspense into which the families are now plunged; and, whether the Dutch Government have taken any practical steps to secure the release of the men of the *Nisero* since the failure of their ex-

pedition in January; and, if so, what steps?

MR. BROGDEN inquired whether there was not reason to believe that the repeated inquiries for information in this House as to the safety of the crew of the *Nisero* were not in a very short time communicated through Penang to the Rajah of Tenom, increasing the difficulties both of the Dutch and English Governments, and being calculated to enhance the dangers of the captive crew?

MR. STOREY: In regard to the Question just put, would the noble Lord state, if it is so very easy for the Rajah of Tenom to receive news of what passes in this House, why was it so difficult to obtain news from the Rajah?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In answer to the first Question of the hon. Member, I will say that there is no information later than that contained in the telegram from the Commander of the *Pegasus* of May 20, which will be found at page 8 of the recent Blue Book. A letter was received by Her Majesty's Consul at Olehleh, from Mr. Crichton, late chief officer of the *Nisero*, dated April 26, complaining of the bad quality of the food supplied to the crew by the Rajah; but this was anterior in date to the delivery of the further supplies of food to them through the *Pegasus*. There are difficulties in the way of communicating with the coast of Tenom, owing to the difficulty of landing during the southwest monsoon; but every endeavour will be made to do so as frequently as possible, and arrangements are being made with the Colonial Office and the Admiralty for that purpose. In answer to the Question of the hon. Member for Wednesbury (Mr. Brogden), I say that it is no doubt true that it is probable that the Rajah of Tenom has means of knowing what passes here in regard to this subject; and as to the danger to the men, no doubt premature threats would increase their risk. I may point out to the hon. Member for Sunderland that information is conveyed to the Rajah by his friends across the Strait; but we have no similar means of obtaining information from him. In answer to the third Question of the hon. Member, I understand that an extra credit of £125,000 has been proposed in the Netherlands Chamber for the purpose of strengthening the Dutch Naval Forces in Acheen, and enabling the authorities

in Acheen to undertake further military operations, should all other means of effecting the release of the crew fail.

MR. STOREY: I wish to know whether it is not correct that the Dutch Government have been attempting to get these people out by employing Acheenese who are unfriendly to the Rajah; also, whether Mr. Maxwell has not informed the Government that the Dutch are going to do so, and that he had little faith in the success of such efforts, which he thought were calculated to endanger the lives of the captives? I wish to know whether Her Majesty's Government have made any protest against this action?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The course adopted by Her Majesty's Government is set out in the despatches contained in the Blue Books. I may, perhaps, point out that as Her Majesty's Government throws the whole responsibility, as it is entitled to do, upon the Dutch Government in regard to the position of these persons, who are upon Dutch territory, it would be exceedingly difficult for Her Majesty's Government to object too strongly in regard to those measures which the Dutch Government, on full consideration, think to be the only means of extricating the captives. Nevertheless, communications have passed in regard to these steps; and, so far as I understand the information which has reached Her Majesty's Government, the £125,000 is not intended to be used with regard to the measures alluded to by the hon. Member in regard to pressure on the neighbouring Chiefs.

MR. STOREY asked how it was proposed to spend this money? In other words, was it proposed that the Dutch should send another expedition?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Dutch Government has not actually settled the details of the measures to be taken; but Her Majesty's Minister at The Hague has been informed that details will be left very much to the advisers, civil and military, of the Dutch Government on the spot; and I think that, on the whole, is wiser and simpler.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE ESTATE BILLS.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in pursuance of his statement on August 7th 1883, that with regard to Private Estates Bills—

"We ought to look to the aid of the House of Lords, for these Bills are made the subject in the House of Lords of a regular reference to Judges. From that source we may possibly obtain some assistance which will be a guide to the House of Commons, and which, at any rate, will secure our giving due attention to these important measures. Probably the attention of my noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor has been called to the subject, and I am sure he will be ready to consider whether anything can be done in that direction."

Her Majesty's Government will propose, by a new Standing Order, that a report shall be made to the House in the case of Private Estate Bills containing provision for extending the term or the area of any settlement of land?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have had an opportunity of considering this matter, and I think it desirable that a Standing Order should be adopted, and that a Report should be made to the House in the case of Private Estate Bills containing provision for extending the term or the area of any settlement of land.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—THE SHIP "EGMONT."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the case of the ship *Egmont*, recently sold in a Salvage Court in Wexford under the provisions of the existing Merchant Shipping Acts; whether the following facts in connection with this case have been brought under his notice:—

"On the arrival of the *Egmont* in Wexford South Bay the crew refused to work the pumps, a slight leak having been discovered, and practically mutinied;

"The captain, who was also the owner, was consequently obliged to hoist signals of distress;

"The Rosslare Coastguards took possession of the ship, and compelled the captain to leave her;

"Finally, the ship and cargo having been secured, two magistrates, viz., Mr. E. S. Flood, J.P. and Mr. Kennedy, R.M. were appointed nautical assessors to adjudicate upon the various salvage claims. Their assessments were so high that, on the ship and cargo being sold, the proceeds barely satisfied the claims and expenses of the Court, and the owner, Captain Lynch, for no fault of his, but owing to the misconduct of his crew, finds himself now stripped of the whole of his property, and cast adrift on the world;"

whether there are frequent cases of the appointment as nautical assessors of magistrates unacquainted with nautical pursuits; and, whether this is a case in which the Board of Trade can take any

action with the view of mitigating the apparent injustice done to Captain Lynch, and securing more suitable assessors in future cases of a like character?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The information which has reached the Board of Trade officially with regard to the *Egmont* is as follows:—On February 15 the *Egmont* was handed over to the receiver of wreck at Wexford by the salvors, nine fishermen, the vessel having been deserted. The crew obtained a decree against the master for £20 on account of wages due, and seized and sold some of the sails to meet the amount. The salvage case was brought before the local magistrates, who awarded the salvors the sum of £65 5s. 9d. against the ship. The owner was unable to pay, and his vessel was consequently sold, realizing £101, the balance, after payment of the award and expenses, being claimed by the mortgagees of the vessel. I have no information which would tend to confirm the allegation of the hon. Member that the Coastguard at Rosslare took possession of the ship and compelled the captain to leave her. The question of salvage was heard by the local magistrates under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, which enacts that disputes with respect to salvage where the claim is under £200 shall be referred to two Justices. It is erroneous to say that the magistrates were appointed nautical assessors. They acted under statutory authority; and the Board of Trade have no power either to review their decisions or to express any opinion as to their efficiency.

SUPERANNUATION ACT—CLERKS IN THE ADMIRALTY AND WAR OFFICE.

SIR THOMAS CHAMBERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has had under consideration the increased charge on the Pension List that will arise from the compulsory retirement of efficient clerks, at the age of 60, in the Admiralty and War Office?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): My right hon. Friend has requested me to answer this Question. The retirement of clerks at the age of 60 is within the contemplation of the Superannuation Act; and if all retirements took place at that age, there is no reason to think that the increase of the aggregate charge

for pensions would, under ordinary circumstances, call for the special attention of the Board of Treasury.

EGYPT (THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION).

MR. BOURKE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What measures the Government are adopting for the protection of Upper Egypt?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My right hon. Friend has requested me to answer the Question. Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the British Forces now in Egypt, with those of the Egyptian Government, are sufficient for the protection of Upper Egypt against any danger which is at present likely to menace it. I do not suppose that the right hon. Gentleman desires to receive information as to the details of military measures which may be under consideration; but I may state that some time since—in fact, immediately after the defeat of General Hicks's force—projects for the defence of Upper Egypt against external attack were drawn up and carefully considered by the military authorities in Egypt. Up to a recent time the command and disposition of the Khedive's Army has been entirely separate and distinct from that of the British Force in Egypt. We have not, therefore, full and complete information, either as to the composition of the Khedive's Army, or as to its disposition in various points in Egypt; even if it were considered desirable, which it probably would not be, to give full particulars on those subjects. Recently, however, in order to avoid any risk of confusion, and to concentrate responsibility, instructions have been given for arrangements being made with the Khedive's Government to place the supreme command over, and general disposition of, all the military forces in Egypt directly in the hands of the General commanding the British troops, who is, of course, an officer senior in the British Army to Sir Evelyn Wood, who commands the Egyptian troops. We shall, therefore, henceforward be in possession of fuller and more complete information with respect to the arrangements that may be made, or that it may be considered necessary to make, for the defence of Egypt, and for the disposition of all the military forces in the country; but it is not probable that it

will be considered desirable to state in detail what those arrangements may be.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: Do I understand the noble Marquess to say that the military authorities in Egypt are of opinion that the forces in Egypt are sufficient to guard against any attack, or is that the opinion only of Her Majesty's Government?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: We have received no representation from any of the military authorities in Egypt that the forces there are insufficient for the protection of Egypt.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Has the noble Marquess made any inquiry on the subject?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: If the right hon. Gentleman wishes to know whether the question was directly asked whether General Stephenson thinks the forces at present at his command sufficient for the defence of Egypt, I do not think it has been put to him in that form; but we were in communication with him, and he would express his opinion if necessary.

MR. GORST: Will the British General Officer who is in command be entirely independent of the Egyptian Civil Government?

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: Will this new arrangement involve the right of the English Commander to take the Egyptian troops into the Soudan, contrary to the terms of their enlistment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In reply to the last Question, I do not understand that the General Officer commanding the troops would have any authority to remove the troops to the Soudan without the authority of Her Majesty's Government. As to the Question of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), I conceive that the responsibility for the military defence of Egypt will rest henceforward upon the General Officer commanding the troops. As to whether he will be entirely independent of the Egyptian civil authorities, I have no doubt he will consider it right to act in concert and communication with them, and that in any matter of difficulty he will refer home for instructions.

THE SUEZ CANAL—NEUTRALIZATION.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the fact, as stated by the French

papers, that a Conference is to be held on the subject of the neutralization of the Suez Canal; and, if so, whether any preliminary arrangements that may be made with France on this subject will be submitted to the House before such Conference is held?

MR. GLADSTONE: With the permission of the House, I will postpone answering this Question, which has essential relation to the statement I am to make on Monday, until that day arrives.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) BILL—THE SAVINGS BANKS FUND.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the recent exchange of £4,000,000 in Three per Cent. Consols, belonging to the Savings Banks, for £4,000,000 in Two and a-Half per Cent. Stock, coupled with a twenty years' terminable annuity, equivalent to the difference of £11 7s. 6d. per £100 between the prices of the stocks, with an addition of £2 per £100 to secure the Commissioners from loss, Whether, seeing that the receipt of £100,000 interest on the Two and a-Half per Cent. Stock, and of £16,050 as interest at three per cent. on £535,000, the amount of difference for which the terminable annuity is issued, leaves a loss of £3,950, he will take any, and what, steps to compensate the Savings Banks Funds administered by the National Debt Commissioners for this loss of income?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): I am sorry that when my right hon. Friend asked me a Question on this subject without Notice in Committee on the National Debt Bill, I failed to explain to his satisfaction the nature and effect of the transaction; but I hope to have better success now. The conversion of Three per Cent Consols held by the Post Office Savings Banks Fund into Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock was commenced by the Prime Minister in 1863; its object was not to leave the Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners, but to broaden the basis of that Stock in the hands of the public in anticipation of some future larger conversion. All I did in the Acts of 1883 and 1884 was to carry out this policy, the Stock available for conver-

sion in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners having been exhausted. I may repeat that the Act of this year was only introduced to make clear an expression (about which doubts had been raised) in the former Acts. The financial result, so far from being unfavourable to the Post Office Savings Banks, has been highly beneficial to them. Of the £4,000,000 of Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock recently taken with the annuity in exchange for Three per Cent Stock, £1,160,000 have been sold, and the gain of capital to the fund has been £20,156. If the balance, £2,840,000, be sold at the price of this day, the additional profit would be £80,053; or the total profit in the shape of increased capital to the Post Office Savings Banks Fund will be £100,209. If my right hon. Friend still fails to understand these details, I shall be happy to explain them to him personally.

ARMY QUARTERMASTERS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Army Quarter Masters would be allowed, as a body, to petition the Government for the redress of their grievances, as all other attempts to get them redressed seem to have failed?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, it would be contrary to the custom and Regulations of the Service, and would be strongly disapproved of as inconsistent with the spirit of discipline which ought to prevail in the Army, if quartermasters as a body petitioned Government for redress of their grievances. On the other hand, any officer or soldier who may consider himself aggrieved can appeal individually, through his military superiors, to the Secretary of State for War with the certainty that his case will be fully inquired into. The position of quartermasters has, during the last few years, been fully considered, and much has been done to improve their emoluments and rank both while serving and on retirement. I cannot admit that as a body they have any reasonable cause of complaint.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, with reference to the statement he has made as to the communication which he intends to make to the House on Monday, will

it be made in such form as to enable observations to be made upon it if necessary?

MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly, Sir. It is my intention to make a short explanation in laying Papers on the Table on Monday; and I shall take care that it shall be made in such a way as to enable observations to be made, in so far as occasion shall arise.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman when the Papers to which he alludes, and which he intends to present on Monday, will be in our hands?

MR. GLADSTONE: They will be in the hands of Members, I have not the least doubt, on Tuesday morning.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. GLADSTONE: I was in hopes that we should have closed the Committee on the Representation of the People Bill on Tuesday, so as to be able to take the Report stage to-day. I understand it is not unlikely that it may not require the whole of this evening's Sitting. In that case we shall proceed with the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. If the whole of this evening's Sitting should be occupied with the Committee on the Representation of the People Bill, the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill would stand as first Order for to-morrow; but supposing the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill to be disposed of to-night, we should then propose to place the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill, which has been waiting for some time, as the first Order for to-morrow, and we should put down the Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases Bill as the second Order, and the Elections (Hours of Poll) Bill as the third.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: When is it proposed to take the Report of the Representation of the People Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE: I may say at once that I feel we could not fairly ask the House to take it to-morrow; and we shall, therefore, put down the Report stage of the Representation of the People Bill for Monday.

ORDER—RULES OF DEBATE—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I wish, with the indulgence of the House,

to make a personal explanation. On Tuesday the Prime Minister made this serious charge against me. He said—

“The hon. Gentleman is incessantly making grossly inaccurate statements, which he coolly ascribes to me.”

I immediately rose and asked the Prime Minister to give an instance in which I had quoted him inaccurately. I then quoted the precise words he used on April 24, and asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he really considered he was justified in stating that I had grossly misquoted him? The Prime Minister then repeated his charge in these words—“Yes, Sir, I do say so, both to-day and yesterday.” [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] Now, I felt I could not allow so serious a charge to pass unnoticed. I therefore asked the Prime Minister, by letter, whether he would be so good as to state what was the substantial difference which, in his opinion, existed between the expressions I attributed to him on Monday and Tuesday, and the words which he actually used? I have received to-day a reply from the Prime Minister, in which he neither proves nor explains the charge he has made; but he makes this additional statement. [“Read!”] I am going to read. This is what the Prime Minister says with regard, to use his own words, “to what it was that required notice in my method of proceeding.” His statement is classified under four heads—

“First, citation so inaccurate as to materially vary the sense; second, this erroneous citation delivered positively as if notorious and beyond question; third, and introduced into a Question put to another person, who could not have proper means of correcting it; fourth, and this in two cases on two successive days.”

And the Prime Minister adds—

“As you justly observe, you did, after exception was taken, read an actual report of the words.”

Well, Sir, I feel no one can really compare the words in which I first summarized the Prime Minister's statements with his precise words subsequently quoted, and say that they were “erroneous” and “inaccurate,” and that they “vary the sense,” or in any way substantially differ from the words he actually made use of. I venture to think that the reports of the Prime Minister's utterances in the public Press and in *Hansard* are “notorious and beyond question.” The

two Questions put to him on Monday and Tuesday arose out of replies by another Minister on the same subject. The first was addressed directly to the Prime Minister himself, and the second to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his presence. Had the Prime Minister deemed it necessary to ask Notice of these consequential Questions, they would, of course, have been postponed. I will read to the House the original words in which I summarised the statements, and the precise words in each case which I subsequently quoted when my summary was challenged. On the 17th I said—

“The Prime Minister gave information to the House on a previous occasion that the fall of Berber would not seriously affect the safety of Khartoum.”

The precise words used by the Prime Minister on April 24—and I have carefully verified these words by examining the reports in the newspapers and in *Hansard*—were—

“We believe, according to all the information we possess, that there would be no essential change in the position of Khartoum in consequence of that change in the position of Berber.”

On the 16th I asked—

“If the Prime Minister withdraws his statement that there is not the slightest risk of the garrison of Berber meeting with the same fate as that of Sinkat?”

The right hon. Gentleman having been asked, on April 24—

“Whether there is any danger that the garrison of Berber may be subjected to the fate of the garrison of Sinkat?”

said—

“We have no reason to believe that there is any risk to Berber of any such thing.”

I think it right to say that one report phrases it “of any such catastrophe.”

I now leave it to the judgment of the House to say whether there is any practical difference in the language in which I first summarized the statements of the Prime Minister and his actual words, which, in both instances, I immediately quoted to the House; and whether there is any justification for the Prime Minister's charge that I had made a “grossly inaccurate statement” of his expressions. I beg to thank the House for the indulgence with which they have listened to me. I felt bound to notice so grave an accusation, coming from one of the high position and power

of the Prime Minister. I repudiate most emphatically the charge he has brought against me, and I protest against it as baseless and unjust.

MR. GLADSTONE (after receiving from the hon. Member the documents from which he had quoted) said: If the hon. Gentleman had been kind enough to give me Notice that he was going to make this statement, I should have taken care not to have troubled the hon. Member for his Papers.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I did give Notice. I wrote to the Prime Minister.

MR. GLADSTONE: I received the Notice as I came into the House. Did the hon. Member send his Notice to Downing Street?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: No; I left the letter here.

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member left it here, and it was put into my hands as I entered the House to transact my business; and that is what the hon. Gentleman calls giving me Notice. I must notice an expression used by the hon. Gentleman two or three times. He speaks of what he chooses to call "summarizing" my statements in a certain manner. There was no question of summary or summing up my statements. They were citations—supposed citations of the few words I used, and were supposed to correspond with them.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: From memory.

MR. GLADSTONE: From memory says the hon. Member; but if this thing is done from memory it should be done in such a way as should raise fairly the question between us. These citations of the hon. Member are made, not with reference to elicit information, but they are made as parts of argumentative Questions, and sometimes made in parts of argumentative Questions, not addressed to me, but addressed to other persons, Members of the Government. That I think to be a most inconvenient practice, and is one that ought to be discouraged. The declarations of Ministers in this House are always held to carry a great responsibility with them. That being so, when they are cited by hon. Members they should be cited with corresponding accuracy. The hon. Gentleman is of opinion that he has made his citations with substantial accuracy. I am of opinion that

he has not, and that he greatly varied the sense of what I said. I will take one of the cases that he has mentioned. [*Laughter.*] This is not a thing to be laughed at; but that is another matter. I am reported to have stated to the House—and I have no doubt that the report is substantially accurate—that we had no reason to believe that there was any risk of a massacre of the garrison at Berber. This statement the hon. Member in his Question the next day converted into a positive statement on my part that there was not the slightest risk of such a massacre occurring. My statement was as to what was our opinion and belief, founded upon an examination of the facts that had come to our knowledge, and that statement the hon. Gentleman converted into a categorical assertion; and, having so perverted the meaning of my words, he says that there is no difference between my stating that to be our opinion, and my stating it as a fact beyond all question. I leave this matter, therefore, to the judgment of the House. In my opinion, his version and my statement most seriously varied one from the other, and this indicates a carelessness of habit on the part of the hon. Member which I hope he will not cultivate in future.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I wish, Sir, to put a Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the right hon. Gentleman rise to a point of Order?

MR. J. LOWTHER: Yes, Sir. I wish to ask a Question of the right hon. Gentleman arising out of the answer which he has just given.

MR. SPEAKER: Then I am bound to say that there is no point of Order involved. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) has offered a personal explanation; and as the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has answered the statement made by the hon. Member for Eye, I do not think that the matter ought to go further. There is no Question before the House.

MR. BROADHURST rose, and was called upon by Mr. Speaker.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I have no wish to continue the discussion; but I merely wish to ask a Question. [*"Order!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: I have already settled the point of Order. No question of debate can arise out of the explanation of the hon. Member for Eye and the

reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I wish, Sir, to ask you a Question upon a point of Order. When you were standing in your place, and called upon the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) the hon. Member rose, and the right hon. Member for North Lincolnshire still remained standing in his place; and I wish to know whether it is not the fact that Mr. John Dillon, a former Member of the House, was named and suspended by your Predecessor in that Chair for committing the same offence? I venture to submit that the breach of Order committed by the right hon. Gentleman came clearly under your observation.

MR. SPEAKER: It was clearly an inadvertence on the part both of the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member. I regarded it purely as an act of inadvertence.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. BROADHURST: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, Whether he can give the House any assurance that the final stages of the Representation of the People Bill shall be completed before the Government offers any facilities for the discussion of any special question?

MR. GLADSTONE: It is our intention to proceed with all the despatch we can in disposing of the final stages of the Representation of the People Bill; but I think that the time for answering the Question of the hon. Member has not arrived.

MR. FIRTH: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, when the Government propose to resume the consideration of the London Government Bill?

MR. EDWARD CLARKE: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I should like to ask him when the second reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill will be taken?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the last Question, I have to state that I have not had any communication with my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade leading me to think that the time has come for naming a day for the purpose indicated. With regard to the London Government Bill, our anxiety with regard to that measure has not in the least degree diminished; but it would be idle for me at the present moment to enter upon the question until we can

form some judgment as to what will happen on the closing stages of the Representation of the People Bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 119.]

(Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 17th June.*]

[ELEVENTH NIGHT.]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

New Clauses.

New Clause:—

(Commencement of Act.)

"This Act shall commence and come into operation on the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five,"—(Mr. Henry H. Fowler.)

—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. LEWIS moved to amend the clause by substituting "1886" for "1885." He wished to draw the attention of the Committee to the way in which the matter stood in reference to the coming into operation of the Act. It would be in the recollection of the Committee that the question had assumed a different aspect from that which it had in the earlier proceedings in Committee. Originally the proposal contained in the Bill was, that the Act should come into operation immediately after it was passed. The Amendment was proposed by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) to the effect that it should not come into operation until after the passing of a Redistribution Bill; but that Amendment was resisted by the Prime Minister, and rejected by the Committee. A further Amendment was then proposed by the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), when the Prime Minister intimated that he acceded to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which was now before the Committee. The result of adopting that clause would be that an

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election in January, 1886, might take place on the new franchise. He thought that that would be altogether unsatisfactory, especially to that side of the House, who were desirous of securing, as far as they could, that the Bill should not come into operation until a Redistribution Bill was an actual fact, and registration was possible and complete under its provisions. It was only for that reason that he proposed to amend the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton by inserting "1886" instead of "1885." He would not say that that would be altogether satisfactory to those who entertained the same opinions that he did; but it would mitigate the evil, and he thought they ought to have, at all events, some further explanation from the Government as to the practical course they intended to take, in order to make what they desired to effect by accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton actually appropriate. He had twice challenged the Attorney General, and he now did it for the third time, to supply this information. The hon. and learned Gentleman must be perfectly well aware that in the month of June next year, unless a Redistribution Bill had previously become law, the Government would be in a position of some difficulty in reference to registration. Unless they were to suppose that there would be under the Redistribution Bill next year no constituencies enfranchised or disfranchised, and no alterations made in the present county divisions, it would certainly be found that the same difficulty would exist as to registration that year with reference to the new constituencies. He had given the Committee his reasons for that on Tuesday, and it was not necessary that he should repeat them. It would be necessary to have some discussion upon the subject, especially after the extraordinary statement of the Prime Minister on Tuesday. The right hon. Gentleman, on that occasion, succumbed to the blandishments of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), who made a suggestion for clearing the way in regard to the settlement of boundaries. The right hon. Gentleman at first said that the Government had not decided or made up their minds that a Boundary Commission should be issued this year in order to

make the work of redistribution the more easy next year; but when the suggestion was followed up the Prime Minister made use of an expression which he imagined was rather a slip on the part of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that he intended to issue a Royal Commission this year.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Not for the purpose of settling boundaries.

Mr. LEWIS said, he understood it was still an open question whether a Royal Commission should be issued between this Session and next for the purpose of ascertaining and settling the boundaries. If the Committee would follow him for a moment, he thought he should be able to show that it was impossible to issue a Royal Commission, or any other Commission, for the purpose of settling boundaries between this and next Session.

Mr. GLADSTONE explained that the object of appointing a Commission would not be to settle boundaries, but simply to supply the Government with information.

Mr. LEWIS said, he might be extremely dull; but he thought that such an explanation only made confusion worse confounded. What information was a Royal Commission to set to work upon with reference to narrowing or extending the county and borough constituencies, or with reference to the disfranchisement of the existing constituencies, and the enfranchisement of new ones? If that was the object of their appointment, upon what principle would they proceed? Would it be in reference to populations, or to particular localities, or what? He thought the Committee were entitled to ask the Government for information, because this had been put forward as a practical argument; and he thought he was not asking too much when he desired to get at the real policy of the Government in reference to this so-called Commission. If it was merely to be the employment of Government officials for the purpose of obtaining information on which the Government were to make up their minds as to what sort of Redistribution Bill was to be brought in, it would save no time at all, because that information would not be of such an official and public character that it could be laid before the House. He would call the atten-

tion of the Committee to the course which was pursued in 1867 in reference to the Boundaries Bill. The House took the question of boundaries into its own hands; and in order to secure that the persons nominated should have judicial weight, and the confidence of the House, they were selected from both political Parties. He did not understand what was to be the result of all these deliberations in reference to boundaries, and the appointment of so-called Commissions; but, at all events, what passed on Tuesday made it the more necessary to delay the operation of the Act until another year, in order that they might not incur the difficulties which had been so often pointed out. He now ventured to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice—namely, that “1886” be substituted for “1885,” in order that they might not find themselves in a position of difficulty with regard to registration under the greatly altered circumstances when a Redistribution Bill had been actually passed.

Amendment proposed to proposed new Clause, to leave out the words “one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five,” and insert the words “one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six.”—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

Question proposed, “That the words ‘one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five’ stand part of the Clause.”

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot follow the hon. Gentleman into a discussion about the boundaries. I will only say that the object of collecting information would simply be to put ourselves in the best possible position as to our own judgment, and in order to afford information to the House before next Session arrives. In the proposal which the hon. Gentleman makes, he virtually revives the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), to postpone the operation of the Act for 12 months longer. Of course, it is scarcely necessary for me to say that the Government cannot accept that Amendment; but I would venture to make this observation—that the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland was fully discussed, and, as a matter of courtesy, was allowed to be withdrawn. The Committee will be well aware that if

that proposition had been negatived, instead of being allowed to be withdrawn, the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Lewis) could not have brought the subject forward again. When a proposition is negatived, it is disposed of; and, although the Amendment of my hon. Friend was permitted to be withdrawn instead of being negatived, we certainly believed that, as it had been largely discussed and substantially disposed of, it would not be revived again.

MR. LEWIS: Will the right hon. Gentleman pardon me? This is not the proposition of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey); but it is a proposal to substitute “1886” for “1885.”

MR. GLADSTONE: It is precisely the same thing, and is only a different form of expressing the proposal, that the voter should be entitled to be registered on the 1st of January, 1886, because the same thing would happen in either case, and the Act could not come into force until 1887. Under the circumstances the Government cannot accept the present Amendment.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman apprehended what was the real purpose of his hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman was distinctly understood, the other day, to indicate that the mind of the Government was open to consideration in regard to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the boundary question. The right hon. Gentleman subsequently rose and explained that if he had made use of the term “Royal Commission” he had been misunderstood, and that was a mistake, because the Government did not intend to appoint a Royal Commission; but they might appoint a Commission to inquire into the matter. That was the distinct statement made to Parliament—namely, that the Government had under consideration the question of the appointment of some sort of Commission, Royal or otherwise, for considering the boundary question. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] The hon. Member opposite contradicted him, but the Prime Minister did not; and after what had recently passed he should be careful how he attempted to summarize the observations of the right hon. Gentleman, for fear that he might be guilty of establishing that very serious difference

which they all knew to exist between "tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee." He should be most cautious how he did that; but he thought the right hon. Gentleman would admit that he was understood to say the Government had under consideration the question of the appointment of a Commission, not necessarily a Royal Commission, to consider the question of boundaries. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] As the Prime Minister did not contradict him, he assumed that he had the assent of the right hon. Gentleman to that statement; and, that being so, he would proceed to ask a question of the right hon. Gentleman as to what would be the duties of that Commission, Royal or otherwise? Would it be the duty of the Commission to investigate the question of boundaries in regard to non-existent constituencies? The right hon. Gentleman had explained his position with regard to that matter; and, as he understood the interruption of the right hon. Gentleman during the remarks of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), the Prime Minister now qualified what was understood to be his statement on a former day, and now stated that the Government simply intended to appoint a Commission for the purpose of acquiring information. But the right hon. Gentleman did not say, however, what that information was to be. He wished, therefore, to understand whether the right hon. Gentleman withdrew altogether from the cognizance of this hypothetical Commission the question of boundaries, which he was specially understood the other day to designate as the work of the Commission? This was a matter in regard to which the Committee would not unnaturally call upon the Government for some information. What were the labours of the Commission to be, and what was to be the scope and the nature of the duties assigned to them? Was it to inquire into the question of the boundaries of constituencies or not?

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the appointment of a Boundary Commission is not the Amendment before the Committee; but the Question is simply one in regard to the date at which the Act shall come into operation—namely, whether 1886 shall be substituted for 1885?

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he hoped he might be allowed to explain the way in which he proposed to connect the two. He had presumed the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to be in Order when he made the statement he had just referred to. If both of them were out of Order—

THE CHAIRMAN: The remarks of the Prime Minister were made on the Question of reporting Progress.

MR. J. LOWTHER begged the pardon of the Chairman. It was, no doubt, true that a further statement—a qualifying and explanatory statement was made by the Prime Minister on the Motion to report Progress; but the original statement, that it was the intention of the Government to appoint a Commission to inquire into the question of boundaries, was made by the right hon. Gentleman in the responsible position he occupied as First Minister of the Crown, in reply to the remarks of his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), and the subject then under the consideration of the Committee was the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), that a date should be fixed in the Bill, and that it should come into operation in January, 1885. It was not necessary, however, that he should follow up that matter further, so far as the point to which he wished to draw attention was concerned. He would proceed to say that the Prime Minister had indicated that the Committee should not throw upon the Government or upon Parliament the responsibility of wasting any time in connection with the subject of registration, and the preparation of the electoral lists; but he added that the time which must necessarily elapse before a newly-prepared list could come into operation would be utilized by Her Majesty's Government in the prosecution of an inquiry of the kind indicated. That was clearly the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman, and in that way it came regularly within the purview of his hon. Friend (Mr. Lewis). Of course, if the investigation which the Government proposed to make were likely to be somewhat prolonged, and they were to have the further period accorded to them by the proposal of his hon. Friend, it would not be necessary that he should go at any length into that point. He would, therefore, content himself with

asking the right hon. Gentleman to explain what really was the position he assumed on the part of the Government; and whether he had correctly understood him to indicate that the Government intended to appoint a Commission—he would not say Royal, or otherwise, but a Commission of any kind; and, if so, what he proposed should be the scope and objects of that Commission?

MR. GLADSTONE: It is the intention of the Government to consider by some form of Commission how to enlarge their information in the course of the Recess, for the purpose of bringing into effect a Redistribution Bill. Beyond that it is not in my power to go, because it would be anticipating the consideration of a matter upon which we have not yet entered.

MR. RITCHIE wished to point out to the Committee an argument which, he thought, was fatal to the proposal of his hon. Friend (Mr. Lewis). If the Amendment were carried, such a state of things as this might arise—that having passed a Franchise Bill enfranchising a large number of new voters, and having also passed a Redistribution Bill, an election might take place which would not come under the new arrangement, but under the old. Therefore, they might be in this position. They might have enfranchised a large number of new voters, and made all the arrangements necessary for the formation of new districts, and yet an appeal to the country might be made upon the existing condition of things. He thought it was only necessary to point out the anomalous position in which the country would be placed if such a state of things were to arise, in order to show the inadvisability of agreeing to the Amendment.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he was sensible of the difficulty which had been pointed out by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie); but what had never yet been explained to the Committee was the condition of things which might arise if a Reform Bill were passed, and an election were to take place under it without a Redistribution Bill. It was quite evident that when the Government elected to bring in their Reform Bill in two years, they had not sufficiently considered the provision that would be necessary in order to get the new franchise properly into operation. The Government had stated that their

object was to take steps by which the county representation should continue to partake, more or less, of its present character. How was that to be done in the course of next year, providing the Redistribution Bill did not receive the Royal Assent before the time for the ordinary conclusion of Business in the course of next year? His impression was that that measure would not receive the Royal Assent before the usual time—namely, the end of August. What, then, must be the position of the important business which must follow in the Revising Barrister's Courts? Provision must be made for it by some special Act of Parliament, for no Government would contend that it would come within the ordinary work of the registration of the year. Then, if the Government proposed a Registration Bill this difficulty would arise—that they would have to compress within two or three months a work which ought to require over five months to complete satisfactorily. He, therefore, thought it would be better to adopt the proposal of his hon. Friend. He did not think they had had anything like a full and clear explanation of the views and policy of the Government as to how they proposed to bring the new voters upon the Register in the new constituencies, forming parts of counties, extended boroughs, and so forth within two years, in conformity with the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). He did not think the Amendment of the hon. Member was sufficiently large and wide to apply to all these cases. At all events, unless the Government had some secret intention, which they had not yet disclosed to the House, and which, if they had, they had better disclose at once, he thought they could not do better than adopt the proposal of his hon. Friend, in order that they might see their way to the completion of a fair registration under a fairly drawn Redistribution Act as early as 1886.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that, as he understood the difficulty of the right hon. Gentleman and of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Lewis), it was this. The work to be done next Session would not be done in sufficient time to receive the Royal Assent, and to enable the first steps of registration to take place in the summer of next year, so that the

voter should be in possession of his vote on the 1st of January, 1886. His answer to that was to be found in the precedent which was set in 1868. In that year Parliament had practically to settle a Redistribution Bill, and had to confirm the Report of the Boundary Commissioners by stating the conditions both of the new boroughs and of the county constituencies. In the spring of 1868 Registration Act was introduced, it did not receive the Royal Assent until the 16th of July, 1868, a month later than they now were; and the registration was completed, not by the 1st of January, 1869, but by the 1st of November, 1868, and a Dissolution took place in 1868, the new election following upon it. Therefore, following strictly the precedent of 1868, and assuming that a redistribution, as wide as they liked, were passed next year—assuming any amount of disfranchisement and enfranchisement, there was not, in his opinion, the slightest practical difficulty; and, speaking as a practical man, he was satisfied that all the arrangements could be completed in sufficient time to allow the new Register to be made in 1885, and the new constituencies to vote in 1886. But he would go a step further, and would mention a point which he had not brought before the House at the time he moved his Amendment, but which was germane to the discussion—namely, that if they were to discuss a Redistribution Bill next year, it ought to come into operation not so late as 1886, but after November, 1885. Undoubtedly, if Parliament were dissolved in 1885, it would be a great calamity for the country to have a six months' election; and therefore it would be desirable, if possible, to make provision for a new election to take place in the Autumn of 1885. Whether that was so or not, there could not be the slightest practical difficulty in completing the registration next year, no matter what arrangement was arrived at.

MR. GORST asked the Government to inform the Committee what the nature of the measure they proposed to take next year for the purpose of completing the labours of the House in regard to the Franchise Bill would be. It was said that if the Government were to give them that information now it would facilitate matters; but he was afraid that if they did give it some of them

might quarrel with the Government for the information itself. He had risen to call attention to the very precedent which the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had just referred to, and he had intended to accompany it by the reflection that, after all, it was possible for the Committee to consider that what was done in 1868 might be done next year; but, in addition to the passing of a Boundary Bill in 1868, a Scotch Reform Bill was also passed on the 13th of July. Thus the House passed the very Act to which the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) had referred, and yet in that year the boundaries of no less than 80 English boroughs were altered and greatly extended, and the Divisions of several important counties were reconstructed, including West Somersetshire, and two of the Divisions of Yorkshire. Besides that, under the Scotch Bill, certain boroughs were thrown into the counties, and the voters were brought upon the county register; so that, in the first place, they had, in the boroughs, to add a considerable number of new voters, to construct several Divisions of important counties, to pass an Act framed in accordance with the Boundary Bill, and also to provide for a dozen English boroughs that were extinguished by the Scotch Reform Act. The whole of that work was completed by the 1st of November, and the election took place early in that month. He mentioned this fact for the information of the Committee. What was done then they could do now, provided they all assisted the Government in passing a good measure of redistribution next year. In that event, they would probably find no insuperable difficulty in getting out the new list, so that an appeal might be made to the new constituencies as early as November, 1885.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS trusted that his hon. Friend (Mr. Lewis) would not insist upon pressing the Motion to a Division. On a former occasion he had ventured to say, in reference to the Motions of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), that they were not worthy of occupying the time of the House, except that those hon. Members might have felt themselves called upon to obey instructions. The Bill would

have been got through last Friday if it had not been for pettifogging clauses of this kind, which were of no use to the Bill, and could be proposed for no other purpose than to occasion delay. Dilatory Motions were at times desirable; but as everybody wished to complete the Bill that night, and there was no other mischievous legislation, as far as he could see, on the Paper, the sooner hon. Members would proceed to withdraw these clauses, none of which were worth the attention of the House, the better it would be. Hon. Members opposite, by the Motions they had introduced, had thrown the Report over until to-day; and if they persisted in making similar Motions, they would throw it over again until Monday. Three Motions, coming from the other side of the House, had already added three days to the discussion of the Bill, and he thought that was quite enough.

MR. GRANTHAM said, the impression on the minds of hon. Members on that side of the House was that the Government had had no intention of following the precedent of 1867 and 1868 in regard to the immediate appointment of a Boundary Commission if it had not been for the suggestion of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). But the circumstances of 1867 and 1868 were very different from those of the present year. There was at present far greater work in store for the House than there was before them in 1868, and there was no question as to the completion of the Business of Parliament in 1867, although it was very doubtful whether the work they had now before them could be satisfactorily disposed of in 1884. What was done in 1868 was simply the carrying out and completing of what had been done in the year before. It would be most unsatisfactory if a Franchise Bill were to come into operation without a Redistribution Bill having been previously passed. That was admitted to be the great difficulty, and it did seem strange that all this time should be occupied—he would not say wasted—in fighting the question whether a particular date should be put in the Bill, instead of the words suggested on that side of the House—that the Act should not come into force until a scheme for the redistribution of seats had been passed. It was not merely a question

of the population of boroughs, but how they were going to arrange for the counties so that the voters, to be introduced by the new Franchise Bill, would be able to vote. Under these circumstances, although they quite admitted the difficulty of fixing on any year, he thought it would be much better to fix on 1886 than 1885.

Amendment negatived.

THE CHAIRMAN: The next Amendment, which stands on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce), will now be out of Order, as it was virtually decided by the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley). The Question now is that the clause be added to the Bill.

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

MR. HOULDSWORTH rose to move the insertion of the following Clause:—

(Extension of the seven mile limit in cities and boroughs.)

“So much of the twenty-seventh and thirty-second sections of the Act of the Second year of the reign of King William the Fourth, chapter forty-five, as relates to the residence of electors within seven miles of any city or borough, shall be repealed, in respect to electors otherwise qualified to be registered and to vote for Members in Parliament for such city or borough: Provided always, That no person shall be registered as an elector for the said city or borough, unless he shall have resided for twelve calendar months next previous to the fifteenth day of July, in any year, within the said city or borough, or within twenty-five miles thereof, or any part thereof.”

The hon. Gentleman said that, notwithstanding the advice which had been given by the hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. Thomas Collins), he would venture to move the clause of which he had given Notice; and, although it was not one of so exciting a character as some of those which had preceded it, yet he thought, especially to those concerned, it was of as great importance as many which had received the attention of the Government and of the Committee. The Committee would be aware that, as the law at present stood, the occupiers in boroughs who had an occupation franchise were not obliged to reside within the area of the borough in order to make good their claim to be put upon the Register, and to exercise the Parliamentary franchise. It was quite suffi-

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cient, in order to secure those privileges for them, that they should reside within seven miles of the boundary of the borough. That was a provision which was inserted in the Act of 1832, when the borough occupation franchise was introduced, and its intention seemed to have been perfectly clear. While, on the one hand, it asserted the principle that residence was to be a condition upon which the occupation franchise in the borough was to be exercised, on the other hand it gave a reasonable amount of elasticity to the definition of what residence really was in connection with the franchise, for the purpose of including among those persons in boroughs who were to exercise the privilege all those who were practically resident in the borough, although technically they might not sleep within the borough area. In the year 1832, and for many years succeeding, he had no doubt that this evident intention on the part of the Legislature had been fully and fairly carried out; and that there had been probably no boroughs in which genuine occupiers would not have had a good occupation franchise, and would not have been able to exercise the franchise when an election occurred. But matters in that respect had changed very considerably since the year 1832, and the consequence was that the condition of these boroughs was very different from what it was then. He was there to assert that at the present moment there was a very considerable number of occupiers who had a perfectly legitimate qualification for the franchise who were practically disfranchised by the seven mile limit, which was now in operation. Of course, the Committee knew quite well the circumstances which had arisen to produce that result; and he ventured to point out to the Committee what they were, and why they should not be held to be any reason for disqualifying these occupiers. It had arisen principally from the fact that the boroughs had increased very considerably, and owing to that increase, and owing to the industries taking possession very naturally of the centre of the towns, the residences of the occupiers had been gradually driven further and further away from the centre. On the other hand, co-incident with that change there had been a great extension of the railway system, which enabled occupiers who had business

premises in boroughs to live further away from the centre of those boroughs; although, at the same time—and he asked the Committee to remember it—they were not dissevered in interest from the boroughs, and were practically as resident within the areas of the boroughs during the daytime as they ever were when they slept within them. He was not in a position to give, with any degree of fulness or accuracy, the number that the seven mile limit at present affected, or the number that would be enfranchised if his proposal were adopted by the Committee, and the seven mile limit were extended to 25 miles. There was one source, however, from which he was able to get some statistics, which perhaps would assist the Committee in forming an estimate. In most of the boroughs a list was prepared annually—perhaps not in all of them, but in most of them—of those occupiers in the boroughs who lived within seven and 15 miles from the borough boundaries. The object of preparing that list was this—that, as the law at present stood, the qualification for municipal honours and municipal offices had been extended to 15 miles; and, therefore, there was a list supplied of occupiers within seven and 15 miles which gave some information with regard to those who resided within those limits. He found within all the boroughs that he had had access to that there were a certain number who lived between those limits; but he would only venture to give, as the basis of his calculations, those who were on the lists for Manchester and Liverpool. In Manchester the number living within the limit was 380, and in Liverpool it was 246. He might point out to the Committee, however, that these lists were not thoroughly full, although accurate as far as they went, because he found that there were several boroughs in which no such lists were kept; and he was informed that even in those boroughs in which a list was made out annually, no great trouble was taken on the part of those who were entitled to be on the list, to put their names upon it, simply because it did not entitle them to the Parliamentary franchise, and they had no particular object in placing themselves upon the list. But he had ventured, from these statistics, and taking into consideration that the position of

Manchester and Liverpool would probably be the same as that of Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, and possibly of Dublin in this matter, and of similar boroughs, such as Bradford, Sheffield, and others, to make a calculation which he thought was a reasonable one. From these statistics he was led to believe that if his proposal were adopted some 4,000 or 5,000 occupiers, who were at present disfranchised by the simple force of circumstances, and not by the intentional will of the Legislature, would receive a vote. Now, this was not entirely a novel proposition. In 1867 the Government of that day did not find any difficulty in dealing, in a large measure of justice, with a number of similar and subsidiary matters, and the consequence was that they acquiesced in and adopted a proposal made in that House to extend the seven mile limit, in the case of the City of London, to 25 miles. He had taken the wording of that clause, and it was the wording which he had put down for the clause which he now ventured to propose. He hoped the Government would sanction his proposal. It was not at all a question of Party. It would not affect one Party more than another, but it would affect both Parties in an equal degree; and he believed he should have the support of his hon. Colleagues who sat on the other side of the House. He certainly could not see that it would have any effect upon Party proportion either in that House or in the various constituencies, and it seemed to him to be in thorough harmony with the principle of the Bill the Government had introduced. They had introduced a Bill for the purpose of dealing justice, with an even hand, towards certain persons who were outside a particular arbitrary line which was drawn in 1867, and they said, very properly, that as there was a similar class of persons placed in precisely the same circumstances outside the area of the boroughs, who were in every respect the same, or, at any rate, similar in class to those within the boroughs, that as one had the franchise the other ought to have it also. He was quite willing to admit that he had never entertained any doubt whatever as to the justice and wisdom of that proposal. He had always heartily supported the assimilation of the household, borough, and county franchise on the broad principle that he could not see

any difference between the class of householders in the various counties and the borough householders in the various boroughs. The proposition he made was in thorough harmony with the principle of the Bill. At present there was an arbitrary line up to a certain limit. Outside that limit there were *bond fide* residents of the boroughs, men who were following their avocations and daily transacting business, not only performing their own business, but transacting civil and municipal duties in connection with the boroughs, and yet by the action of this hard-and-fast line they were practically disfranchised, while those who remained and slept within the seven mile limit, but who were in no other way practically more resident in the boroughs, had the privilege of the franchise. Now, he contended that that was an injustice which the Government ought to remove. His proposal did not seem to him to introduce any new principle. It did not raise any question of residence. He adopted the question of residence with regard to the boroughs, although he was free to confess that he did not see any reason, especially now an assimilation was to take place between the borough and county franchises, why the condition of residence should still remain. But, as far as his proposal was concerned, he accepted the principle of residence fully as it was adopted in 1867. It did not affect those who owned property, and it did not seem to him to introduce any principle which the Government might not fairly accept. It simply did this—on the ground that there were those who were *bond fide* residents within a borough, following their avocations within it by day, and connected with it closely by interest, by property, and by personal attendance day by day, and who yet, by the mere circumstance that they did not happen to sleep within a certain limit, were deprived of a vote, was an injustice which ought to be swept away by the Legislature, on an occasion when they were engaged in extending the franchise. He would further urge that the class of occupiers on whose behalf he was speaking were the very best class of citizens they had in the boroughs. They were, as a rule, the most educated class—a class who were calculated and able to lead public opinion, and who, probably, did most for the welfare and good of the

borough in which they practically resided. He had no doubt what the objection would be against his proposal, and it was the only objection he could conceive that could be brought forward against it—namely, that it would give to those who would be enfranchised under his clause two votes, whereas at present they had only one. His answer to that was simply this—that at present those who lived outside the borough area and within the seven mile limit had two votes, and that the class which he wished to see enfranchised, and who were at present disfranchised by the force of circumstances, would only be placed in the same position as those who resided within the seven mile limit. He thought that, if the question of having two votes was a serious objection to the proposition he made, it ought to be carried a great deal further, and the question of the possession of two votes should be considered in its entirety as to how it affected the various classes of the community. If two votes were not to be allowed, and the new principle was to be one man one vote, then let them adopt it after a regular and thorough discussion of the question; but do not let them, in the meanwhile, do injustice to a certain class of individuals, and the very best class of citizens in the boroughs, who devoted their daily leisure and their money to the benefit of the borough—do not place them in the position of being disfranchised, and, as far as the Parliamentary lists were concerned, keep them out of the exercise of rights that belonged to householders of very inferior position. Further, he maintained that if this objection against having two votes had any weight, it would be infinitely better that the occupier, connected as he was with the borough should lose his county vote and retain his borough vote. Another reason, which he would bring forward, was that the severance now taking place between the better class of occupiers in the borough and the lower class who still resided within the borough was becoming more and more a social question of very great importance; and it behoved the Legislature, whenever it could, to do all in its power to encourage the connection between the boroughs and the great mass of the people rather than to introduce and perpetuate any system which would make a greater disservice between them.

Mr. Houldsworth

There was one other argument which he would urge upon Her Majesty's Government in considering the question; and it was that, as far as he could see, his proposition would not introduce any new peril to the Bill, which he, for one, was anxious to see passed through both Houses of Parliament. He did not see that this proposal of his infringed any principle of legislation which could in any way imperil the Bill; but it would do substantial justice to a number of persons, amounting to at least 4,000 or 5,000, who would value the privilege conferred on them just as they felt a grievance in losing the franchise in these very boroughs. He would only add that if the Government would not accept the proposal, it would go very far to make him feel that they were not entitled to the credit of endeavouring to do justice to every part of the community in respect of the franchise—a credit which he, for one, had been hitherto glad to accord to them. He begged to move the clause which stood in his name upon the Paper.

New Clause (Extension of the seven mile limit in cities and boroughs).—(*Mr. Houldsworth*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. GLADSTONE: I hardly think the hon. Member himself can have considered the consequences of the Motion which he has made. In my opinion, it is one of the most objectionable that has been offered to us during the discussion of the present Bill. First of all, he proceeds to extend the number of persons residing beyond the limit outside the borough, who shall have the power of voting within it. Now, what is the history of this seven mile rule? The history of it is this—When it was proposed by the Government of Earl Grey, it was a question whether persons doing business in the borough, but sleeping outside its limits, should have a vote in returning Members to Parliament or not. In those days the county franchise was a freehold franchise, together with certain other qualifications; but I am now speaking of the way in which the seven mile rule came in. The seven mile rule came in because it was intended to prevent the evil of keeping without any

Parliamentary vote a great number of persons having offices and large pecuniary interests in a borough, but residing beyond its limits, and who would not, but for this provision, in consequence of residing beyond its limits, have had a vote either for the borough or for the county. That state of things has been done away with almost entirely, and almost all these gentlemen have votes already. Probably nearly all of them have a vote in the county, although it is possible that a portion of them have not. Our Bill, however, will give to every one of them a vote in the county. Secondly, the proposal of the hon. Gentleman is simply a proposal for the purpose of extending the principle of double voting. Now, what does the hon. Member say? He says that the principle of double voting is either good or bad; that it ought to be either universal, or it ought not to exist at all. I hope the hon. Member will not drive us to that alternative. If he does, he will certainly place us in a position of great difficulty. We have proceeded with the utmost tenderness towards the principle of double voting. We have done nothing to impair it; but I hope we shall do nothing to extend it. Has the hon. Gentleman considered what sort of change he proposes to make in what I may call the residential areas of the boroughs? Has he taken the pains to go even through a rule of three sum? Has he considered how much larger the residential area of boroughs will be under this clause than it is now? If his proposal is accepted the effect would be to multiply the areas 10 times over. If he will take pains to compare the superficial extent of a circle having a radius of 14 miles with the superficial extent of a circle having a radius of 50 miles, he will find that it would be increased by 10 times as nearly as possible, and for certain purposes all this great territory would form a portion of one great borough. How is this to operate? How is it to operate in Lancashire, where large towns are to be found at no great distances, probably not more than eight or 10 miles apart, all over the county? Gentlemen in a large way of business would have warehouses and establishments of more than £10 annual value in a number of towns, and for every one of them they would be enfranchised and entitled to vote under the clause of the hon. Gentleman. But

they are not resident in these towns, and the clause of the hon. Gentleman goes distinctly to weaken, and weaken very greatly, the residential character of the borough franchise. It is impossible for the Government to accede to such a clause. We conceive that the true basis of the whole representation is the household franchise. Now, the householder does not receive the slightest benefit from the Motion of the hon. Gentleman. His object is to increase the weight of that element which is completely different from that of the householder. First of all, there is the element of the £10 householder, who, after all, will represent in the main, after the passing of this Bill, the principle of property; then there is the principle of the householder and the head of the family, and, perhaps, another class of voters—the freemen. The hon. Gentleman proposes nothing in regard to the freemen, although with respect to them the Government have carried their Conservative tenderness in this Bill to the point of leaving them in full possession of their privileges. But I am not prepared to say that the voting power of the freemen should be extended by giving them permission to live within 25 miles of a borough and still to retain a vote. I do not think it necessary to follow the hon. Gentleman into all the details of his proposal. It would increase the residential areas of boroughs ten-fold. It would increase the weight of the property franchise directly in boroughs—it would weaken the residential character of the constituency, and it would double many votes. The hon. Gentleman says that the persons he proposes to enfranchise are quite as much residents as those who sleep within the borough. I question that. The hon. Gentleman knows a great deal about the city with which he is connected; but all of us know something about this question. And every man who has a connection with a borough, but who lives in the country, does not pursue business in the borough. There are a large proportion of individuals who have a great deal of leisure, some of whom go twice, or, perhaps, only once a week into the borough. These gentlemen cannot be regarded as residents, and the proposal would undoubtedly weaken the residential character of the franchise, which is the essential basis of our measure. Upon

that ground alone I am not prepared to extend the principle of double voting by new enactments introduced for that purpose, and I must object to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman. It cannot be permitted that any man should be at liberty to split up his property into 50 fragments, and have a vote in respect of every one of them. When the hon. Gentleman says it is a question of justice, my answer is that it is not a question of justice at all. The question of justice is to allow a man who is a competent citizen to have a vote for a Representative in Parliament; but he is not to be allowed to multiply his property by pieces and fragments as much as he likes. Our system is liberal towards property as it stands. We do not propose to interfere with the liberty which already exists; but we strongly object to this principle of multiplication.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman was so decidedly disinclined to entertain in any form the proposal of his hon. Friend. He thought the right hon. Gentleman could not have recognized the change which had taken place in the circumstances of the case in regard to the residential qualification for the enjoyment of the borough franchise. As far as the borough was concerned, it was the place where a man lived during the day, the place in which he carried on his business, where he exercised his influence, the place in which he was known, and was charged with all the duties of citizenship; but the effect of the present system was to disfranchise and exclude that man in the borough with which he was so thoroughly identified. They would have this curious anomaly, that under this Bill a man's servants—the people living in his offices and employed in his warehouses—would be enfranchised in the boroughs, while he himself would not have a vote for those boroughs. What was the practical value of the 25 miles sought to be attained by his hon. Friend as compared with the seven miles which had been the law of the land for many years? It was practically a really shorter distance in point of time from the borough than the seven miles were when the principle was first established. Nowadays a man who had business in a town and lived in the country passed to and fro—not once or twice a week, as the right hon. Gentleman supposed, but

every day. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] He was speaking from his own knowledge when he said that the great majority of traders in London, in Westminster, and in the large constituencies—the great majority of the most influential, and the most worthy, and the most respectable of those traders, had of necessity to pass from their offices in the evening to their homes at a much greater distance than seven miles in the country, returning the next day; and they did this, not twice a week, but, as a rule, five, and even six days a week. They were citizens to all intents and purposes. They slept in the county, but they were not identified with the county, and the county franchise to them was of comparatively small value. Their avocations were such that they could not record their votes in the county. In most cases men of business came into London, Liverpool, and Manchester on the morning of the election, and they did not record their votes for the county in which they resided. The greater the respectability and the responsibility of the trader connected with London, Manchester, Liverpool, Hull, Bristol, and other large towns, the more certain he was to be disfranchised as far as his place of business was concerned, notwithstanding the fact that his interests and his influence were linked together with those of the place in which he transacted his business. It certainly was a great anomaly and even a grievance that persons placed in this position should be denied the privilege of the borough franchise.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he never questioned the sincerity of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith); but he must express astonishment that the right hon. Gentleman should have manifested such earnestness, and refrained from proposing to extend the limit to 50 miles, in order that a large number of persons who lived in Brighton, and whose places of business were in London, might enjoy a Metropolitan vote. If the proposal of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) was to be entertained, he did not see why it should be limited to 25 miles. It ought to be 50 miles, so as to enable the persons to whom he referred to enjoy borough votes. The hon. Member said that he expected to receive the support of his Colleagues on that

side of the House. He had not the honour of being a Colleague of the hon. Gentleman, although he had a very sincere respect for him; but he was a next-door neighbour, and he would promise the hon. Member that he would not have his (Mr. Arnold's) support in reference to the clause he had submitted to the Committee. The Prime Minister, throughout the discussion of the Bill, had been absolutely consistent in declining to entertain any proposal for conferring a property vote. He (Mr. Arnold) entertained great objections to the further extension of that mode of voting; and, but for the desire not to occupy the time of the Committee unnecessarily, he should have desired to give expression to them. So far as this proposal went, he entertained the strongest objection to it, on the ground that it involved the extension of the property vote in the direction of non-resident voters in boroughs.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he had listened to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in reply to the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) with some surprise. He quite agreed that the proposal to increase the boundaries of the boroughs to the extent of a 25 mile limit would have been highly objectionable; but the Motion of the hon. Member was nothing of the kind, and only referred to those who were occupiers, but resided outside, and it involved no extension of the area of the borough whatever. He differed entirely from the right hon. Gentleman in regarding the borough vote as a household vote. It was an occupation vote. It was introduced because it was thought desirable that the occupier in a borough should have a vote; and at the time it was introduced, with the exception of the City of London, seven miles would cover the practical limit within which people who carried on business in a town were able to live outside the area of the town. But in consequence of the alteration in the principles of locomotion, by which a number of people were able to go away by train into the country, that limit of seven miles was altogether altered, and the seven mile limit might be said to be done away with altogether. As had been pointed out, a large number of persons who transacted their business in London resided in Brighton; but there was no other town in England

where the same relations existed as between Brighton and London. It was not only the class who desired to seek pleasure, or the mere wealthy class, who now lived outside the large towns. He had the honour of representing, in his constituency, a far larger number of the middle and lower classes who were employed in London and occupied daily in business in London than of the wealthy classes. Most of the merchants of the City lived outside the limits of the Division of the county which he represented (East Surrey); but so far as the clerks were concerned, a very large number of them formed a portion of his constituency, and if anyone would stand upon London Bridge from half-past 6 o'clock in the morning until 10 he would see thousands upon thousands coming in by train, the whole of whom would be excluded from the franchise in reference to their occupation if there were not a 25 mile limit in regard to London. That being the law for London, he thought it was hard that the suggestion of his hon. Friend should be treated as it had been by the Prime Minister in regard to Manchester, Liverpool, and some other large towns of that description. The 25 mile limit might be too great, and the majority of the occupiers in the large towns might be included within a less limit; but he certainly thought that some alteration of the existing system ought to be made if they were to maintain the principle that every occupier in a borough was entitled to vote. As to these persons enjoying the county vote, it was not so. He would take the case of Brighton, where certainly a great number of people lived outside the town; but very few lived just outside, and it was not until they got to Burgess Hill, Hossacks, and two or three places of that kind that they found any of the residents of Brighton living outside. The persons included by the adoption of this proposal would not be very large, and certainly the seven mile limit was of very little value in these days. Probably if they took a limit of 10 miles they would include most of the persons who, as a general rule, transacted business within the area of a borough and lived outside. It was absurd to say that if they extended the limit they would increase the residential boundary of the borough to the enormous extent suggested by the Prime Minister.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought the proposition which had been made by his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) was a very important one. He had, however, some diffidence in offering any observations upon it, after the warning hon. Members had received from his hon. Friend the Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), who had deprecated further discussion at that stage of the Bill. But while he could not agree with that suggestion, he could guess what was in the mind of his hon. Friend. No doubt he thought it was useless to discuss in detail a Bill which practical people felt had no chance of ever forming a portion of the law of the land. The Prime Minister said the Amendment was most objectionable. Why? Because the right hon. Gentleman said it would simply enfranchise what he called the leisure class of persons. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say it would enfranchise those who attended a place of business once or twice a-week, and he considered that to be most objectionable. He would not pursue that point further than by asking the right hon. Gentleman if he did not consider that, upon sanitary grounds as well as upon the grounds of mere justice, it was desirable to offer every inducement against the aggregation of large masses of persons within small areas, and to enfranchise persons who were virtually occupiers, but who resided beyond the limits of the borough. The right hon. Gentleman had not made any reference to the important precedent which had been quoted by his hon. Friend—namely, that Parliament had deliberately, with its eyes open, extended the provision, now suggested, to the City of London. He imagined that the right hon. Gentleman must have forgotten that fact, or it would have been almost disingenuous not to have referred to it. An hon. Friend near him suggested that it must have been a point which had received the support of the right hon. Gentleman himself, seeing that it was passed with the unanimous approval of Parliament, including the right hon. Gentleman himself, who at that time—1867—took so prominent a part in the debates. His right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had reminded the Committee that the circumstances under

which the franchise was now exercised with regard to residence had very considerably changed in the boroughs. His right hon. Friend pointed out that the development of the railway system enabled persons now to live at a considerable distance from their place of business, and here it was that the sanitary considerations he had referred to came in. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was as anxious as the rest of them to diminish the evils of over-crowding in the large centres of population, and he ought to be disposed to assist to the utmost of his power in inducing persons as far as possible to extend the areas within which they resided. Then on this ground—what he might call the sanitary point of view—as well as the ground of expediency, it was most desirable not to place any obstacle in the way of the legitimate extension of the borough areas. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the fact that freemen would be included in any possible extension of the boundaries as suggested by his hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman had reminded them on more than one occasion, certainly on one within his (Mr. J. Lowther's) recollection, that he was determinedly hostile to the very existence of the freeman. Well, the right hon. Gentleman recalled to their recollection that the freemen were for the present exempted from the general disfranchisement to which he was subjecting the wealthier classes. He thought that was a matter of which they ought to take note. For his own part, he had no desire to endorse the principle in any sense, and he should, therefore, give a cordial support to the clause.

MR. WARTON said, it would be in the recollection of the Committee that several Amendments which had been brought forward at the earlier stage of their proceedings had invariably been met with the same observation by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister—namely, "This is an Amendment which cannot be accepted." The proposal of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) was undoubtedly a proposal of enfranchisement; and if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was sincere in desiring to enfranchise capable citizens he could not understand why he refused to accept the clause, because certainly the

citizens proposed to be enfranchised under it were as capable as any in the country. People who carried on business in towns, and were able to live in the country, appeared to be very obnoxious to the Prime Minister, who evidently wished to bring the country as fast as he could to a dead level of democracy. He could not forget the 4th section of the Bill, by which a large class of persons had already been disfranchised—namely, those who were in the position of rent-chargers and tenants in common. Probably under that clause something like 10,000 capable citizens would be disfranchised. He really thought that the object of the Prime Minister was to give the franchise to as many incapable citizens as possible, and to disqualify as many really capable citizens as he could. Certainly, it would be impossible to find any class of more capable citizens than those which the proposal of the hon. Member for Manchester would enfranchise. And, again, it seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman was not quite happy in his calculation with regard to area. But it was not a question of area at all, because they would not find that the class of persons in question were equally distributed. They must remember the facilities offered by the railway; a gentleman who lived 25 miles from town could get up and down quicker than he could a shorter distance in his own carriage. But it seemed to him that the Prime Minister had chosen to ignore the changed conditions of life in this respect.

Mr. ECROYD said, this was a question of great importance to large and populous cities, and he was much disappointed that the Government had not seen their way to accept in its integrity, or in part, the Amendment of his hon. Friend. He confessed his inability to follow the argument of the Prime Minister, who spoke of his hon. Friend's proposal as one to extend the property vote. It was not a question of property at all; it was a question of occupation voting only; and seeing that the Government made occupation, and not residence, the test of the capacity to vote for boroughs, he did not see that it was open to the Prime Minister to base his argument on the question of residential occupancy as opposed to occupancy alone. If it was

a question of residence, the Bill ought to have rested on other grounds. It must be familiar to every Member of the Committee that in consequence of the demand for space in large cities, it had happened in London, Liverpool, Manchester, and other great towns, that the population formerly resident there had been driven, not of their own will, to live outside the city or borough limits, and the effect of suburban railways had been to extend the operation of this influence far beyond the wealthy class and the heads of large businesses of whom the Prime Minister spoke. It was well known that in all great mercantile cities there was a considerable body of shopkeepers, clerks, warehousemen, and others, by no means in a position of financial ease, but either carrying on small businesses or possessing a very limited interest in the large concerns they served, who, for the health of their families, had been driven to live beyond the limit of seven miles; and, in his opinion, it was a great grievance that they should be excluded from the franchise in the boroughs in which their interests lay. He considered it a great mistake on the part of the Government to refuse this very moderate proposal; and he should certainly vote with his hon. Friend if he went to a Division.

MR. WHITLEY said, he represented a constituency (Liverpool) largely concerned in the application of the principle contained in the clause. That was not the first time that the subject had been brought under their notice. For a long time past there had been a large number of citizens of every class who lived outside the town of Liverpool, to deprive whom of the vote for the borough would be to inflict a very great hardship. For his part, he entirely agreed with the argument of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) that, the main principle of the Bill being occupation, and not residential franchise, the clause should be accepted; and he could not help thinking that the Government took a very unfortunate view of the question. They seemed to look at every Amendment as affecting the rights of property; as if every proposal that came from that side of the House must necessarily lead in that direction; whereas the effect of their not accepting the Amendment would be, that a great number of clerks and others

employed in City business would be disfranchised. He was obliged to his hon. Friend for having brought this question forward, and that, too, in a way which ought to commend itself to the Committee. Therefore, in the interest of a large body of men, who, as the Bill stood, would be disfranchised, he should vote for the clause.

MR. HOULDSWORTH said, in view of the support which had been accorded to the clause, he should be compelled to ask the Committee to divide on the Motion for its second reading. The two main misrepresentations of the clause which had been laid before the Committee had been made by the Prime Minister, who said that it was in the interest of property. But it had no connection with property; it was a proposal to enfranchise, or, rather, not to disqualify, persons who were exercising the functions of householders—capable citizens, who, as the Bill stood, were disqualified. The other argument against the clause certainly did not coincide with his experience. He believed the Prime Minister was thinking of the Metropolis when he spoke of the labouring population; and he seemed to have forgotten that the Metropolis was specially privileged. But, as far as he knew the boroughs in question, and he was acquainted with every one of them, he believed that the number of the labouring class who would be disfranchised would be insignificant. The class for whom he claimed qualification were in every way entitled to the consideration of the Committee, and he found that in Manchester they contributed 60 per cent of the rates. He had always understood that representation and taxation went together; and on that ground he asked the Committee to divide on his proposal.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 38; Noes 137: Majority 99.—(Div. List, No. 125.)

DR. COMMINS said, the clause standing on the Paper in his name was one which he trusted the Government would see their way to accept, for it proposed nothing more than to carry out the principle of the Bill. There was a clause in the Act of 1832 which disfranchised everyone who received parochial relief, and which, at the time the Act was passed, was not an improper clause, be-

cause the number of persons who came within its purview was small as compared with what it was now. The laws of public health, which rendered hospitals of great importance, were imperfectly understood, and very few persons had recourse to them except paupers. Very few persons also had then recourse to dispensaries for relief. Since that time, however, an immense impulse had been given to the establishment of institutions in which relief was not only given, but pressed upon the people; and unless some provision were introduced into the Bill to prevent the clause of the Act of 1832 having effect, there would be a very large disfranchisement of persons otherwise entitled to vote. Again, under the Public Health Act of 1875 a large number of persons were obliged to have recourse to public hospitals whether they would or not, and those persons were simply pauperized for the benefit of the community at large. In a section of the Act of 1875, a magistrate might remove any person sick of a contagious disease to a public hospital under certain conditions; and that had been done in London, Manchester, Liverpool, and elsewhere. Whenever there was anything like epidemic disease, as there was at the present time in London and Liverpool, large numbers of people were sent to the parish hospitals by the magistrates' orders. There were 200 or 300 small-pox cases in the Liverpool hospitals at the present time; what the number was in London he knew not, but it must be very considerable. The object of the clause he was about to ask the Committee to read a second time was to prevent the clause of the Act of 1832 operating under conditions which were never contemplated when the Act was passed. They were all proud of the development of sanitary science; but the application of sanitary science and the gratuitous distribution of medical aid to those who stood in need of it under the circumstances he had described ought not, in his opinion, to carry with it disfranchisement. It was no longer ago than last Sunday that a collection of money was made in all the churches throughout the country which was distributed amongst the hospitals; and it would appear, from a statement published, that no less than 75,000 persons received medical relief within the non-endowed hospitals in London,

and that there were 900,000 persons who received outdoor relief. Now, according to the provision of the Act of 1832, every one of those persons would be disfranchised; and not only was a man disfranchised who himself received medical relief, but he was disfranchised if that relief were obtained for his wife or child. Again, in addition to this form of hospital relief, there was a very large system of parochial relief which was in operation in London, Liverpool, and the large towns. The parish authorities paid the doctors to attend at certain centres, and anyone applying there could get a bottle of medicine for 3*d.* This was not looked upon as alms, but the doctor who gave the 3*d.* worth of medicine was paid by the parish for his services, and by the law of 1832 every one of the recipients would be disfranchised; they had to go to the relieving officer who made out the relief tickets, and they were disfranchised *ipso facto*. That would apply to all who went to the hospitals subscribed to last Sunday, and, under the circumstances, would constitute a very great cruelty. Again, in all large towns, as was well known, there were large bodies of men, who sought employment in docks, manufactories, and similar places, constantly exposed to accident, and there was no place where their cases could be so properly attended to as the ward of a hospital. The consequence was they were sent to the nearest hospital, and it was quite right they should be, because, if they were not sent there, the injured persons would most probably die. Yet every one of these people would be disfranchised unless the clause which he proposed was introduced into the Bill. He said it would be a cruel state of things that a great army of operatives, who were liable at any moment to accident in our dockyards and factories, and who went to a public hospital for relief when an accident occurred to them, should be disfranchised; and, in his opinion, the persons so situated would have great reason to complain of the hardship. There were always a number of persons belonging to an unwholesome and mischievous class who went about seeking grounds on which they might disfranchise their neighbours, and these would make the fact of a man having received 3*d.* worth of medicine at a public dispensary either for himself,

his wife, or his child, a reason for objecting to him at the annual revision of the list of voters. The dissatisfaction which would result would, therefore, be another mischievous consequence of allowing the Act of 1832 to remain unaltered in the sense indicated by his clause. He knew it for a fact that in Liverpool, for instance, hundreds and thousands of men had been disfranchised in consequence of busybodies going about and discovering that voters had themselves been treated at public hospitals, or that their wives or children had received medical aid. Something ought to be done to check this mischievous and unwholesome activity, and to put a stop to this system of disfranchising men. There was just one reason more why the clause he proposed should be accepted by Her Majesty's Government. Under the Public Health Act of 1875, power was given to magistrates, upon a doctor's certificate, to send to hospital anybody who was suffering from an infectious disease. In every case the compulsory removal was for the benefit, not so much of the individual removed, but of the inhabitants of the court or alley in which the outbreak of disease occurred. Public officers could be sent to disinfect the house in which the disease had broken out, and this alone would be sufficient to cause the disfranchisement of the occupier of the dwelling. He asked the Government whether, in the interest of the public health, seeing that the Public Health Act imposed on people the necessity of accepting public treatment, it was not reasonable to prevent the disfranchisement of people who, through no fault of their own, were obliged to receive treatment at a public dispensary? He begged to move the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause (Medical aid not to disqualify voter).—(*Dr. Commins*),—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."—(*Dr. Commins*.)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member had made his statement very clearly, and put his case very well before the Committee. He agreed with some portion of the hon. Member's remarks; but, at the same time, he was unable, on behalf of the Government, to

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accept this clause, and he hoped the Committee would refuse to read it a second time. The hon. Member had almost confined his argument to the case of hospitals; and with regard to the town of Liverpool, he had, no doubt, made out a strong case in favour of the acceptance of his clause. But the clause was a very wide one; it covered every form of medical relief, and would prevent disfranchisement from medical relief of any kind. By so doing, he believed they would take away the greatest of all inducements which existed in this country to lead people to join Friendly and Provident Societies. Having said thus much against the clause, he could assure the hon. Member that he should be disposed, on behalf of the Government, to support it if he were to propose a Bill separately for removing some of the existing disabilities in reference to certain kinds of medical relief. Some action had been taken in this direction in the past. In the winter of 1878-9 a Bill was brought in by the present Member for Carnarvonshire, then Member for Liverpool (Mr. Rathbone), intitled "A Bill to remove disqualification by medical relief for infectious or contagious diseases." That measure, which passed the third reading in the House of Commons, proposed that no person should be deemed to be disqualified to be registered as a voter, or to vote at any election of a Member, or Members, to serve in Parliament for any county or borough by reason only that he, or any member of his family, or any person whom he was liable to maintain, had received medical treatment or relief for any infectious or contagious disease as an in-patient or out-patient of any hospital, infirmary, or dispensary established or maintained by any sanitary authority or Poor Law authority, or at which he had been so treated or relieved by the order or with the sanction of any such authority, or the medical officer thereof. The Bill was greatly altered in the House of Lords, and it was limited to cases where patients afterwards repaid the cost of their maintenance in hospitals. The promoters of the measure did not think that in that limited form it would meet the object in view; they refused to accept the Lords' Amendments, and the Bill fell to the ground. He thought the provisions of that Bill would meet the object the hon. Member

had in view; and if he thought proper to introduce a similar measure, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would be very glad, on behalf of the Government, to support it. There was a recognition of the principle, as far as infectious diseases was concerned, in the Municipal Corporations Act of 1882. Section 33 of that statute provided that—

"A person shall not be disentitled to be enrolled as burgess by reason only that he has received medical or surgical assistance from the trustees of the municipal charities, or has been removed by order of a justice, to a hospital or place for reception of the sick at the cost of any local authority."

That dealt with the cases of compulsory removal for infectious diseases. To show that the Government agreed with the principle, he might point out that on the Diseases Prevention (Metropolis) Act, which was passed last year in view of a possible cholera epidemic, a clause of that kind was inserted and passed by Parliament. Clause 7 of that Act provided—

"That the admission of a person suffering from an infectious disease into any hospital or hospital ship provided by the managers, or the maintenance of any such person therein, should not be considered to be parochial relief, alms, or charitable allowance to any person, or to the parent of any person, and no such person or his parent should by reason thereof be deprived of any right or privilege, or be subject to any disability or disqualification."

He might point out to the hon. Member that if he intended to deal with this subject in any future Bill from a medical or public protection point of view, there was one other matter which was not included in the present clause, and which might very well be included—he referred to the case of lunatics. If a man had a lunatic child admitted into an asylum, was the father made a pauper, and, therefore, disfranchised? The matter was doubtful; but the late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn seemed to say that a man would be disfranchised in such a case. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke), on behalf of the Government, would not object to an exemption being made in such a case. As the clause now stood, however, he could not consent to its insertion in this Bill.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that this clause would very detrimentally affect Friendly and Provident Societies. If

the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had been in the House, he felt sure they, as Members of the Friendly Societies' Commission, would have testified to the great importance of upholding the principle of self-reliance amongst the people. As he (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) worked as an Assistant Commissioner under those Gentlemen, he noticed in a most marked manner the evil influences of the Poor Law upon the poorer people. In the more rural districts of Leicestershire and Derbyshire it was seen that the Poor Law stepped in to help people who really ought to have helped themselves. Friendly Societies ought to be encouraged; but he felt that if the Committee adopted the clause of the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Commins), a great blow would be struck at such Societies.

MR. PELL said, he hoped the hon. Member (Dr. Commins) would accept the suggestions which had been made to him by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. They were very moderate suggestions, and they led him to hope that at some future time he would be able to give effect to his desire, at all events as regarded those persons who, in consequence of some infectious disease, had to be removed out of the position in which they would have remained had they not been attacked by such disease. With reference to what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley), he might state that the Friendly Societies in the Principality of Wales had made remonstrances, ineffectually, he was sorry to say, against the lavish way in which the Boards of Guardians of several of the Welsh Unions administered outdoor relief, especially in the medical department. The extension of Friendly Societies in Wales was seriously interrupted by this weak and injudicious action of the Boards of Guardians. He felt that one of the first steps many a poor man took in the direction of pauperism was the acceptance of medical relief of some insignificant nature. The Statutes were in accordance with the feelings of the people; and though he divided the House upon the third reading of the Bill of 1878, he felt that

a strong case had been made out for certain exceptions to be made to the present law. The hon. Gentleman (Dr. Commins) had gone a long way towards securing the acceptance of the principle he advocated; but he (Mr. Pell) did not think he would improve his case if he were to divide the Committee upon his clause.

DR. COMMINS said, his object had been to call attention to what he believed was a matter requiring a remedy. He had no doubt, particularly after the very handsome offer made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, that he would achieve his object without dividing the Committee on the present occasion. There were many cases in which it was necessary to protect people from being pauperized. In the case of explosions in mines, accidents on the railway, on board ship, in warehouses, and the like, it was often imperative to take the injured person to the nearest hospital; and he submitted that such a person was quite as much entitled to immunity from being pauperized as those who were compelled to accept relief under the provisions of the Public Health Act. He would not repeat what he had said; but he should be very glad to co-operate with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board in aiding the passing of any Bill which might be brought in to carry out the object he had in view. He would ask leave to withdraw his clause.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE suggested that the hon. Member should allow the clause to be negatived, lest it might be re-introduced.

Question put, and *negatived*.

MR. WARTON, in moving the following new Clause:—

(Contract requisite for service franchise.)

"No man shall be entitled to vote by virtue of any office, service, or employment, under the third section of this Act, unless at the time of his entering into such office, service, or employment, a contract was entered into and made between him and his master or employer, to the effect that he was to have the use and occupation of such house by way of payment or part payment for his services,"

said, that it was in perfect sympathy with the Bill. However much an hon. Member might disapprove of a Bill, there was always the possibility of its passing, and therefore it was his duty

to endeavour to amend it. With this view he had put this clause upon the Paper, and it seemed to him that the Prime Minister would be able to see his way to accept it. He proposed it with no Party motive, but simply to prevent any mistake being made as to the real meaning of the new service franchise, and to guard against all possibilities of fraud. He thought it was very important that, in introducing a new franchise of this sort, it should be clearly understood that there was a certain time when the franchise should be created. Now that the Act could not come into force before the 1st of January, 1885, and no registration could possibly be held in respect of this Bill until the autumn of 1885, there was plenty of time for masters or employers to consider whether or not they intended their servants to have the franchise. In his opinion, it ought to be clearly understood that before a man could become possessed of the service franchise he should have entered into some contract or agreement with his master or employer. He did not mean to say that the contract or agreement ought necessarily to be in writing, but he was of opinion that the 3rd section of the Act would have a very mischievous effect unless both parties knew what their duty was. It was well there should be no uncertainty as to whether a man could become possessed of the service franchise or not, and, indeed, it would be positively wrong to let people come into possession of this new franchise without they understood their exact positions. He thought the Committee would come to the conclusion that his clause would prevent fraud under the Service Clause of the Act, and he therefore submitted it with confidence to the consideration of the Committee.

New Clause (Contract requisite for service franchise,) — (*Mr. Warton*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he did not question the good faith in which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport proposed this clause. He had, however, given the best consideration in his power to it, and he found himself unable to agree altogether

with the hon. and learned Gentleman. He submitted, in the first place, that with regard to the service franchise, the facts would be of such a patent character as to the employment and the residence of the persons that there was no risk at all of their being misrepresented or misunderstood. A man who applied for a franchise in this case differed from most of those who would apply for a franchise, inasmuch as there was one other person at least interested in the matter. He had felt it his duty sometimes to oppose Motions made for additions to this Bill in what he might call the Liberal sense. At the present moment he considered himself acting in quite a different interest, for according to his belief—he did not disguise it and he had never disguised it—this Service Clause was a clause which would go to strengthen the Conservative interest in the country. Let him take a considerable class of persons, a very proper, competent, and capable class of voters under this Bill, who would come in by means of the service franchise, but who would be liable, not to coercion or intimidation, but friendly influence—legitimate influence—which, he held, would tell very much in favour of the Conservatives. Coachmen living in the houses attached to the stables, gardeners, and gamekeepers—three important classes of persons existing to the extent of many thousands, and quite capable of voting—would come in as a rule under the Service Clause, and no other clause. As far as his experience went, it was totally contrary to the custom of the country to make any contract with these people. It might be held, perhaps, that written contracts would be wise; but still the whole thing was so generally worked upon the principle of confidence—upon simple verbal contracts—that he did not think the Committee ought to force people to adopt the practice of written contracts. It might, perhaps, be well to recollect what was the consequence of the provision in the Irish Land Act of 1860 requiring written contracts. The consequence of that provision was that the Act was an absolute failure, and that not a single person got the benefit of the Act. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would, after what he had stated, agree with him that, on the whole, there was no real danger to be apprehended in this case.

Mr. Warton

MR. TOMLINSON said, he thought there were some parts of the country where questions had been frequently raised in the Revision Courts as to whether contracts of service were such as gave a residential qualification apart from the service. He could not help thinking that the clause, as it stood in the Bill, was open, to some extent, to the objections that had been advanced against the present law, and that the time of Revising Barristers would be frequently occupied with a class of questions relating to the qualification of persons claiming under this clause. If his hon. Friend went into the Lobby, he should go with him.

MR. WARTON reminded the Committee that some time ago they had got into considerable trouble, which was not yet disposed of, as to what was the meaning of "dwelling-house." It was possible that this Bill might not extend to more than two persons; but there might be a question as to several persons being qualified, and he wished to draw a distinction between different persons dwelling in the same house.

Question put, and *negatived*.

MR. WARTON said, the next clause he wished to move had been stigmatized a "fancy franchise;" but it seemed to him that a man who held £100 of Government Stock, or other Stock, was a respectable and capable person who was entitled to the franchise. If the Government were sincere in their desire to enfranchise all capable citizens, he could not see how they could object to his proposition. The possession of the franchise through the possession of money would show that these persons were as fit as other persons to exercise the franchise under this Bill. In order to give permanence to the qualification, he had provided that the voter must show that he possessed the Stock at the time of registration and at the time of voting.

New Clause (Money franchises).—(*Mr. Warton*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he could not assent to the clause, objections to which were very apparent. In the first place,

it had already been decided that rent-chargers should not have the franchise on that account, although their income was, in a sense, derived from real property; and, in the next place, if a man possessed £1,000 of Stock, and he had 10 sons, he would be able under this clause to divide that £1,000 among the 10 sons before an election, and so create 10 votes, even though when the election was over he took the money back. This would greatly facilitate the making of fagot votes; and, further, if the vote were refused to holders of Railway Stock, and yet given to these owners of personal property, a very objectionable anomaly would be created. For these, as well as other reasons, the Government could not accept the clause.

MR. TOMLINSON pointed out that, under this clause, residence would be required, and he should support it, feeling that the possession of personal property ought not to be altogether disregarded in conferring the franchise.

MR. WARTON said, he should be willing to make the possession of Railway Stock a franchise qualification, and he held it to be right to enfranchise those who owned property obtained by industry and frugality. There was an increasing amount of personal property as compared with real property, and on that ground he urged the adoption of this proposition.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS agreed in the view that the Committee ought to have regard to personal property as well as to freehold property; but he did not think there had been any evidence to show that injustice had been done, for, as a rule, those who owned £100 of Stock would be already on the Register as householders or lodgers. On the whole, he thought the hon. and learned Member might be content with having raised the question, and would not press the clause.

MR. WARTON said, there might be a case in which a family of grown-up young men lived in the same house with their father, but had acquired this amount of Stock from their own earnings, although they were not on the Register as lodgers or householders. He would withdraw the clause.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. WARTON said, he wished to move the next clause standing on the

Paper in his name, relating to soldiers, sailors, marines, and merchant seamen.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he wished to take the opinion of the Chairman as to whether this clause was a matter that could be dealt with on a Franchise Bill. His hon. and learned Friend would, he thought, agree with him that the effect of the clause would be, not to give any qualification, but to provide that if a soldier or sailor was ordered abroad, instead of appearing personally and recording his vote, as compelled to do under the Ballot Act, he should leave his voting paper with the Returning Officer to be used by that person on the day of the election. He (the Attorney General) would not wish to shut out the hon. and learned Member from any legitimate right; but he submitted that this Amendment did not deal with a mode of voting with which this Bill had anything whatever to do, affecting, as it did, merely enfranchisement. As a matter of fact, the clause was only an alteration in the mode of voting in favour of one person as against others. It seemed to him, further, that the clause was put out of court by the rejection of the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) on the previous Friday.

MR. WARTON wished to say a word upon the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. His impression was that the Bill was for the purpose of enfranchising, and here were persons who, from the accidents of their profession, were sometimes unable to vote when they ought to do so. It was not a question as to the mode of voting, but the Amendment was merely to prevent the disfranchisement of soldiers, sailors, marines, and merchant seamen. These men were bound to leave home at the call of duty, and he did not think that by so doing they should forfeit their right to vote. The question was one of avoiding disfranchisement.

THE CHAIRMAN: The view expressed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General also struck me, and induced me to consider this point. I think, if the hon. and learned Gentleman will look at it carefully, he will observe that the clause of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) is quite of a different character

to that proposed by the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston), which was as follows:—

(Votes of officers and men in the Navy and Army.)

“Every officer and man enrolled in Her Majesty’s Navy or Army who shall be registered as a voter in any constituency of the United Kingdom shall, when stationed or engaged on Her Majesty’s service more than twenty miles away from the constituency in which he shall be so registered, but in some part of the United Kingdom, be entitled to give his vote for such constituency at the place at which he shall be so engaged or stationed, under such conditions and in such manner as may be prescribed by Her Majesty in Council.”

That clause was in Order; and as Her Majesty in Council might prescribe some form of voting similar to that proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, I cannot rule the hon. and learned Member’s Amendment out of Order.

MR. WARTON said, he was glad he had got over that difficulty; and perhaps now, having done so, it might not be altogether too much to expect that he might bring the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to agree to his proposal. Soldiers, sailors, marines, and merchant seamen were very deserving and respectable men—he used the word “respectable” because he thought a man who was a “capable citizen” was worthy of great respect. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had agreed with the noble Lord the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy) as to the necessities of the case; and it was very curious, therefore, that he should now have turned round, as against those whose enfranchisement he had been in favour of, and try to exclude them from the franchise. When Amendments for the extension of the franchise came from the other side of the House they were accepted, or, at any rate, favourably considered; but when proposals came from the Opposition Benches they were at once rejected. He would urge hon. Gentlemen calling themselves Liberals to exercise an independent judgment upon this matter. Hon. Members below the Gangway opposite must remember that they would have to face their constituents, and perhaps sooner than they thought likely. When they did so, and when they were asked what position they had taken up in this matter, they would have to say

that instead of maintaining the principle that those who ought to have a vote should be able to exercise it, they had opposed the extension of the franchise to soldiers, sailors, marines, and merchant seamen who were ordered away on service. If he understood the spirit of the Bill, it was to enfranchise; and he should think that those who were in the honourable discharge of duties, particularly when that duty was the defence of their country, were certainly entitled to their share of the franchise. These persons were treated by the Government as men who were not to have a vote. Who knew that, if this Amendment were not accepted, the Government would not, when the occasion offered, perpetrate some piece of sharp practice by sending away on some foreign service large numbers of men whom they had reason to believe were dissatisfied with the administration of the Service to which they belonged, and were likely to vote in favour of the opponents of the Party in power? It was difficult for the soldier or sailor to get a qualification at all; but when they had obtained it, and when the moment came when they were about to exercise the franchise, if they were obliged to go away from home for the short time during which an election occurred, it would be a very hard thing. He would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister really wished, in their hearts and consciences, to deprive these people of the power of voting? As for the paltry question of machinery to which the Attorney General, in his few observations just now, seemed to give prominence, that was altogether beside the mark. If the hon. and learned Gentleman could devise a better machinery than that proposed in the clause, he (Mr. Warton) should be very glad to adopt it. He himself had not been able to think of a better; but if such were brought before him, he should be very glad to accept it. It seemed to him that the Returning Officer, who was, as a rule, very respectable, was a person eminently fitted to discharge a trust such as that he would confer upon him. They must, in this world, depend upon the honour of many persons under many circumstances, and surely a Returning Officer, who was at present entrusted with onerous duties, would be a fit person to hold these

voting papers. The position the Government took up upon this question showed the sincerity of their professions with regard to the enfranchisement of "capable citizens." He begged to propose the clause standing in his name.

New Clause (Votes of soldiers, sailors, marines, and merchant seamen,)—(*Mr. Warton*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it would be quite impossible to accept this clause. It would only assist a very few persons to the exercise of the franchise. It would not assist those ordered away before the issue of the Writ, but only those ordered away from the place in which they were qualified to vote to another station after the issue of the Writ. It would only, therefore, assist those men ordered away within a period of three days in the case of boroughs—as that was the time which elapsed between the issue of the Writ and the election—and in the counties some seven or eight days. The Government were opposed to it as a matter of principle. Why should they give this advantage to the soldier and sailor, or anyone else, away on duty? If they gave this privilege to the soldier and sailor, why not extend it to others? The commercial traveller was frequently away from home, and, no doubt, was often away from the district in which he was qualified to vote during an election. Builders' assistants, again, and many artisans, were frequently away in the employ of their masters at election time. Furthermore, persons who were ill, and were not able to go to the poll, could not exercise their vote, for it was not said that the Returning Officer should go to them. In all the eloquence of the hon. and learned Member, delivered as it was, by the way, in a low voice, so far as he (the Attorney General) could gather it, the argument seemed to be that accident might prevent these people from coming to the poll; but accidents might prevent a great many people from coming to the poll. The whole effect of the clause would be to alter the Ballot Act and do away with the secrecy of election, as it would enable a man to put his vote in the hands of another person, or to vote

with the knowledge of that person. That being so, the Government felt it necessary to oppose the clause.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER said, that, speaking as an old soldier, he should like to point out to the Attorney General that there was a great difference between the circumstances of the soldier or sailor and the carpenter, joiner, or artizan whom the hon. and learned Gentleman had alluded to. The soldier or sailor was ordered off on public service, and could not get permission to remain in his district in which he was qualified to vote, whereas in all probability the carpenter, joiner, or artizan might obtain the consent of his employer to come home and vote. Then, again, whereas the ordinary workman would in most cases only be sent away a few miles, the soldier or sailor might be ordered away to India, or some part of the Colonies, whence it would be impossible for him to return. With all due respect, therefore, to the hon. and learned Gentleman (the Attorney General), he wished to point out there was a great difference between the several classes referred to. He (Sir Henry Fletcher) had taken no part in this discussion hitherto, although it had been proposed by the noble Lord the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy) to enfranchise any man serving in Her Majesty's Sea or Land Forces and occupying separate quarters. There was a distinction to be drawn between the cottager or day labourer and the coachman, because the officer of a regiment had a greater right to go into the married soldier's quarters than a master of a labourer or coachman had to go into his house.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Baronet is not in Order in going into that question. He can only discuss the clause before the Committee.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER said, he, of course, bowed to the decision of the Chairman; but he did hope that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, upon this question now before them, would take into consideration the differences of the soldier and sailor and the ordinary artizan.

MR. TOMLINSON said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General did not appear to perceive the meaning of the clause, but seemed to confound the time of the issue of the Writ with the nomination. If he (Mr. Tomlinson)

was right, he believed that six days elapsed between the issue of the Writ and the nomination day.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the nomination day took place the day after the issue of the Writ, and the polling two days after that in boroughs. He had stated three days in order to be safe; but it might not be more than two.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he believed six days might elapse between the nomination day and the polling day. Even if the Government could not see their way to accepting this clause, they ought not to dismiss it without some expression of sympathy for the soldiers and sailors who, through being ordered on foreign service, might be unable to exercise the privilege of voting.

Clause negatived.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, he wished to move the clause standing in his name, the object of which was to extend the franchise to every man, not otherwise qualified, who should pay the Income Tax. The object he had in moving the clause was to enfranchise a very numerous class of persons who, while possessing a large stake in the country—a far larger stake than those whom the Bill would enfranchise—would yet, as the Bill stood, be excluded from the suffrage. There were many men, clerks and others, resident in London, who only occupied their lodgings for short periods, who went into the country for part of the year and travelled up daily to perform their work, and who, therefore, did not even obtain the lodger qualification. There were also many people who preferred to live in hotels, and to move about from place to place, and who, of course, had a greater stake in the country—having a sufficient income to pay Income Tax—than the majority of lodgers. Moreover, it was not impossible that this class would considerably increase. In America, for instance, a large portion of the well-to-do people had now taken to living in hotels much more than they formerly did. These people, it must be remembered, paid a much higher rent—probably treble the amount—than the ordinary lodger paid, and that they also possessed intellectual power, and were better educated than the majority of lodgers. The clause he proposed would cover officers in the

Army who did not reside in separate quarters, and it would remove the disability under which they laboured in consequence of their being marched from one place to another, and, therefore, not having a sufficient residence to qualify them for the lodger franchise. Then, he thought, the clause was sound in principle, because it made representation and taxation go together, whereas there were many who were enfranchised under this Bill—notably those under the service franchise—who paid no taxes whatever. The Attorney General, a short time ago, in the discussion of a previous clause, had drawn the distinction between real and personal property, and said it was necessary to retain the present provision that real property was really to give a qualification for a vote; but he (Lord Algernon Percy) would point out that the occupier of a mud-cabin in Ireland, and the lodgers who would be enfranchised under this Bill, could not be said really to possess real property. This clause might be objected to on the ground that it would create a sort of floating constituency; but that objection might also be taken to the lodger franchise, particularly if it were proposed, as it was suggested a short time ago, to reduce the period of occupancy. Under the clause he was now moving, payers of Income Tax, if not otherwise qualified, would, on production of a certificate that they had paid Income Tax, be allowed to vote; and he did not think there would be any difficulty as to registration, because they would vote either in the district in which they paid the tax, or in that in which they resided. This was necessary, because in the case of Railway Stock the tax would be taken from the sum the taxpayer received, and, therefore, he would vote where he was residing. He (Lord Algernon Percy) hoped the Government would accept the clause, or some other Amendment having a similar object, because he thought it was a proposal in the spirit of the Bill. The Government and the Liberal Party had taken great praise to themselves as to this Bill, from the simple fact that it enfranchised 2,000,000 of people; but if they did not accept some proposal of this description, they would find themselves in this position, that whereas occupiers of mud-cabins in Ireland, and the criminal classes whom the Government were so anxious to in-

clude—[Sir ASSHETON CROSS: Hear, hear!]
—would under the Bill enjoy the franchise, a large class of respectable, intelligent, highly educated, and, to use the Prime Minister's words, "highly capable citizens," would be excluded from any voice in the government of the country. He begged to move the clause standing in his name.

New Clause (Income Tax payer to have the franchise).—(Lord Algernon Percy,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had cheered the remark that the Government desired to have the criminal classes on the Register of Voters; but he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that in the Reform Act of 1867 the Conservative Government took exactly the same course as that adopted by the present Government. They put the criminal classes on the Register, and the right hon. Gentleman neither cheered, nor raised his voice against it. He (the Attorney General) was afraid to be too brief in his reply, otherwise the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) would accuse him of having treated the Committee with disrespect in not following his example and making long speeches; but the Government had already stated their objection to the principle contained in the clause. The reason for giving a vote to those who were householders was because that class were usually the heads of households, and bore the responsibility of heads of families; whereas if they gave the franchise to every person who might pay a few shillings of Income Tax—for no particular amount was specified in the clause, and they must assume that that Income Tax might be varied from time to time by the action of Parliament—they would have persons entitled to vote who might not have been a week in any particular place, and might not be at all identified with the interests of the locality in which they voted. There was no qualification in the clause as to the length of residence. Payment of the tax for one year would suffice to

[*Eleventh Night.*]

qualify a man, and he would have a right to vote if he had lived less than a week in one particular place. The Government had considered the right of property in regard to the franchise to the extent which the Prime Minister had mentioned that evening; and to give the vote to that very light description of property was not a course to which the Government could assent.

MR. WARTON said, no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer was anxious to increase the Revenue by every legitimate means, and he would put it to him, therefore, whether this would not be a valuable clause, inasmuch as it would induce persons who now escaped payment of the Income Tax to declare their liability in order to obtain the franchise? He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer would carefully examine the proposal, and that he would give a very different answer to that which they had received from the Attorney General. The right hon. Gentleman could not be bound by what had been stated by the Attorney General in his absence; he was at liberty to take his own view of this matter. It had always seemed too great an anomaly to him (Mr. Warton) that working men who received good wages should not pay Income Tax. This would be the means of inducing them to do so, and he could not see how the Chancellor of the Exchequer could refuse his support to the proposal. Many working men would gladly pay Income Tax, if by so doing they made themselves "capable citizens." If there was any principle which had ever been put before them with great force, and repeated again and again on both sides of the House, it was the principle that taxation and representation should go together. That was the principle that they all in their sober moments asserted; but when they came to consider the matter as a Party question, they either asserted the principle or denied it as their interests at the moment dictated. They remembered that the United States had broken away from this country for the reason that taxation was not associated with representation. The principle was a most sound one, and should be recognized by the House of Commons, that he submitted—that the man who voluntarily taxed himself was the man above all others who should have the right to vote.

The Attorney General

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had addressed a special appeal to him (Mr. Childers), requesting him to look at the clause, and to give his support to the principle contained in it. So far as he understood the clause, anyone, not otherwise qualified, who paid Income Tax, would *ipso facto* be entitled to a vote, for the clause said—

"Every man, not otherwise qualified, but paying Income Tax, shall by such payment be qualified to vote in the polling district in which such Income Tax is paid, or in which he is residing, as the case may be."

He must say that there could be no better contrivance than this for the manufacture of fictitious votes. If he were anxious to secure a constituency, and did not care what means he adopted to secure his end—that was to say, if his sense of honesty would allow him to resort to bribery—he should take care that 200 or 300 persons should pay a small amount of Income Tax, who otherwise would not do so, so that they might *ipso facto* have the power of voting. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had tempted him by his proposal to add to the Revenue, but it was one he did not feel at all willing to accept.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he hoped the Government would give a little more consideration to this proposal, believing, as he did, that it was one of great weight. It deserved the very fullest consideration. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General based his remarks just now upon the statement that in 1867 the Government of the day did not propose to disfranchise criminals; but he would point out that the House of Commons was older to-day than it was then. No doubt, they had benefited by experience, and the question of enfranchising or not enfranchising criminals was one which deserved full consideration at the hands of the Committee and of the Government. For this reason, he should in all probability, at a later stage of the Bill, bring the question of the enfranchisement of criminals before the notice of the House again, and he trusted that by that time the House would have become so thoroughly educated on the question as to be able to come to a right decision, and not to the determination at which they arrived

the last time they discussed the subject. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had said that the whole principle that underlay the giving of a vote under this Bill was the enfranchisement of the householder—of giving the vote to a man occupying a house, and being as it were the head of a family. Well, if that were the reason the Government had extended the borough franchise to the counties, well and good; but that was no reason why they should have extended the lodger franchise to the counties also, because a lodger did not occupy the whole of a house, and was not, as a rule, the head of a family. In most cases the lodger lived in one room. It seemed to him (Viscount Folkestone), therefore, that the clause now moved by his noble Friend was one which, with the example of the lodger franchise before them, deserved a certain amount of discussion, and he trusted that it would be considered therefore by the Committee. It appeared to him there were other classes of persons who would be enfranchised by this proposal of his noble Friend besides those who had been referred to. Tutors, for instance, would not be enfranchised by this Bill—tutors who lived in houses occupied and owned by their employers. People who occupied this position must necessarily be of great attainments and thoroughly educated, and they certainly would be much more capable citizens, and much more capable of exercising the franchise, than the majority of those it was now proposed to include by the Government. Besides tutors there were many other persons, well educated and thoroughly capable of exercising the franchise in the right and proper way, who would not get it unless such a clause as this were passed. There were curates, for instance. A great many of these gentlemen resided in the houses of their rectors or their vicars, such residences being bestowed upon them in part payment of their service. These gentlemen, capable as they were, and well educated as it was necessary for them to be, were all debarred from exercising the franchise by the provisions of this Bill. If they got the franchise under this clause, he did not think there could be any doubt as to their exercising it with as much intelligence as the occupiers of the mud-cabins in Ireland, to whom reference had been made by his noble Friend.

There were many places where several curates were employed in one district, and they were in the habit of occupying what were called clergy houses. He did not understand that these gentlemen would be enfranchised by the Bill, and hon. Members, if they would refer to the part of the Bill to which he was alluding, would find that that was so. The Committee, he thought, would agree with him that these curates, and gentlemen in their position who might not come under the lodger franchise, would be much more capable of exercising the vote than, as he had already stated, a great many who were to be enfranchised by this measure. At any rate, the matter was one which should have full discussion, and should not be dismissed by the mere observation that the Bill was for the purpose of conferring an occupation franchise, and that it did not contemplate a property qualification. He had much pleasure in supporting the clause of his noble Friend.

Mr. GREGORY could not but think that it was a fair proposition, that the payment of Income Tax should qualify a man to exercise the franchise, where it arose from and represented in that case the possession of property. The payment of Income Tax was a real qualification, as it was an indication of realized property; and he, for, one could not see why a man possessing such a substantial stake in the country as property upon which Income Tax was paid to the State should not be allowed a voice in the management of the affairs of the country. No doubt, care should be taken that the payment of Income Tax to qualify for a vote was a *bond fide* payment, incident to the possession of realized property. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had suggested that the clause would lead to the manufacture of fictitious votes—that was to say, to the paying of the Income Tax in order to give men a qualification; but precautions could be easily taken against a fraud of that kind. For this reason, he rather preferred the clause standing on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), which said—

“Every man who has resided within a county or borough for a period of twelve months, but has not by reason of such residence a qualification to be registered as a voter in such county or borough, may be registered as a voter and

may vote, upon proving that he has, in the year for which he claims to be so registered, paid or had deducted from the income of any real or personal property accruing to him during such year income or property tax to the amount of not less than ten shillings."

MR. MACFARLANE said, that as he understood this clause it was one for the purpose of enfranchising anyone who liked to pay Income Tax. If this clause was carried, he wished to give Notice that he should move an addition to it to the effect that any person who chose not to pay Income Tax could be excused on giving up the franchise. That seemed to him a very natural corollary, because if they said to a man—"If you pay the Income Tax you shall have a vote," he did not see why they should not say to him—"If you do not claim a vote you shall not pay Income Tax."

MR. GLADSTONE wished to point out that in a great number of cases of payment of Income Tax, particularly in regard to the public Funds, and he believed in all cases of foreign securities, the tax was deducted by the agents authorized to pay the money, and the registration authorities, therefore, would have no cognizance whatever of the fact that Income Tax was paid. A very infinitesimal amount of Income Tax might be charged in this way. For instance, if a man had 20s. in any of these securities, the interest he received, however small might be the amount, would have deducted from it a certain sum for Income Tax, if a coin sufficiently small to cover it could be found.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, after the discussion which had taken place, he would ask leave to withdraw the clause.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid we must contradict it.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he was not quite certain that, in the event of the clause of the noble Lord being negatived, he should be in a position to move the clause following it which stood in his name, and therefore, with the permission of the Committee, he would make a few remarks with regard to it on the present clause. His noble Friend and he had had some conversation as to the mode of introducing into the Bill a clause with reference to giving a qualification by the payment of Income Tax, and the result had been the two clauses which appeared on the Paper in their several names. Now, the clause

which he had intended to propose certainly got rid of the objection urged by the Attorney General to the clause of the noble Lord.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member would not be in Order in discussing his clause upon the Question before the Committee.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS rose to Order. He had understood the Prime Minister to wish the clause of the noble Lord to be negatived; and he asked whether, if that event took place, it would be competent to his hon. Friend to move the clause which he had placed on the Paper?

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the clause of the hon. Member was substantially the same as that of the noble Lord, and could not, therefore, be put if the latter were negatived.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the hon. Member had pointed out that his clause differed from that of the noble Lord. He trusted the Committee would allow it to be discussed.

MR. GLADSTONE said, they were entirely opposed to the principle of the clauses, and must object to the proposal to discuss it should the Amendment of the noble Lord be negatived.

MR. TOMLINSON said, in that case he would say a few words on the principle. In the first place, it would be very easy by the addition of words to remove the effect which it was objected the clause would have on account of the payer of Income Tax not being in a fixed position, or being connected with a residence or local habitation. He and his noble Friend, assuming that the Bill was to pass that House, desired to make it as good a Bill as possible; but they were under some difficulty in carrying out their views owing to the way in which the Government put forward, without rhyme, reason, or sequence, that Amendments were not to be discussed on their merits, but were to be rejected simply because the proposal was not in the mind of the Prime Minister, because they did not accord with the arbitrary views which he assumed to be proper with regard to the basis on which the franchise ought to rest. He (Mr. Tomlinson) had asserted on several occasions that, in his opinion, it would be a great misfortune if hon. Members did not insist upon the right of property as distinct from occupation to be repre-

sented in that House. He thought the main objection to the clause might be met by Amendment; and therefore he trusted the Committee would allow it to be read the second time, with the view of amending it, if desirable, in the direction indicated.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was perfectly right in supposing that the principle of the clause was raised in a form which many people did not approve; but he would point out that if the clause were read the second time, it would not be in his power to amend it. This proposal, as he said, was a mode of creating a new property qualification. The Government were against that in all forms in which it might come before them; and on the last occasion he might observe that the Government views were supported by a majority of 137 to 38. Therefore, the hon. Member could not be surprised at the position taken up on the present occasion with reference to his Amendment. Although the clause had evidently been carefully framed, he did not think that any clause could raise the property qualification satisfactorily at all; because, if the Committee assented to a qualification on an Income Tax basis, the forms in which the principle might be embodied would be of endless variety. Under the circumstances, he was sure the hon. Gentleman would not be surprised that the Government should challenge the principle, and that they should not be disposed to agree to the second reading of the clause.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the argument of the Prime Minister was not the same as he had before urged against the clause. The present objection was upon a matter of detail; but he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) wished to have the principle and not the details of the clause discussed. The hon. Member for Preston, it had been ruled, could not move his clause on that occasion; but he understood that the hon. Member would hereafter raise the question of property qualification on a scale which would not confine it to the basis of Income Tax—that it would be raised on Report in such a form that the Prime Minister would not be able to take objection to the proposal on either of the grounds put forward by him on the present occasion. He should therefore

reserve the further observations he had to make on the proposal of the hon. Member until its principle was discussed, as it certainly would be on Report.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that the question on which the Division alluded to by the Prime Minister had been taken had nothing to do with property qualification as he had described it to be. It was a question of the kind of residence required for the exercise of the occupation franchise.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 21; Noes 99: Majority 78.—(Div. List, No. 126.)

THE CHAIRMAN said, the clause in the name of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) relating to the appointment of a Boundary Commission could not be moved, inasmuch as it was not within the scope of the Bill, a circumstance which he thought the hon. Member must be aware of, because he had moved words of the same import, as an Instruction to the Committee, at a former stage of the Bill.

Schedules 1 and 2 *agreed to*.

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed*. [Bill 249.]

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[BILL 206.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 9th June.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(*In the Committee.*)

Clauses 1 to 4, inclusive, *agreed to*.

PART II.

INCOME TAX.

Clause 5 (Grant of duties of income tax).

MR. MACFARLANE said, when the Motion for the second reading of the Bill was before the House, he gave Notice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that at this point of the Bill he should draw attention to a Motion which was decided against him when the Bill of last year was in Committee. He claimed exemption from the payment of Income Tax for all moneys accruing to persons in the United Kingdom, but which

moneys never came into the United Kingdom. He claimed that the Income Tax should only be paid on that money which came into the United Kingdom. But he had put down the Amendment, which he was about to move, for the purpose of affording the Chancellor of the Exchequer an opportunity of offering an explanation about a case which the right hon. Gentleman had cited in support of the view taken by the right hon. Gentleman in reference to this question. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman last year if the law had been settled upon this question; if a decision had ever been come to upon the question as to whether a person in the United Kingdom was liable for the tax upon his whole income, if received in the United Kingdom or not? The right hon. Gentleman stated in reply that the case was settled in 1808, and he quoted an Exchequer case which led him to take for granted that the law had been settled at that time. He went to his solicitor, and got him to look up the Law Reports; but he could not find the case, and for a very good reason—it had never been tried. He (Mr. Macfarlane) wrote to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting him to give a reference, and the right hon. Gentleman was good enough not only to give him a reference, but a copy of the case. When he read the case, however, he found that the precedent did not at all support the view of the right hon. Gentleman, while it did support the Amendment he (Mr. Macfarlane) moved. As the case was very short, he would read it to the Committee. It was a case raised at Hemel Hempsted, Hertfordshire, in the year 1805, and at that period the Income Tax did not extend to Ireland. The gentleman concerned, Mr. William Hilton, lived at Hemel Hempsted, and was a trader in Ireland. He had been in the habit of returning an Income Tax of £1,000 a-year. It was pointed out to him he was injuring his own case, because he was only required to return in England as much as he received from Ireland. That being so, he tried the experiment; and on the next occasion when he made a return he returned £500, being the sum that he received in England from his trade in Ireland. The Income Tax Commissioners charged him with the full £1,000, on the ground that

he had returned it before, and Mr. Hilton appealed. He appealed to the Local Income Tax Commissioners, and they upheld the appeal, and charged him on £500 only. The case was sent up to the Board of Inland Revenue, and from the copy of an official document, which he held in his hand—a document dated the 29th of February, 1808, and prepared by Mr. Harry Grover, clerk to the Commissioners of the Hundred of Daconum, Hertfordshire—he found that this gentleman—

“Claims relief of the Commissioners against the advance on him of the £500 in 1805, when from the foregoing circumstances he had lost the opportunity of applying on the appeal day, and to have remitted him the sum of £31 5s. charged on him—”

He (Mr. Macfarlane) had made the case rather weaker than it really was, because it appeared that, during the absence of Mr. Hilton, Mrs. Hilton had paid the full amount, and what Mr. Hilton claimed was the actual repayment of the sum paid. He claimed to be repaid—

“£31 5s. charged on him above the return he so made in that year; but the Commissioners did not feel themselves empowered to afford him any relief, as the duplicates were perfected and delivered to the Tax Office and to the Receiver General. The foregoing matters were stated by the said William Hilton on oath before the Commissioners on the last appeal day, on the 8th of April instant, and at his instance the Commissioners have directed me to transmit thereof to the Commissioners for the affairs of Taxes, in order that he may obtain the relief prayed, if there were any means of affording it him. The Board are not aware that the Commissioners have any authority to remit the duty, nor do they see upon what ground the Commissioners assessed him the last year in £500 only as on the sum received from Ireland. Every trader living in Great Britain is answerable for the whole profits of trade arising in another country.”

That was the opinion of the Inland Revenue Commissioners; but was it what was conveyed to him last year? It was conveyed to him that the law had been definitely decided, not that the Inland Revenue Commissioners had decided in their own favour that such and such was the law. Here was a case, and the Exchequer never appealed against it; they never brought the case into Court. He did not make these remarks in order to raise the question just now, because he did not think the time was opportune, but in order to give the right hon. Gentleman the Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer an opportunity of explaining how it came about that the precedent that was quoted against him (Mr. Macfarlane) last year turned out to be a precedent entirely in his favour. He awaited the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman with some curiosity.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 29, after the word "profits," to insert the words "received in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Macfarlane.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. COURTNEY understood that the hon. Member did not propose to amend the law—[MR. MACFARLANE: The law is not settled]—but he desired to get from the Chancellor of the Exchequer a declaration as to what the law was. The hon. Gentleman himself had allowed that the Inland Revenue authorities were the supreme authorities in these matters, and that they had decided that a person living in England was taxable for an income obtained in a foreign country. If the law was laid down by the supreme authority, and acquiesced in by every taxpayer, it was no objection to say it had not been decided by the Court of Exchequer. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to the case of Hilton in 1806, and also to the case of Cankrien in 1808, and he said the contention was that the profits did not come into England, and were not and should not be subject to Income Tax. In both cases the decision of the authorities was to the effect that the profits were subject to Income Tax; and that had been the invariable decision of the authorities ever since. On the 5th of June of last year, the right hon. Gentleman referred to the case of Hilton, and made the quotation the hon. Member (Mr. Macfarlane) had made to-night. He acknowledged the act of the Local Commissioners, and then said—

"In the case of Hilton the particulars as to the year 1805 were transmitted to the Board in London, with a view to his being allowed a repayment; "

and he added the words—

"Every trader living in Great Britain is answerable for the whole profits of trade arising in another country."—(3 *Hansard*, [279] 1741.) That was what was laid down by the supreme authorities—the Inland Re-

venue—at the time; it had been acquiesced in by every taxpayer, and it was what constituted the law. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer was perfectly justified in declaring that to be the law, for it had been acted upon and observed, and never questioned since. That being the only point raised by the hon. Member, it was not necessary to go into the question as to whether the demand was a just one. Justice required every person who lived in the Kingdom, and who had an income, wherever obtained, to pay Income Tax upon that income; it did not make any difference whether or not the person brought the income home, or left it where it was made to be reinvested. There could be no question whatever as to the justice of the law, or as to the accuracy of the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he did not charge the Chancellor of the Exchequer with having stated that which he did not believe to be accurate; but he considered that the right hon. Gentleman had been misled by the permanent officials of the Inland Revenue. Those officials considered that an opinion of theirs given in 1805 was the ruling of English law. He did not think that the majority of people would agree with them in that matter. What he understood when the subject was discussed last year was, that the decision had been given according to law, and not merely according to the opinion of the officials of Somerset House. He took it for granted that law was administered by Judges, and not by the officials of the Inland Revenue. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had said that whatever was acquiesced in was law. A great many people acquiesced in what was called law, but which was not law. No one knew better than the Secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer what an odious thing it was to appeal against the Income Tax assessment. No one knew better than they did what an odious power was possessed by the Inland Revenue authorities for the purpose of squeezing Income Tax out of people. They knew that, as a rule, people would pay almost anything rather than be dragged into a Court and have all their private affairs exposed, and they had played upon that

fact for their own advantage. He would not enter into a controversy with the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, though he thought the hon. Gentleman's dogmas on the question of the law relating to the Income Tax might be very easily refuted. The hon. Gentleman said there was no doubt as to the justice of the principle on which Income Tax was assessed. He (Mr. Macfarlane) had very great doubt on the point. A lawyer discussing the question would probably say that the present system of assessment was an anomaly, which was much worse than an injustice, because an anomaly was a thing for which nothing at all was to be said. At the present time he only wished to put on record that, in his opinion, in the statement which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer made last year he was misled by the Inland Revenue officials, and that he quoted a case which was virtually one in his (Mr. Macfarlane's) favour.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that the hon. Gentleman did not wish to discuss the general question; but he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was only anxious to maintain his consistency. The words he used last year were quite correct. He referred to two cases, and he said—

"The case of Cankrien, which occurred in 1808, is perfectly clear. He claimed not to be assessed on certain profits made abroad; but his claim was disallowed, and the tax was paid. The case of Hilton, in 1806, was as follows:—He had paid the full tax in 1804 and in 1805; but I find that in 1806 the Local Commissioners relieved him from the tax on certain profits made abroad, and desired the particulars as to the year 1805 to be transmitted to the Board in London, with a view to his being allowed a repayment. The Board declined to do so, replying that they were 'not aware that the Commissioners have any authority to remit the duty,' and adding—'Every trader living in Great Britain is answerable for the whole profits of trade arising in another country.'"—(*3 Hansard*, [279] 1741.)

He merely said that that was the decision of the authorities, and he adhered to that statement.

MR. MACFARLANE asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. CLARE READ moved the omission of the words "twopence halfpenny," in page 2, line 34, and the substitution of the words "one penny three farthings." He understood there

were to be equal laws for England, Ireland, and Scotland, and, therefore, he thought the time had come that the Committee should know the reason why the tenant farmers of England were taxed at a higher rate than their brethren in the two more favoured countries. He asked the question in the late Parliament, and he received the very Conservative reply—it was so in the beginning, and it must be so to the end. He trusted the law would be altered, because it appeared to him to be totally unsatisfactory and entirely unjust. In the first place, agricultural depression had been much more severely felt throughout all the corn-growing districts of England than it had ever been in Scotland or in Ireland; and he undertook to say that if, during the last five years, the farmers of England could have produced correct accounts before the Commissioners, not one farmer in 10 would have been called upon to pay any Income Tax at all. In consequence of farmers, as a rule, not keeping their accounts properly, there was extreme difficulty in appealing against the tax. In good years, he cheerfully admitted that the rough-and-ready way of taking half the rent was a fair criterion of a farmer's profits. He understood that one argument in favour of the distinction in the amount of Income Tax paid by English, and Scotch, and Irish farmers, was that the rents in Scotland and Ireland were higher than they were in England. Ireland, of course, stood in an exceptional position; but he believed it would be found that the reduction of rents had been much greater in England than in Scotland. In England there had been a return of a great number of percentages which did not appear in the shape of reduction of rent, yet in a vast number of instances both landlord and tenant had had to pay on the full rent. He should be glad if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be good enough to take this matter into his serious consideration, and that, at least, he would inform the Committee how it came to pass that the distinction was ever made, and whether there was anything to justify it.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 34, to leave out the words "twopence halfpenny," and insert the words "one penny three farthings."—(*Mr. Clare Read*.)

Mr. Macfarlane

Question proposed, "That the words 'twopence halfpenny' stand part of the Clause."

COLONEL NOLAN said, that if the hon. Member, who always spoke authoritatively on English agricultural questions, would only propose to take three farthings off the Income Tax paid by the farmers of Ireland and Scotland, he (Colonel Nolan) would very cheerfully give him his support. He had no objection to the Amendment in itself, because he knew that for some years past agriculturists in this country had suffered very severely from the agricultural depression. He could not help, however, finding fault with the arguments by which the hon. Gentleman had supported his Amendment. It was a little surprising that the hon. Member had not seen fit to show the differences which existed between England and Ireland in regard to agricultural matters. The Irish farmers suffered very greatly from the want of sufficient market accommodation. He noticed that the farmers of England could get £5 a-ton for their hay; indeed, it had been given in evidence before a Committee now sitting up-stairs, that recently a large contract for hay at £9 per ton was made at Liverpool. The farmers of Ireland never got such prices; they sometimes got £2 10s. and £3 per ton. Occasionally they got a little more; but £2 10s. might be taken as the average price. The case of potatoes was just the same. He found that here potatoes were now selling at 7d. and 8d. a-stone; last year they were sold at 9d. and 10d. a-stone. This year they were selling at 5d. and 6d. a-stone; but usually it was hard to get more than 3d. a-stone. English farmers were able to prevent Irish cattle being moved through England, and this Irish farmers resented very greatly, because it seriously interfered with their profits. These were some of the reasons why it might very easily be supposed that Irish farmers did not make as much profit as an English farmer. The Income Tax, during the last two years at least, might very properly have been remitted in the case of a large number of farmers. Many farmers had made no money at all; certainly many in his own part of the country (Galway) had bought a large number of cattle, but they had

not even made their rent. It was hard upon these people that they should be called upon to pay even 1½d. Income Tax. He did not strongly oppose the Amendment of the hon. Member who so ably represented agriculture in the House; but he thought it was right to present the Irish side of the question, and not let the Committee run away with the idea that people in Ireland were making money. As a matter of fact, the Irish farmers were losing money upon almost everything in which they dealt.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he was not aware that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Clare Read) intended to raise this question. If he had given Notice of his intention, he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would have been prepared to speak more positively and authoritatively on the subject. What, however, he had to say was that this had been the Income Tax rule with respect to Schedule B for many years, and he was not aware it had been disputed. The reason was that the proportion which farmers' profits in England bore to the valuation of the land had always been held to be considerably higher than in Ireland and Scotland. The proportion of farmers' profits in England had generally been taken to be one-half; whereas it had been taken at one-third in Scotland and Ireland. There were also reasons as to rating, to which he need not now refer in detail. That rule had been observed in Acts of Parliament for many years past. There was another reason why he thought it would be quite unnecessary to make this change, and that was that the law provided the method under which, if the assessment was too high, the farmer was able to obtain a reduction of the assessment. The 3rd section of the Act of 1851—the 14 & 15 *Vict.* c. xii—related expressly to Schedule B, and it provided that if any person occupying land, and assessed under Schedule B, should find and prove to the satisfaction of the Commissioners by whom the assessment was made, that his profits and gain from the occupation of his land fell short of the sum on which the assessment was made, it should be lawful for the Commissioners to cause an abatement to be made from the amount charged against him. There-

fore, what a farmer had to do was to look sharply after his rights under that clause. He would undertake, between now and next year, to look carefully into the question, and if he could do anything to strengthen the provision of the Act of 1851, he would do it. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would not press his Amendment.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT said, he listened attentively to the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he failed to find that the right hon. Gentleman had grasped the situation, the situation being that during the last 10 years farmers in England had scarcely made any profit. There might be a few who had made a little profit; but he was fully persuaded that particularly since the year 1879 a large number of farmers in the great corn-growing counties had made no profit at all. If they looked at the price of wheat at the present time, they must come to the conclusion that, even with a good crop, it barely covered the cost of cultivating the land and sowing the wheat. Such being the case, it was but right that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give some attention to the matter, with the view, if possible, of making an abatement in the Income Tax paid by agriculturists in England. In spite of what his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) said, he asserted that during the last few years two-thirds of the farmers of Ireland had been doing better than the farmers of England. All the Irish farmers who had been able to grow cattle had received very high prices indeed for their stock. He admitted the truth of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's (Colonel Nolan's) statement, that since foot-and-mouth disease had been rampant in this country, cattle farmers had experienced some difficulty in carrying on their trade; but, looking at the whole circumstances of the case, he was confident Irish farmers, particularly those in certain parts of Ireland, had done a great deal better than English farmers had done. In Scotland, too, although higher rents were to be paid, the farmers made greater profits than the agriculturists of England made. What English agriculturists complained of was that in respect of the Income Tax there should be any distinction made between them and their Irish and Scotch brethren. They had a right to ask that

the Chancellor of the Exchequer should, if possible, reduce the tax this year, or, at any rate, that he should most carefully consider the subject, with the view of making a reduction in the immediate future. The right hon. Gentleman talked about the law, and he had shown what could be done under the law as it at present stood. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well, as he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) knew perfectly well, that there were very few farmers who could produce such accounts as would enable them to obtain the proper reduction. They could not pay their rents, and in many instances it had been necessary to give them a bonus—they had not been able to show by their accounts that they had made sufficient money to necessitate their paying this $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent Income Tax. He would not go into the question further, except to say that he should like to see the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer give them a little more encouragement, because, looking at the manner in which the farmers had borne their distress, and looking at the outcry which was raised against everything proposed which had a semblance to Protection, even when it was protection against the introduction of cattle disease, he thought they did deserve everything that could be done to relieve them from charges upon the land. Local taxation, as well as Income Tax, all bore very heavily upon the farmer; therefore, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) cordially agreed with the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read), and ventured to hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, at any rate, give the matter his most serious consideration.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he had promised to give the matter careful consideration.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the very liberal offer he had made to consider the claims of farmers for exemption from the Income Tax when the profits fell below the fixed proportion of the rental. An hon. Member had very justly said that there was one mode of remedying the evil complained of—namely, by farmers keeping accounts, and thereby being able to substantiate their claim for the deductions

to which they were entitled; he was very sorry that the farmers generally did not avail themselves of this mode. He himself was acquainted with only a few Scotch farmers who had obtained relief from taxation in this way. The Inland Revenue officer had, on proof by production of accounts, granted relief; and he should cordially agree with any proposition which contemplated getting them to adopt this general system. The Inland Revenue Department attended very carefully to all representations on the part of the farmers. He wished to point out that in Scotland farmers paid on their full incomes, while in England a very large reduction was made.

MR. BIRKBECK said, he wished to suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it would not be well for him to take into consideration the desirability of coming to some more satisfactory settlement on this question, between now and the Report stage, without waiting till next year. They ought not to be put off for another year. The agricultural distress had now been going on for eight years, and the farmers of the country ought not to be put to the necessity of waiting any longer. If the right hon. Gentleman did not give the promise asked of him, it was to be hoped the Amendment would be pressed to a Division, so that the country might see who were the real friends of the farmers on this question.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be slow to hold out expectations to hon. Gentlemen on this question which were not likely to be realized. It seemed to him that this was not so much a question between the farmers of England and those of Ireland and Scotland as it was a question between the farmers of England and the other taxpayers. They were told that the farmers had had a series of bad years; but if the case of other traders was fully stated, it would be found that they had quite as strong a claim to consideration as had the agriculturalists of the country. The farmers had had their rents very largely reduced all round; and he did not hesitate to say that, in the average of years, this class had got on very well—much better than those concerned in other trades. It was said that the farmers should not be charged upon the basis

upon which the tax was at present levied, on account of the succession of bad years they had suffered; but it seemed to him that the answer which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given to that contention was complete. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that the farmer had redress. They had the same relief given as any other trader under the Income Tax system; and he was, therefore, at a loss to imagine why this special boon should be given to the farmers, and refused to the other taxpayers. For his own part, he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer should wish to see a much stronger case put before him before he agreed to any such change as that proposed. Surely farmers were not to come to that House and claim an exemption at the expense of all the other taxpayers of the country. If they did, it would be absolutely necessary that those who represented large constituencies carrying on the great industries of the country, and who had been suffering for quite as many years as the agriculturalists, should come forward, and each declare that the special conditions of his constituents had a right to be considered. He maintained that there had been, unfortunately, more Income Tax paid on money which had not been earned by the manufacturing classes than by the farmers.

MR. D. DAVIES said, if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Clare Read) went to a Division on his Amendment, he should support him. Thirty years ago he was a farmer himself, and he did keep accounts for one year—and, as he thought, pretty correct accounts. He was very busy at the time, and these accounts bothered him so much that at last he had to give them up. That was his experience, and he believed, also, that it was the experience of the generality of farmers. Taking the agricultural class as a whole since 1879—he did not say that there were not exceptions in cases where farmers had good grass land, and a large amount of healthy stock—they had lost money that could not pay Income Tax. He himself was willing to pay Income Tax; in fact, if it would relieve the farmers, he should be very glad, so far as he was concerned, to pay a little more. He did not wish to vote against the Government; and, he supposed, if he did he should be called to Order. If, however, the Amendment were pressed

to a Division, he should feel bound to vote for it.

MR. GREGORY was understood to say that this subject had been unexpectedly raised, and it was new to him that there was a difference of assessment between the farmers of the three countries, nor could he understand the principle upon which the tax was so levied; but he felt that the burden was most unfair to the English farmer, falling more heavily on him than on the Irish or Scotch farmer.

MR. COURTNEY said, the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) had declared that this was a new subject to him, and the hon. Member's speech had proved that to be the case; because, for the first time in his (Mr. Courtney's) experience of the hon. Member, he had that evening spoken upon a subject with which he was not acquainted. Such a proceeding was of the rarest occurrence on the part of the hon. Member. When the Income Tax was revived by Sir Robert Peel, it was a great question how the tax was to be assessed on farmers, because farmers, as a rule, were unable to make out accounts, as the hon. Member for Cardigan Boroughs (Mr. D. Davies) had declared to have been his own experience. It was said that there was no trustworthy test as to the property of a farmer; but, taking good years with the bad, it was thought that in England the farmer's profits might fairly be taken at half his rental. That was to say, supposing he paid £500 a-year rent, his profit would be £250. It was assumed, at the same time, that the Scotch and Irish farmers' profits would be, as a rule, a third of their rental—that was to say where they paid a rental of £600 a-year their profit would be some £200. That was the rule adopted by Sir Robert Peel, and it was in accordance with that rule that the Schedule had been prepared. The landowner, under Schedule A, paid 5*d.* in the pound on his rental; and the English farmer paid 2½*d.*, that being supposed to be 5*d.* on his profits. The Scotch and Irish farmers had to pay 1½*d.* on their rental, that being supposed to be at the same rate—namely, 5*d.* on their profits. The scheme of taxation of profits was the same in the Three Kingdoms—that was to say, all paid the same rate. There was no idea of taxing the English farmer to the extent of 2½*d.* on his rental, and the

Scotch and Irish farmers a smaller amount. He was not going to argue the rule under which the charge was made; he had explained the principle which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gregory) could not understand. But the law had done something more for the farmer. There was an Act of 1851, giving farmers the privilege to pay on the actual profits they made in bad years—that was to say, they had the privilege of saying—"I will take the average in good years; but whenever bad years come, I will pay on the actual profits I have made." That was an extraordinary exemption, only embodied in the law in favour of the English farmer. It came to this—that the farmer had the privilege of paying as if his profits were half his rental, although the amount realized might be more than half his rental; and, furthermore, the privilege, whenever a bad year turned up, of saying—"My profits will not reach a half of my rental; therefore I must have a reduction." English farmers had largely availed themselves of this privilege in recent times. The English farmers had the advantage, therefore, both ways, and the Exchequer could never make a gain by him. He (Mr. Courtney) thought, after this explanation, hon. Gentlemen must see that the charge which had been brought against the Government fell entirely to the ground.

MR. BIDDELL, after remarking that the hon. Member (Mr. Courtney), in correcting the previous speaker, was not right himself, stated that the fact was the English farmer was assessed on more than half his rent. The tithe was added to his rent, and from the amount thus obtained one-eighth was deducted, and the remainder was the sum on which he was assessed. [Mr. GLADSTONE and Mr. CHILDERS: No, no!] Thus, assuming his rent was £500 and tithe £120, his tax would be calculated on £620, less one-eighth, or £542 10*s.* 2½*d.* in the pound on that would be £5 12*s.* 10*d.*, which was 15 or 20 per cent more than the Scotch farmer had to pay. He had stated these facts in the form of a Question to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) some three years ago, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the right hon. Gentleman had deputed the answer to the gentleman (Lord Frederick Cavendish) who was, unfortunately, murdered in Ireland.

The answer given on that occasion was that his (Mr. Biddell's) calculations were right. He would stand on his calculations, and would still maintain that where the rent, tithes, and rates were the same the English farmer paid from 15 to 20 per cent more than the Scotch or Irish farmer. He would take a further opportunity of publishing his figures, in order that he might convince the right hon. Gentlemen he was right and they were in error.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that when he heard the hon. Member (Mr. Biddell) fall into what appeared to him to be a most manifest error just now he shook his head, because it was impossible for him to hear such a statement without taking exception to it. He would not go back into figures of which the hon. Member had spoken, but would address himself to the point the hon. Member had put before the Committee. He understood the hon. Member to state that the tithe paid by the farmer entered into the computation of his rent. [MR. BIDDELL: That is so.] He was not sure whether the hon. Member also said that the rates were added, and that one-eighth was deducted either from the rent *plus* the tithe, or the tithe *plus* the rate, or from the rent *plus* the tithe and rates. Certainly, if the experience of the hon. Member had been such as he had described, his position had been most unfortunate. If he, or any of his friends, had been assessed on the basis of adding to the rent the tithe, or the tithe and rates, they had, unquestionably, been imposed upon by those who levied the tax. There could be no doubt in the world that, according to law, there was no connection whatever between the rent and tithe in the computation of the tax. The charge on the rent was made without the slightest reference to what was paid for tithe or for taxes. No such addition as the hon. Member had alluded to ought to have been made, the Act of Parliament being perfectly clear on the subject; and that fact ought to have been known throughout the country by this time, after the experience it had had of the Income Tax. As to the question whether, when the tax was levied on the rent, the hon. Gentleman paid a larger proportion than was paid in Scotland, it was an important subject, which ought to be discussed on its merits; but, without doubt, it

appeared to him that the question was much more whether the Scotch farmer should have his tax raised than whether the English farmer should have his reduced. The English farmer could not possibly be damnified, as the rule of taxation in proportion to his rent was a rule entirely in his favour, and entirely against the Exchequer, because if he made profits beyond his rent he had the benefit of being charged on only a portion of those profits; whereas, if he made profits short of half of his rent, he could decline altogether to pay on the ordinary assessment. The Income Tax, no doubt, was a tax full of anomalies and inequalities; but in this case it certainly seemed to him that those anomalies were on behalf of the farmer, and not of the State.

SIR BALDWIN LEIGHTON said, he rose to correct an observation which had been made by the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour). He had understood the hon. and gallant Member to say that the farmer ought to be rated higher for Imperial taxes, for the reason that 30 per cent was taken off his rent in the assessment of the local taxes.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR was understood to say that he had only pointed out the difference between England and Scotland in this matter. In England the local rates were not paid on the gross rental. In Bedfordshire, for instance, he believed about 30 per cent was deducted from the gross rental before the taxes were rated and paid.

SIR BALDWIN LEIGHTON said, if that were so, Bedford must be very exceptionally situated, because it was not the case in the county he represented (South Shropshire). The deductions from rental were 5 per cent for land and building, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for land without building, and this for repairs, not for rates or tithe. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised to give the matter his best consideration; and, under the circumstances, he would appeal to his hon. Friend (Mr. Clare Read) not to press his Amendment to a Division. With regard to the statement of the Prime Minister, that the tithe was not reckoned with the rent, he thought that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would inquire into the matter he would find that the Prime Minister was mistaken, and that if a man paid £500

a-year rent and £100 a-year tithe, the Commissioners charged his Income Tax upon the one half—namely, £300 a-year, upon which he was obliged to pay. There was evidently a very important question at issue here. His hon. Friend (Mr. Clare Read) had stated that it was the rent and the tithe together that the tax was assessed upon; and he (Sir Baldwin Leighton) was almost sure that he was right in his contention. Of course, rates were not reckoned; but certainly the tithe was. At any rate, if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would look into the matter to see whether the case was as represented by the hon. Member (Mr. Biddell) he would be doing a great justice to a large number of people. The concession which had been announced by the Prime Minister depended very much upon how it worked, and the facilities afforded for its use.

MR. MAGNIAC said, the whole question of rating for Income Tax and other purposes depended on the annual value; but the hon. Gentleman below him (Mr. Courtney) had said that rates did not enter into the question. In his (Mr. Magniac's) opinion they did; and they really lay at the whole root of the question. The farmers had a certain percentage deducted from their rents for rates and taxes, for rates could not be profit to the farmer. In many counties the deduction was large according to the valuation. In his county (Bedford) they had a very careful valuation of the lands and houses. It was made some years ago, and was a very high valuation indeed; and the consequence was that a much larger amount was assessed upon there than in counties in which there had been no such valuation. It was very well to say that farmers ought to keep accounts; but there was nothing more difficult than to make out the accounts of a farm. Profits must depend on circumstances occurring over a term of years; and it was impossible to lay down a general rule applicable to every locality and every description of land by which to ascertain the value of a farm. Farmers would have to pay Income Tax upon profits which they never made; unless they were able to take a long series of years it would be impossible to show their average profits or losses. This state of things ought to be remedied; but he did not know how that was to be done.

An hon. Member had said that farmers were in a better position than other traders in the country; but he believed they were worse off: and he thought the plan of requiring them to show the profits of each year separately as a trader could do would be altogether inapplicable to them, unworkable, and unjust. This was a matter which certainly demanded examination, for it was one of very serious importance; but he hoped the hon. Member (Mr. Clare Read) would not go to a Division, because it was a case in which it would be utterly impossible for a responsible Minister to give an answer off-hand. At the same time, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would fulfil the promise he had made to have the question properly looked into in justice to the farmers.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he thought it would be most unwise for his hon. Friend to press this matter to a Division. The question was one of very great importance, and he was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider it during the Recess. He was not prepared to recommend the right hon. Gentleman to make an alteration at once, because the alteration of an Act which had been in existence for a great many years was a very serious matter indeed; but there could be no doubt that the views expressed by the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac), and by other hon. Members on both sides of the House, were unfortunately too true. The farmers of England had for many years sustained losses under circumstances which had been most disastrous to them, and to a great many other persons also. It would be difficult for them to convey to the Commissioners before whom they would have to prove their case facts and evidence which would justify their claim for an entire remission of taxation. Farmer after farmer, tenant after tenant, had failed and disappeared, and the land had fallen back into the landlords' hands, and been re-let at a great reduction of rent; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the country would have to face a serious condition of things, in regard to which there appeared to be no prospect of improvement at the present time. The farming industry was now of a character of which few persons in London had the slightest idea; and if that was the case in the greater part of

England, it was not borne out to the same extent in Ireland or Scotland, where the proportion of the Income Tax was much smaller in relation to the rent paid. He was not aware that there was any reduction in respect of rates referred to by the hon. Member for Bedford, and he had always understood that the rent paid to the landlord was the basis upon which the Income Tax was paid; and some authoritative statement upon that subject should be made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to remove misapprehension in the minds of persons interested in the matter. He believed the Income Tax was paid in reference to the rent in many cases, *plus* the tithe. In many cases the rent paid included the tithe; in others they were separate payments. The whole matter was a very important one, and required to be considered during the Recess.

MR. RAMSAY wished to draw attention to the discrepancy between England and Scotland in respect to Income Tax charged upon farmers. In England the practice was for the tenant to pay, in addition to his rent, the rates and taxes due in respect of the land he occupied; but in Scotland those would be charged on the owner of the land. That was the sole ground why, in 1842, a distinction was made between England and Scotland. In Scotland the tenant was charged in respect of rack rent; and he thought no better reason could be assigned for the distinction between England and Scotland as to the rate at which the Income Tax should be assessed than the fact that in Scotland the principal rates were divided equally between the landlord and the tenant, while in England the tenant, as a rule, undertook to pay the rates for the landlord. In these circumstances, it was obvious that it would not be fair or reasonable to charge farmers in Scotland with respect to Income Tax at the same rate as in England, where the tenants, in addition to the rent, also paid the whole of the rates.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): The right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) has asked me to make some authoritative statement on this subject; but I have nothing to add to my previous remarks, except that I should like to see the machinery of the assessment for taxes and rates in force throughout the

country. Beyond this, I can only repeat that what I will undertake to do is, not to examine the basis of the principle upon which the farmer should pay the same Income Tax as other people upon his profits, but to see whether the particular machinery under which he is assessed is good or bad.

MR. CLARE READ said, he thought the tenant farmers had already gained considerably from this discussion, for the Committee had heard from the highest authority in the House that they had been taxed for years and years on the tithe they paid, and that that had been an illegal tax upon them. He had paid Income Tax upon his tithes for 30 years, and he should certainly now make a demand for a repayment, and should advise every tenant farmer to do the same. He was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer was wrong in saying that that was not the universal custom of the Inland Revenue authorities. His hon. Friend the Member for West Suffolk (Mr. Biddell) had put the case so plainly that he would not repeat the arguments of his hon. Friend; but the case was this. The farmer's rent and tithes were added together; then a certain amount was deducted, and that was supposed to represent the rates; but that balance of rent and tithes was what the tenant farmers of England had been paying for years and years. Now, however, they were told by the Prime Minister that that had been illegal, and henceforth they would not have to pay that. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his assurance that he would consider this question. He did not care about the facilities given for appeal, because he was sure that the majority of the farmers in this country did not keep accounts well enough to furnish the necessary information for an appeal; but even with the best arrangement of farm accounts, he considered the case put by the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) unanswerable. Farmers had to go through their accounts, not for a single year, but for a series of years, to ascertain whether they had made a profit or not. The Secretary to the Treasury had rightly put before the Committee the origin of the difficulty. That was in 1840, when Sir Robert Peel revived the Property Tax; but the case was now entirely altered. Ireland and Scotland might be considered pastoral

countries, and England had been, until recently, more or less arable land. It was quite true that in 1840 the farmers' profits in pastoral districts were different from the profits in arable districts; but now, whereas pastoral districts in this country had suffered hardly at all under the operations of Free Trade, and in some cases had benefited, the whole of the losses had been sustained by the tillers of the arable parts of the country; and therefore, although one-half of the rent might have been a fair criterion of the farmer's profits in the days of Sir Robert Peel, he contended that that ought now to be altered, and that the calculation ought to be one-third in England, as it was in Scotland and Ireland. The statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a distinct gain to the farmers, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not forget his promise. Under these circumstances, he would withdraw his Amendment.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought the tenant farmers of England owed a debt of gratitude to the hon. Member (Mr. Clare Read) for bringing forward this matter, and extracting a declaration from the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he hoped some instruction would be given to the officers of the Inland Revenue that they were not in future to charge tenants Income Tax on the tithes they paid. His experience went to corroborate the statement of the hon. Member, for he had paid Income Tax under Schedule B on tithes as well as on rent, and had always supposed that he was liable as an occupier to that charge. As, however, that was not legal, he thought some instruction should be given to the Inland Revenue officers that such a charge should not be made; or, at any rate, that there should be no trouble in assenting to appeals by tenant farmers.

Mr. MAGNIAC wished to say further that if there was one thing more erroneous than another it was that rent represented real value as a basis for Income Tax. There might be cases in which the farmer paid rent according to the real value; but there were others who paid beyond the value, or less than the value, the difference being settled in other ways.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH urged that trade and manufactures should be considered in reference to this matter. Some

tenants would be taxed on the full rent; while in other cases, according to the Prime Minister, tenants would be assessed at a lower rate. He saw no injustice in the rent being divided between two or more landlords.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he would undertake to look into the question as affecting tithes as well as other matters of assessment. The whole subject should be considered.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 8, inclusive, *agreed to*.

Clause 9 (Provisions of Income Tax Acts to apply to duties to be granted for succeeding year).

Mr. WARTON moved the insertion of the following words at the end of the clause:—

"Provided, That nothing in this section shall be deemed to render necessary or authorize the appointment of assessors for such of the said Duties as may be granted and payable under Schedules (A) and (B) of 'The Income Tax Act, 1853.'"

The hon. and learned Gentleman said, he had been somewhat struck by the rapidity with which the Bill was carried through its second reading; and, when he came to look at the text, he found a vast difference between the Bill of last year and the present Bill. The Bill of last year contained provisions very similar to those in the last clauses of the present Bill—in fact, two or three of the last clauses were identical with the clauses of last year's Bill, with this exception—that the last clauses in last year's Bill contained at the end the words which he was now proposing to add to this clause. Knowing what was done last year when an attempt was made by the Government to increase their patronage to a considerable extent by appointing a new means of collecting the Income Tax, and remembering the effort that was made in that House, and successfully made, to defeat that attempt—an effort which was successful by a majority of eight—it had struck him, on reading the 9th clause of the present Bill, that this was the same attempt being made under another form; and that impression was confirmed when he remembered the suspicious rapidity with which the Bill had been passed through its stages. He was under the impression that that was

the meaning of it. He might or might not be right; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not be angry with him for putting down this Amendment, which he now begged to move.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, at end, add—"Provided, That nothing in this section shall be deemed to render necessary or authorize the appointment of assessors for such of the said Duties as may be granted and payable under Schedules (A) and (B) of 'The Income Tax Act, 1853.'"—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. COURTNEY said, he did not wish in the least degree to interfere with the freedom of the hon. and learned Gentleman. There was a little discussion on this point last year. The proposed words formed a provision which it was very necessary and desirable to insert in the Bill in two years out of every three; but in the third year it was not necessary, and should not be inserted, for this reason—that there was a fresh assessment every third year, and, when that was made, it was necessary that assessors should be appointed. In the other two years the assessors were not appointed. As a fresh assessment would be made next year, it was necessary that these words should not be in the Bill.

MR. WARTON expressed his readiness to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause agreed to.

MR. MACFARLANE moved, in page 1, after Clause 2, to insert the following Clause:—

(Reduction of Tobacco Duties.)

"The Duty of Customs chargeable upon unmanufactured tobacco shall be three shillings per pound, and upon manufactured Cavendish, Negrohead, and other cake tobacco, two shillings."

The hon. Gentleman said, he had put down this Amendment in consequence of the unsatisfactory result, in his opinion, which attended a recent discussion in that House on the Tobacco Duties. He was not able on that occasion to answer the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, therefore, he was not able to argue the question; but it would be in the recollection of the Committee that the right hon. Gentleman admitted the essential accuracy of the

figures which he (Mr. Macfarlane) then quoted. Those figures were never disputed in any way. He (Mr. Macfarlane) showed that the principle upon which the duty was levied upon tobacco in this country was not an equitable principle; but he did not, upon the occasion he was referring to, raise the whole question of the Tobacco Duties in general, for he did not then wish to wander into the whole subject. He must, however, now say that the refusal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that occasion to grant a Select Committee to inquire into the question left him and others no option but to go into the whole question in order to create a public opinion upon the point; for that was the only thing that would have any influence upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or upon any other Minister. He had, therefore, put down this Amendment raising the question in a specific manner. The figures which he had put into the Amendment were, he dared say, quite inaccurate, and did not properly represent the relative duties that ought to be charged on one kind of tobacco as distinguished from another; but he had simply put them down so as to raise the question, and to enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say whether he would now grant a Select Committee to inquire into the whole question. He (Mr. Macfarlane) explained, when he brought the matter forward before on the Order for going into Committee of Ways and Means, that he did not do it for the purpose of making a raid upon the Exchequer. All he asked for was an equitable adjustment of duties to enable manufacturers outside the United Kingdom to compete on fair and equitable terms with manufacturers inside the United Kingdom. He had shown the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the previous discussion to which he referred, that 1 lb. of tobacco, brought into this country in a dry condition, contained, when sold to the working classes after manufacture, something like only 2s. 4d. or 2s. 5d. worth of duty-paid article, the rest being made up of water and other matter. He showed, also, at the same time, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer not only charged for the water and matter contained in foreign-manufactured tobacco at the rate of 3s. 6d. per lb. duty, but he actually penalized the foreign manufac-

turer by charging 4s. 10d., or 1s. 4d. per lb. more; and the result was that the tobacco—the actual leaf—contained in tobacco manufactured outside the United Kingdom, and brought in here to be sold, had duty levied upon it actually at the rate of about 7s. 6d. per lb. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had admitted that he could not deny that foreign-manufactured tobacco could not compete in this country with English-manufactured tobacco; but the right hon. Gentleman declared that that was due to circumstances, and not to the amount of the duty. The circumstances were that in the one case the right hon. Gentleman charged 2s. 5d. per lb. in duty, while in the other he charged 7s. 6d. per lb. That was a very tangible circumstance, no doubt, and quite accounted for the whole thing. But there was another statement which the right hon. Gentleman had made, and which he (Mr. Macfarlane) desired to controvert. It was this—that the importation of manufactured tobacco into this country showed that the duty was not prohibitory, and did not keep such tobacco out. But what were the figures which the Chancellor of the Exchequer relied upon? He (Mr. Macfarlane) would quote two or three of them. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) recently obtained a Return for 40 years, showing the importation of manufactured tobacco into this country. The Return commenced with the year 1841, when the total quantity of manufactured tobacco imported into the United Kingdom in that one year was 1,896,000 lbs. But that did not go into consumption. It was imported and exported again, with the exception of 213,000 lbs., which was entered for home consumption. That was the total in that year, 1841; and in 1861, 20 years afterwards, the quantity entered for home consumption was 517,000 lbs. Now, the last year given in the Returns from which he was quoting was the year 1880, and in that year the total quantity of foreign-manufactured tobacco imported for home consumption was 153,000 lbs., or 50,000 lbs. less than it had been 40 years before. Now, he did not quite understand how it was that the right hon. Gentleman was able to argue that the duty was not a prohibitive duty because the importation was

increasing under it, when, as a matter of fact, these figures showed that, though the consumption of tobacco in general had largely increased, the importation of manufactured tobacco had fallen off by 50,000 lbs. in 40 years. Now, what he (Mr. Macfarlane) wanted to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer was this. He did not propose to put the Committee to the trouble of dividing upon the Amendment; because, if the right hon. Gentleman had not arguments enough in his head, he had sufficient arguments, at all events, in the Smoking Room and in other places about the House, to come in when the bell rang, and gave notice that he required them. There was no occasion for argument when a Minister had big battalions at his back. But he (Mr. Macfarlane) was satisfied that the public, having their eyes opened, would not rest under this injustice, and would not be content until the whole question had been dealt with, and a proper and equitable plan devised for charging the duty on tobacco. Such a proper and equitable plan was to charge the duty in bond, no matter where the tobacco came from. He had pointed out before that they owed nothing to America in this matter. America had her own Protectional duties, which formed only an indirect way of taxing her own people; and the least that the British Chancellor of the Exchequer could do was to try and tax the British people on some equitable principle, and in such a way as would not force them into the consumption of an atrociously bad article when they could get a good one at the same price. If the right hon. Gentleman were to place a duty on corn, and so were to force the people not only to use English corn, but to use bad English corn instead of good foreign corn, what would the country say? Yet, that was just what went on in the case of tobacco, and the people of England did not know what good tobacco was—the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not let them have the opportunity of tasting it. They got rubbish composed of 65 per cent of some sort of tobacco, and the balance made up of water. He (Mr. Macfarlane) asked the Home Secretary a Question on this point the other day, as to the atrocious system of watering and adulteration practised. He understood that the officials of the Government were sent for certain pur-

poses to every manufactory in the Kingdom. Was it, or was it not, their duty to see that the article sold to the public was not watered and adulterated by anything but fair means? He did not wish to use hard words with regard to the manufacturers; but they themselves admitted that when the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer put 4*d.* per lb. extra upon the Tobacco Duty, they simply added so much water to the article they sold. They admitted it themselves. What he wanted to ask was, whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would now agree to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the whole question? The right hon. Gentleman knew very well that questions of this kind grew very fast. He (Mr. Macfarlane) had no desire to harass the manufacturers in any way; but they themselves were beginning to see that an inferior trade was a disadvantage to the public and no advantage to the Revenue. Would the Government, then, consent to appoint a Select Committee to consider the whole question of the duties upon cigars and the rest of the present system? It was, no doubt, a great convenience to the Custom House officials to charge precisely the same duty upon a miserable cigar which came from Burmah and was worth 1*d.*, and upon the finer one which was worth 1*s.* He did not wish to trouble the Custom House officials to go into every petty little detail; but, surely, analogous duties could be imposed upon cigars of different qualities to those which were imposed upon wines of different strengths; and one duty could be imposed on cigars worth less than 40*s.* per lb., while another duty was imposed on those which were worth more than 40*s.* per lb. He did not see how there could be any difficulty in making such a change; and it certainly was not equitable that a 1*d.* cigar should pay the same duty as a 1*s.* 6*d.* Yet that was the practice now, and the person who bought cigars at 100*s.* per 100 paid only 5*s.* 6*d.* per cent duty on their purchase, while the tobacco consumed by the working classes paid 600 or 700 per cent in duty. He did not think that was a defensible system, and he did not see why the right hon. Gentleman should not deal with it. He could assure the Government that the matter would not be allowed to rest where it was, and the agitation aroused

on the subject would become greater and greater each Session. The working man would not be content to smoke wet rubbish when he could get good dry tobacco for the same price. He (Mr. Macfarlane) would not go any further if the right hon. Gentleman would agree to the appointment of a Select Committee. The right hon. Gentleman said the other day that he was not prepared to submit £3,500,000 of Revenue to a Select Committee. But he (Mr. Macfarlane) did not propose that the right hon. Gentleman should leave it to a Select Committee to remit £3,500,000; all he proposed was that a Committee should consider the question, and see whether a more equitable system of taxation could not be introduced, not to reduce the Revenue—that might be unnecessary—but only to allow the duty to be more fairly and equitably charged. The rich man's cigar should pay as much as the poor man's tobacco—in indeed, it ought to pay a good deal more. The right hon. Gentleman knew very well that a Select Committee, if appointed, would have no power to remit taxation; they would only have power to inquire and report to that House, and that House could deal with their Report as they pleased. He thought he had now shown that his request was a reasonable one. If a Select Committee were appointed, the public would wait patiently until they had made their Report, and then the right hon. Gentleman would be in a position to deal with it. This was really a most important question; because he (Mr. Macfarlane) held that tobacco and temperance went together. There was an old-fashioned, absurd theory, that people who smoked drank; but the fact was quite the contrary. People who smoked, as a rule, did not drink. People who drank smoked in addition, but people who smoked did not naturally drink in addition. The fact was, that many of the greatest smokers were among the most temperate of men; and smoking was really the only enjoyable luxury that the poor man possessed. He wanted to see the poor man get as good a tobacco to put in his pipe of a morning as circumstances would permit, and as the exigencies of taxation would allow.

New Clause (Reduction of Tobacco Duties,)—(*Mr. Macfarlane*,)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the hon. Gentleman, under cover of this Motion, had made an appeal to him, asking him to assent to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the Tobacco Duty. The hon. Gentleman, in giving his reasons for the adoption of such a course, had said that he was in favour of a system under which the duty should be levied in proportion to the value of the tobacco on which it was charged, and not in proportion to its weight, whether it was manufactured or unmanufactured. What he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had said was that in this country they had abandoned the system of *ad valorem* duties—their day was passed. As to wines, to which reference had been made, there was no *ad valorem* duty on them; but the duty was levied according to the amount of alcoholic strength contained in each wine, and had no relation to value, directly or indirectly. This country had had great experience of *ad valorem* duties—it had had them for something like two centuries, with respect to one article or another. All the arguments that could be used in favour of *ad valorem* duties were used years ago; but we almost unanimously determined to abolish the system as one open to every possible kind of fraud, and bad from the point of view of the Revenue. Under these circumstances, the hon. Gentleman appealed to the Government to appoint a Select Committee for the purpose of re-introducing the system of *ad valorem* duties on tobacco.

MR. MACFARLANE: I did not ask for that. I merely expressed my own opinion. A Committee would consider the whole question, and would not be guided by my opinion.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that when the hon. Gentleman asked for a Committee because he was in favour of a particular system it was fair to assume that the revival of that system was the object which he had in view, and that that was the question which the Committee would primarily have to consider. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was not prepared to say that the

re-introduction of an *ad valorem* system was practicable; and, therefore, as he had said on a previous occasion, he could not assent to the appointment of such a Committee as was proposed. He came now to the actual Motion of his hon. Friend. The hon. Gentleman proposed that whereas the duty now charged on unmanufactured tobacco was either 3*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* 10*d.* per lb., as the case might be, and the duty charged on manufactured tobacco lay between 4*s.* and 5*s.*, there should be instead a duty on unmanufactured tobacco of 3*s.*, and on manufactured or other tobacco of 2*s.* The hon. Gentleman shook his head; but he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was quoting the hon. Gentleman's own figures.

MR. MACFARLANE: I only put them down to raise discussion.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that if the hon. Gentleman put a Motion down on the Paper, it was his (the Chancellor of the Exchequer's) duty to show its effect, and he found that the effect of this particular Motion would be to take off about one-seventh of the present amount of duty. If, therefore, the hon. Gentleman's clause should be carried it would entail a loss of more than £1,000,000 to the Revenue; and, therefore, he could not assent to it. But the hon. Gentleman said he had only put the words of his Motion on the Paper in order to raise discussion, and see whether the Government would persist in their objection to the appointment of a Committee. Now, he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had gone very carefully into the question in the course of a former debate, and he would not now repeat all that he then stated. All he would now say was that if they taxed manufactured tobacco at 2*s.* and tobacco in its unmanufactured state at 3*s.*, they would invert what was the universal practice in their fiscal system. The hon. Gentleman had stated that the importation of manufactured tobacco had not increased within the last few years, and he had given as an illustration the amount of manufactured tobacco imported in 1841 and 1861, and lately. The hon. Gentleman quoted figures showing some such result as this—that while in 1841 200,000 lbs. were imported, last year the amount imported was 150,000 lbs. But in 1841 and in

1861 the old duties were in force—that was to say, a duty of 9s. in the lb. upon manufactured tobacco—and those duties only lasted until the year 1863, when they gave way to the present duties; but the amount of manufactured tobacco imported during last year was over 1,000,000 lbs.

MR. MACFARLANE: For home consumption?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) said, yes. He had gone through all he said on the subject the other day, and he must still adhere to the conclusion at which he arrived. He could not accept the clause, nor agree to the appointment of a Select Committee.

MR. EUSTACE SMITH said, there was great disappointment among those who took an interest in the subject at the manner in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had dealt with it. There could be no doubt that though it might seem but a small question it was one that would attract more and more attention. The right hon. Gentleman, in addressing himself to meet the arguments brought forward, had lost sight of the view the hon. Member advocated—not by any particular proposal, though he stated his own opinion—the broad principle that this was a question which ought to be investigated by a Select Committee. The whole point of it was the state of the Tobacco Duties, and the protection these afforded to the English manufacturers. It was a question of nothing else than Protection in the trade against Free Trade. Those who wanted an alteration in the duty did not want to inflict any injury to the Exchequer, or to the financial interests of the country; they wanted the English consumer to get the best supply he could, without regard to the manufacturer in this country or in any other country. He would appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's large acquaintance with the Australian Colonies and the working of the tobacco trade there. In the Australian Colonies and in New Zealand there were little sale of English tobacco, simply because English and American tobaccos were subject to the same duty as manufactured tobacco, and the Colonist never thought of buying an ounce of English tobacco. This was a fair test of English opinion of the two articles, if it had a fair chance of judging between them;

but under the present state of the law it was quite impossible that American tobacco could be sold at a price the working man could approach. The hon. Member for Carlrow (Mr. Macfarlane) was a little unfair to the English manufacturer, when he said the whole question of the weight of English tobacco was explained by adulteration. It could not fairly be called adulteration. The fact was, the process of manufacture in the two countries was totally different. In the English manufacture the exigencies of climate required the use of steam in the manufacture, and this left a certain amount of water in the tobacco; whereas, in America, the sun being more available, there was not so much water, and the weight of the tobacco was considerably reduced. It would be quite possible, without much disturbance of duty, to get the article from the country in which it was manufactured under the greatest advantage; and they had a right to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not to commit himself to any particular proposal of *ad valorem* duties, or any great principle of political economy, but to consider the manner in which Tobacco Duties were levied, and whether this could be altered in such a manner that there would be increased advantages to the consumer without detriment to the Revenue.

MR. PUGH said, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would reconsider this question. It was one of great importance, pecuniarily, to the poorer classes; and it was also a question of immense importance to India and the financial condition of that country. Every source of Revenue there should be carefully encouraged. The growth of tobacco in India had increased to a large extent in recent years. During the time he had known it the manufacture had increased and improved to a very large extent. It would be clear to the Committee that the Chancellor of the Exchequer devoted himself entirely in his remarks to criticising the various suggestions made by the hon. Member for Carlrow; but the two main questions he did not touch upon. The present duties added much to the expenses of the consumer. If a poor man wished to find the best tobacco, and bought foreign manufactured, he paid a higher rate than for English tobacco. That was clearly Protection, and Protection of the

worst form. Then, again, in reference to cigars. He was not going to advocate a return to *ad valorem* duties; but surely the Chancellor of the Exchequer could see some way, without recurring to that principle of *ad valorem* duties, to equalize the anomalies that existed in the duty upon Havannah cigars and Trichinopoly cigars. Putting these two points together, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would re-consider the question, and make some further inquiries into it. Without wishing to have recourse to *ad valorem* duties—certainly not with any intention of decreasing the Revenue—with no intention of advocating any less duty than at present, he wished to see a more fair and equitable way of raising the duty, so that the consumer might buy English or foreign manufacture as he wished, and a man who could only afford to smoke a 1d. cigar should pay less duty than a man who paid 1s. 6d.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, it was impossible not to sympathize with the object of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane), and from one point of view he had made out his case. It was indisputable that, although the consumption of tobacco in this country was very great, calculated per head of the population, unquestionably it was much adulterated. Owing to their fiscal arrangements, the manufacture of the tobacco consumed was confined to the United Kingdom; therefore this might be taken as one of the causes of adulteration, and one of the consequences of the fiscal arrangements in force. At all events, it was not an unfair proposal that this question should be thoroughly investigated, and, if necessary, referred to a Select Committee. At the same time, he agreed with one objection of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that it was not always understood if the House assented to the Budget proposals it was hardly consistent to make such an alteration in the Inland Revenue Bill. Unquestionably, if the Amendment were carried, it would place the Chancellor of the Exchequer, according to his figures, in such a position that he would have a deficiency to meet. It was a very complicated question, with which he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer attempted to deal fairly; but he very naturally objected to refer to a Select Committee such a large question as the

Tobacco Duties, which might, perhaps, make a Report which, if adopted, would largely decrease the Revenue at the exact time when the Revenue could least afford it. But would it not be possible to refer to a Committee the incidence of the tax, leaving the amount of Revenue, as far as possible, where it now was? The Chancellor of the Exchequer was very adroit in the drafting of Resolutions; and the hon. Member for Carlow would be satisfied if that assisted him to secure what he wished—as good an article as possible for consumption by the poorer classes. The hon. Member for Carlow wished to improve the tobacco, and he, moreover, contended that there was less duty imposed on the rich man's cigar than on the poor man's tobacco. If that were so—and he believed it was not disputed—he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider the proposition he (Lord George Hamilton) had ventured to make; and between now and when he introduced his next Budget make such a proposal as would tend to equalize the inequalities to which the hon. Member for Carlow had called attention, not objecting to some inquiry into the subject.

MR. WILLS said, he should not have intervened in the discussion but for a remark from the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton), who had spoken of the adulteration of tobacco. In no country with which he was acquainted were the laws against adulteration more stringent or more strictly enforced. There was a Return in the Library, moved for by himself a year or two ago, and that would show the convictions for adulteration in process of manufacture. A very heavy duty was imposed by the State for Revenue purposes, and the only thing allowed by the Excise to be used in the manufacture was pure water. The addition of water to the tobacco consumed by the working classes was made to bring it to the price at which the British working man wished to have his tobacco. If a man, instead of giving 3d. an ounce, would give 4d. an ounce, he would get as good tobacco as could be produced in India, in America, or any part of the world. The higher classes of tobacco manufactured and consumed in this country were probably the finest in the world. The increasing export trade in tobacco from this country to all parts of the world,

and the price that British manufactured tobacco commanded in the market, showed there were consumers in other countries who appreciated the high quality that the British manufacturers had secured.

MR. MACFARLANE said, the hon. Member who had just spoken claimed that adulteration was practised for the benefit of the working man, that the latter would only pay 3*d.* per ounce; therefore, if he only got 25 per cent of water he should be satisfied. He was careful to point out that there was no adulteration except with pure water. Now, if the Aylesbury Dairy Company offered such a plea, what would be the result? If a dealer put 5 per cent of water in his milk, he was summoned and fined. To be sure the fine was so small, perhaps he made more out of the water than would cover the fine. But that was not the question. Pure water though it might be, the man was fined; but in the tobacco trade it was alleged it was merely to satisfy the demand of the working classes for wet stuff. The hon. Member said if the working man would pay 4*d.* per ounce the manufacturer would leave the water out! Such an argument he had never heard advanced before. He was afraid all the arguments he had put before the Chancellor of the Exchequer had totally failed; but he thought this last argument ought to settle the question. Let the tobacco manufacturer be dealt with as the milk dealer was dealt with. He did not care whether the water used was pure or impure; he wanted to have the thing he paid for, and that which it was called, not a spongy stuff, which took half-an-hour to light in a pipe. A considerable part of a working man's leisure time must be taken up in efforts to light his wet tobacco, but he should be satisfied! But he would leave the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the conviction that the brief statement of the hon. Member ought to carry.

Clause *negatived*.

MR. WILLS said, the Clause he had to move was simply one of interpretation, and was intended to remove a practical inconvenience that had arisen in working under the Manufactured Tobacco Act of 1863. The term "Cavendish," which was employed all through that Act, was one that it was very difficult to

define with strict accuracy, because it was only employed in this country, and was neither used nor understood abroad. To the description used in the Act of 1863 he thought it desirable to add a few words of explanation, which would clear up a doubt that had existed for some time past whether certain sorts of tobacco were completely covered by the words of the Statute as originally framed. The Committee would see the clause was simply one of definition and explanation; it did not touch the principle of the Act of 1863 in any way, or in the slightest degree interfere with the Revenue. It would remove some difficulty and trouble with the Customs, from which the trade would be glad to be relieved, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would accept it.

New Clause (Amendment of the "Manufactured Tobacco Act, 1863,")—(*Mr. Wills*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. COURTNEY said, since this Clause was placed upon the Paper, the subject had occupied their attention a good deal; but he was sorry to say they had not been able to come to a definite conclusion on the matter, and he must ask the hon. Member to defer consideration of it to a later stage of the Bill at all events. He could not accept the statement that the clause would merely remove difficulties that arose out of the Act of 1863. There was no reason to doubt that that Act referred to tobacco in cakes; but this was a proposal to allow tobacco not pressed into cakes—to allow in bond—

MR. WILLS said, the tobacco would be manufactured precisely in the same way as Cut Cavendish.

MR. COURTNEY said, but it was different from that contemplated in the Act of 1863. It might be possible to accept the clause; but they had to consider the effect it might have on other branches of the trade, especially on tobacco made out of bond in the United Kingdom. He preferred to have it further considered in consultation with the Board of Inland Revenue. Without prejudging the decision, he thought if the hon. Member would withdraw his Motion it might be possible to come to

some decision on Report; but, in any event, he could promise the matter should have fair consideration.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Mr. WHITLEY said, the clause he had to propose, reducing the Carriage Duty to 15s., he put off on a former occasion. The question raised was not new to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The House could depend on the right hon. Gentleman when he turned his attention to the figures; but he (Mr. Whitley) wished to impress on the right hon. Gentleman, and on the Committee, the fact that the tax to which he was referring was *sui generis*. He was not aware that there was any tax pressing so directly on an industry of the country. The duty on plate might occur to some; but that duty was paid once for all, whereas this tax recurred every year, pressing directly on an industry of the country. No doubt, when it was instituted it was a tax on luxury; and if it were so now he would not be proposing this clause. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to reduce the duty on two-wheeled carriages to 15s., and also made another reduction on all carriages from October 1 to 21s.; but there was no provision respecting carriages for hire at makers, or at livery stables, or for the very common case of carriages being let out without charge while private carriages were under repair. These were the two cases he had endeavoured to meet by his Amendment. He would point out that in consequence of the heavy taxation upon carriage licences there had been a great reduction in the use of carriages; and with the reduction in the Railway Passenger Duty competition was greater, and the pressure had been very severe indeed over the carriage industry all over the country. In Scotland and in the North of England there had been great loss to the trade through taxation. He hoped, therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be in a position to say that if not this year, at least in the future it would be taken off. As the one remaining duty on an industry of the country, he was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be anxious to remove it. He believed the present reduction would amount to £25,000, and a total reduction would be considerable; but, still, seeing that it was a tax on an industry,

and the great competition those engaged in that industry had to meet, he really hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to looking into the subject carefully in the future, with the object of a total reduction of the duty. In doing so, he would give a great relief to a most industrious class of the community. Many Members had had this view strongly urged upon them by their constituents; and the tax could not be defended upon any ground but the necessities of the Exchequer.

New Clause (Duty on carriages to be reduced to fifteen shillings,)—(*Mr. Whitley*,) — *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read the second time."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the hon. Gentleman, in moving this clause, had referred to the general question of the Carriage Duty; but his clause did not touch the general question, but a very minute matter. As to the Carriage Duty itself, the amount of that duty was £500,000 or £600,000, a sum not to be lightly dealt with. But he did not think the hon. Gentleman had seen Clauses 3 and 4, which the Committee had passed. Clause 3 was almost identical with that of the hon. Gentleman, though it differed in one important particular. Under that clause it had been provided that hackney carriages, which were plying for hire either in the Metropolis or in any town or any borough in Scotland, under the Towns Police Act or the General Police Improvement Act, if of four wheels, should pay the same duty as those of two wheels. The hon. Gentleman's proposal was the same; he proposed that carriages plying for hire where fares were fixed by law should pay 15s.; but the difference between the two clauses was that the hon. Gentleman had used the words "plying for hire or to be let;" whereas in the clause in the Bill the carriages must be licensed under either the Metropolitan Act, the Towns Police Act, or the corresponding Act for Scotland. The fact was that, unless the distinction was drawn in this way, anyone might let his carriage for a day, and claim the reduced payment. As to the other part of the proposed clause, he, with his hon. Friend (Mr. Courtney),

Mr. Courtney

was, at first, rather prepossessed in favour of the proposal; but, on looking into the subject with the Revenue Board, it appeared that to adopt it would so open the door to fraud that they could not accept it.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY called attention to the fact that there were in certain towns in the North of England carriages which plied for hire at the Railway Stations, and which belonged to private firms of jobmasters. The carriages were kept simply for that purpose; and the jobmasters felt it very unfair that as the carriages in question did not come under the Police Acts, or the Metropolitan Public Carriage Act, they were shut out from the advantages under this Bill. As the right hon. Gentleman said it was impossible, from the point of view of the Revenue, to deal with the matter then, he trusted he would give it his merciful consideration hereafter.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) suggested that in the case of Durham, which did not appear on his list, the municipality of the City should be applied to for the purpose of their passing a bye-law, which would obviate this difficulty.

MR. WARTON suggested that the clause should be read a second time, and then amended, to meet the case of the jobmasters, by the addition of the words "kept for the purpose."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he was afraid that would not do. There would be no means of registering the names of persons having carriages for hire except under the Police Acts. He was not prepared to go beyond the words of the clause.

MR. BIDDELL said, the Bill, as it at present stood, would not remove the great hardship on coachmakers who did not let, but lent carriages to their customers, and who would still have to pay the tax.

MR. WARTON said, he must press his point upon the right hon. Gentleman, who seemed to be under the impression that it was not possible to ascertain the number of carriages under hire except by means of a register. No difficulty was experienced when the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill was passing through the House in defining and settling the

question with reference to persons who let and persons who lent carriages.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. SLAGG said, he wished to give the Chancellor of the Exchequer another opportunity of removing the very objectionable tax on silver and gold plate. He might remind the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee of the very serious nature of the burden that it entailed upon an important industry. There was no doubt that the silver trade in the country was languishing seriously under the influence of the duty and the system of Hall Marking. Not only was their own trade being stifled, but in America, their rival in artistic work, the trade was advancing in such a degree as to put us to shame in consequence of the merit of their productions. It seemed to him, then, that they could not afford to lose any industry—not even small industries. Surely, every obstacle should be removed from the path of trade and manufacture in a country which admitted the principle of Free Trade. It was known that in India was produced a very large quantity of artistic silver work. And how did they deal with it? They imposed upon it a tax of 1s. 6d. per ounce, or the equivalent of one-third of its cost, and not only that, but they subjected those artistic productions to a process to which they were entirely unadapted; they sent them to be stamped, a process which often destroyed them, because they were generally of such a nature that they could not undergo the operation without injury. He believed it was necessary, at the earliest possible moment, to remove this tax, as they had removed the taxes upon Indian imports. The origin of the practice of Hall Marking dated from those times when nominally articles of all sorts were subjected to State supervision and control, not only as to quality but as to price, and this practice was the sole remnant of those barbarous enactments. He would also point out that one of the principal objects of the custom of Hall Marking was not secured by the process to which the goods were submitted; and it would be easy for him to prove, were it necessary for him to do so, that counterfeit marks were made with perfect impunity. The small Revenue of £80,000 was not, in his opinion, anything like compensation for

the effect that the duty had upon the silver trade, which was falling off year by year. As far as he could understand with regard to the abolition of this very objectionable tax and undesirable custom of Hall Marking, the authorities were all upon his side. The Committee would remember that a Select Committee sat in 1879 to consider the question of Hall Marking, and that experts gave evidence before it who were largely engaged in the trade, as well as gentlemen from the Board of Trade, and others well versed in finance, who were unanimously in favour of the abolition of Hall Marking at the earliest possible date. But nothing had been done. He believed that every Member of the Government entertained the same opinion as to the unjust nature of these practices. There was another aspect of the case to which he desired to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The trade felt that the end of these duties must be approaching; and the consequence was that although not lacking in enterprize manufacturers were afraid to increase their stocks; while, on the other hand, they were anxious to get rid of the present stocks as soon as they possibly could. No doubt the question of drawback was an important consideration; but he had already pointed out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the question was not so serious as it appeared to some; and he believed that for the sum of £100,000 the trade would be perfectly willing to compound for the drawback on all stock in first hands. For the reasons he had advanced he made a strong appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to adopt his proposal, which would enable the Treasury to effect the reform which was so strongly desired.

New Clause (Silver and Gold Plate,)—(*Mr. Slagg*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR pleaded on behalf of India that the silver wares of that country should be admitted free into this country, on the broad ground that India had done what had been done in no other part of the world—made the extensive coasts free to all merchandize of the

whole world by having, in 1882, taken the import duties off £40,000,000 of imports, so that all goods, excepting spirits and wines, were now entirely free from duty. He appealed, therefore, [to those Members who had any regard for the principle of fair dealing to say that justice should be done to the people of India by removing the tax upon their silver manufactures imported into this country. He knew well that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his Colleagues were quite willing to do away with the tax on all silver wares, the product of India as well as at Home; but that they felt the difficulty with regard to drawback to be repaid, which the Prime Minister, in his Budget Speeches of 1881 and 1882, had, in some degree, recognized, as also had the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Speech of 1883. Now, his hon. Friend (*Mr. Slagg*) said that £100,000 would be sufficient to compound for the duties which had been paid on plate in the hands of first holders; but he believed that a much smaller sum would be necessary for the drawback on silver plate. The question was what precedents existed for repaying duties; and here it was shown that only five precedents could be found, and the amounts refunded were only fractions of the duty paid in a year. Again, his hon. Friend had stated that the Revenue on plate amounted to £80,000; but it appeared, from the account furnished to him by the Inland Revenue Department, which was always willing to give information, that the net year's income from the duty on silver plate was £48,000, besides which there was the sum of £5,000 derived through the Customs which need not be considered. In this view a refund of a year's Excise Duty ought to suffice for first holders of stock, and the Goldsmith's Company ought to undertake to appropriate this sum, so as to satisfy all equitable claims. Of course, articles which had been in stock for years ago might have been used, and those pieces ought not to be entitled to drawback. The present time was favourable for a settlement: For four years the silversmiths had had warnings of the change, and he might mention that at no time had the manufacture of plate been so small and so few persons employed. His hon. Friend had said the amount of duty

Mr. Slagg

was small, having regard to the large trade in silver ornaments; but he would point out that the articles were likewise few that were subject to the Excise Duty, these being but a mere fraction of the whole work produced. The silver plate, as exempted from Stamping and Excise Duty, might be stated at thousands of tons, and the manufacture was in a flourishing condition, while the dutiable protected articles were in a decaying state. He thought his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury was especially bound to support this proposal, because he had taken a very active part in the inquiry which took place with reference to the question of Duties and Hall Marking in 1878 and 1879. He thought the time had come when they should make a stand against the Government in this matter, and he should be glad to go to a Division on the clause.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not think that Parliament was at all likely to introduce all the important provisions contained in the proposal of the hon. Member for Manchester into one clause of a Bill, particularly under the circumstances which he would now describe. For instance, the question of Hall Marking was one which required to be dealt with as a separate matter. Nor did he think that the powers asked were such as the Committee would agree to give to the Crown. Whatever might be his own opinion, a Committee of that House had deliberately approved compulsory Hall Marking; and, therefore, he thought the Committee would be unwilling to deal with it in the summary way now proposed. In the same clause, the hon. Member proposed to abolish the duties on gold and silver plate, producing, with the licences, nearly £150,000 a year, and to settle, in a particular way, the claims for drawback. These claims were very much larger than his hon. Friend thought, and it would be unwise to assume that they would be covered by the sum of £100,000. Anyhow, they would have to deal with something like £250,000 if the clause were accepted, a sum which he was not in a position to take away from the Revenue of the year. It was, therefore, quite impossible to admit the clause into the present Bill. His own views on this subject remained the same as he had expressed in the year 1881-2 and last year—that was to

say, he was in favour of abolishing both the gold and silver plate duty, and of amending the system of Hall Marking. Therefore, so far as his opinion and that of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury were concerned, they were in favour of the proposal of the hon. Member for Manchester. The Government, however, could not assent at that time to the clause, which, for the reasons given, would require much consideration. But he thought that, when the state of the Revenue admitted, they might well repeal these duties, and make Hall Marking no longer compulsory. He was anxious, however, not to be understood to assent to the opinion which had been expressed that the diminution of the trade in silver plate had much to do with the duty. As a matter of fact, silver was being superseded in common use by such articles as electro-plate and nickel goods; and his impression was that, although the abolition of the duty might do something, yet, just as the fall in the price of silver had not increased the demand for silver goods, the repeal of the duty would do no more. He did not think, therefore, that the trade ought to be sanguine as to the effect of the repeal of the duty, though the Government would be glad to repeal the duty when the financial position of the country would permit of their doing so. His hon. Friend (Mr. Slagg) had referred to the impediments placed in the way of the importation of silver work from abroad, and particularly from India. Clauses with respect to filigree work had already been considered by the Treasury, and he hoped might be introduced later. He could only repeat that he entirely sympathized with the object of the hon. Member (Mr. Slagg), who had stated his case frankly and fully. On one point he would say a word. Reference had been made to the United States. It was perfectly true that two large houses of silversmiths in the United States turned out excellent silver work; but he thought the silversmiths of this country did their work equally as well. It must be remembered that the American silver trade was protected by high duties. He hoped the Committee would accept the undertaking he had given, and that the clause would not be pressed.

MR. SLAGG said, he did not wish to press a clause which the right hon. Gen-

tleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer considered to be in any way impracticable, although he was perfectly sure of this—that such was the public conviction on this matter, and such was the mind of the Committee in regard to it, that if he were to go to a Division he should carry the clause by a considerable majority. He very gladly accepted the right hon. Gentleman's declaration that he would avail himself of the first opportunity to get rid of these objectionable duties. If it was his (Mr. Slagg's) good fortune to be a Member of the House next year, he should consider it his duty to remind the right hon. Gentleman of his specific promise that the remission of these duties should take first rank in any remission of taxation which might then take place. He had not ventured on mere surmise as to the amount which was necessary to deal with this matter, and he should take an opportunity of showing the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that £100,000 would be quite sufficient to effect the purpose in view. In regard to the silver trade in America, he had only to say that, although Protection might be an element in the matter, America was drawing the whole of our skilled silversmiths into their silver trade. It was alleged that the use of silver was falling off in this country, owing to the competition of electroplate. That, however, was not the case in America, where, concurrently with the enormous development of the electroplate trade, there was a great business done in the most beautiful objects of silver. He begged leave to withdraw the clause.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR agreed with his hon. Friend (Mr. Slagg) in the propriety of accepting the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was satisfied if the Treasury recognized the repayment of drawback on duty-paid silver articles that £100,000 would be more than sufficient to meet the drawback on one year's stock of silver or gold plate, calculating the net excise on both classes of plate at £72,000; and he begged the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who seemed to have formed an exaggerated estimate as to the sum which would be required, to look carefully into the matter, with a view of testing the accuracy of the statement.

Mr. Slagg

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House."

MR. CLARE READ asked leave to reiterate the request he made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer some little time ago, with regard to the brewing licences paid by cottagers. The licences expired about the 1st of October, and if the right hon. Gentleman did not insert some such clause as he (Mr. Clare Read) desired, but was prepared to do it next year, it would be unfair to those persons who had taken a licence for 12 months. The Revenue would lose nothing by the change; but a great gain would accrue to the agricultural labourers, who, in this cottage or kettle brewing, did not want a licence for more than three months in the year.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) promised the hon. Gentleman that during the course of the year he would give his attention to the subject.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 109.]

(*Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow, at Two of the clock."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

MR. WARTON appealed to the Government not to take the second reading of the Bill to-morrow, on the ground that very little Notice had been given and no one was prepared to take the Bill except the Government. By a curious concatenation of circumstances a great number of the hon. Members who took a great interest in the question would not be able to be in their places to-morrow. Both of the hon. Members for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons and Mr. Brooks), one of the five excepted cities, entertained very strong feelings in regard to the Bill, and it was

proper they should be present when its second reading was taken. They, however, were away in Dublin, and neither of them had the slightest idea that the Bill would be taken to-morrow. Two other Gentlemen who were also opposed to the Bill would not be able to be present, as they had met with a domestic affliction—he referred to the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) and the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy). Under the circumstances, he put it to the Government whether they really ought to take the measure to-morrow? Personally, he thought they would do well to devote themselves to far more useful legislation.

MR. COURTNEY said, that at that time of the Session it was impossible to say when particular Bills would be brought on; certainly, at that hour of the night (1.30) the Government could not take it upon themselves to disturb an arrangement which had been arrived at at the commencement of the Sitting.

MR. HEALY said, he was sure it was nothing but pure benevolence that had induced the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) to raise this question. This was the third occasion that the hon. and learned Gentleman, deserted by the hon. Members concerned in the Bill, had endeavoured to prevent the progress of the measure. It was evident that the Irish Tory Members in the House attended very badly to their business. This measure had passed every previous stage—first reading, second reading, and Committee—without one of those Members saying a single word in respect of it. It was an extremely small Bill, for it was a Bill to grant relief to an officer in Dublin who was now overpressed with work.

MR. COURTNEY, interposing, said, he thought the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) was labouring under a misapprehension. The Bill now under consideration was the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill.

MR. HEALY begged the pardon of the House.

Motion agreed to.

Second Reading *deferred till To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

SHERIFF COURT HOUSES (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 245.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(*In the Committee.*)

Clauses 1 to 7, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Liability in case of destruction by fire).

MR. D. CAMERON said, it appeared to him that the previous clauses formed part of what was in the nature of a bargain or compromise between the counties in Scotland and the Treasury. He did not know what the opinion of Scotch county Members might be; but it seemed to him that the Treasury had got the best of the bargain. In respect of this clause, he ventured to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate to make a small concession. This clause provided that if a Court House erected or improved under the Sheriffs Court Act was destroyed or injured by fire it should be replaced at the cost of the county and not of the Treasury. The Court Houses ought to be insured, and he suggested to the Lord Advocate that, proceeding on the principle which pervaded the rest of the Bill, he should make the concession that one-half of the premium should be paid by the Treasury and the other half by the county.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he would consider the matter on Report. His hon. Friend (Mr. D. Cameron) had rightly apprehended the general scope of the Bill. It was the opinion of the Law Officers of successive Governments that the provisions of the Act of 1860 would be exhausted by a single application. That was found to be a great hardship on many counties, and this Bill had been introduced in consequence of the complaints on that head which had come from several counties; but when the Government undertook to bear the burden of successive applications to the extent of one-half it seemed right there should be a rectification of certain other defects in the Act of 1860. The Treasury thought that if there could be a second application with regard to a Court House, they were fairly entitled to say that they

should not be liable to be called upon for the cost of the restoration of a Court House which had been burnt down. It must be borne in mind that the counties had the appointment of the officers, and that they could protect themselves by insurance. At the same time, he would consider the point raised by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. D. Cameron) by Report, and he would delay the Report stage for a week to admit all the question being fully entertained.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday* next.

SETTLED LAND BILL [*Lords*].—[Bill 247.]
(*Sir R. Assheton Cross*.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title).

MR. HEALY said, this was the third Settled Land Bill which had been brought in in three years. This system of tinkering with the question led to great complication with lawyers. It would be well that the Committee should receive some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that a Settled Land Bill was passed last year; but it had been found that it contained one or two points which were difficult to work. This Bill was simply brought in to remove a little friction which was found in the Act of last year, and it had been approved of by all lawyers on both sides of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and also by the Incorporated Law Society. It was not quite clear, under the Act of last year, whether a fine received for granting a lease was to go to the tenant for life, or to be considered as part of the capital of the estate. The point was made clear in this Bill. He did not know whether the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) wished him to go through all the other points of the measure.

MR. HEALY said, it was not for him to raise any further objection to the Bill. He had only to remark that it was strange that lawyers on the opposite Benches—Members of the Radical Party—who were supposed to take an interest in the question of settled lands,

The Lord Advocate

should permit these attempts to tinker with the matter.

Clause agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

—o—

TRUSTEES OF SETTLEMENTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. TOMLINSON, Bill for the better protection of Trustees of Settlements, ordered to be brought in by Mr. TOMLINSON, Mr. HENRY ALLEN, Mr. WHITLEY, Mr. INCE, and Mr. ELTON.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 255.]

CRIMINAL LUNATICS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Criminal Lunatics, ordered to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 256.]

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 20th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Legitimacy Declaration Act (1858) Amendment* (134); Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment* (135); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4)* (136); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (New Streets in the City of Dublin, &c.)* (137); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) (Unions of Clonmel and others)* (138); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) (Unions of Cashel, and others)* (139); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) (Unions of Delvin, and others)* (140); Local Government Provisional Order (Highways)* (141); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) (Parishes of Barnwood, and others)* (142); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) (City of Oxford, and others)* (143); Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) (Clogher Valley Tramway)* (144).

Third Reading—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders* (70); Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*; Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland)* (101); Metropolitan Police* (118); Sea Fisheries Act (1868) Amendment* (125); Great Seal* (83), and passed.

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS—EFFICIENCY OF THE HOUSE.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I rise to ask your indulgence while I lay before you the reasons which induced me to place the Motion on the Paper which stands in my name. That Motion is—

“That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of promoting the efficiency of this House.”

In putting this Motion on the Paper, I have been desirous of bringing forward not merely an academical discussion, but a practical proposition. I am quite aware that the Motion itself and the form of the Motion are unusual; but I can hardly think that there is anything to be said against an unusual Motion, in the days in which we live, when nothing is sure to happen but the unexpected. But I will go a little further, and say that not merely is this Motion unusual, but it is unprecedented; and it is on that very ground that I would urge your Lordships to accept it to-night. The House of Lords has never, so far as I know, in the whole of its history, appointed a Committee to inquire into its own general condition. It has at times appointed Committees to inquire into branches of the subject. It has appointed Committees to inquire into its own judicial jurisdiction, into the state of the Representative Peerage of Ireland and Scotland, into the system of Joint Committees, and into various branches of this very large subject. But I am not aware that at any time it has ever thought it necessary to appoint a Committee to inquire into its own condition as a whole. The House of Lords has existed, I think, about six centuries. I do not suppose that any Institution has existed so long as that without reform. Of course, it may be said that that is due to its inherent and original perfection; but I do not believe that there is any Institution that can afford to remain motionless, and seal itself against the varying influences of time. Are there any Institutions of that antiquity which have been able to remain without amendment or modification? What Institutions are they? Is it Monarchy? Is it the Church? Is it the House of Commons? Is it the Municipalities of this country? Every one of

those Institutions has undergone frequent and large reconstruction in the course of the six centuries to which I have alluded. Is it something in the form of this House itself that makes it an exception? Why, this House has undergone considerable modification. Who were the Peers who originally composed it? They were mainly Ecclesiastics, with a minority of the great feudal vassals of the Crown. Then came a change, when this House lost its predominance over the other House. Then they lost their feudal power; then they lost their mitred abbots, and ceased to be an Ecclesiastical Assembly, and became mainly a temporal Assembly; then their existence was suspended under Cromwell; then they admitted Parliamentary Representatives from Scotland; then they admitted Life Representatives from Ireland; as well as—if I may so call them—rotatory Ecclesiastical Representatives from Ireland—Ecclesiastics who came in turn from that country to represent the Church in this House; and then came, in my opinion, the greatest change of all, when the House was swamped under George III. and Mr. Pitt. The extent of that great revolution is easily shown by the bare figures I am about to quote. At the Accession of George III. there were 174 Peers altogether, of whom 13 were minors, and 12 Roman Catholics, leaving 149 sitting Peers. George III. in the course of his long reign created 388 Peers, of which number Mr. Pitt was responsible for 140. These figures show how completely changed this House was by these creations; but there is a very curious proof, beyond these figures, of the change which it has undergone. At the first reading of the first Reform Bill in this House, of the Peers who were created before 1790, 104 supported the Bill, and only 4 voted against it, and the Bill was thrown out mainly by the Peers created by Mr. Pitt. The next change was that the House of Lords, which was a great Assembly of borough-owners, lost its direct representation in the House of Commons on the passing of the first Reform Bill. The next change was in the method of voting, when they suspended the use of proxies in 1868. They lost their Irish Ecclesiastical Representatives in 1869; they suspended their bankrupt Members in 1871; and last, and not least,

they admitted three judicial Life Peers in 1876. You may well ask, and I have no doubt some of your Lordships are asking yourselves, why, after this long recital of modifications, I have any right to say this House is in need of reform. I do it on this ground—that all these modifications were indirect and inconsequential, and that not one of them, except the change in the method of voting and the suspension of proxies, was carried out by the House itself, for the deliberate purpose of reforming its own constitution. I might say, in another sense, that, while its status has been indirectly modified, the proceedings leading thereto have never been recognized by the House itself. Not only has the House of Lords been considerably modified in the great lapse of time, but all has changed around. Many of the institutions that were coeval with it have disappeared, and all that existed at the same time have been reformed. There is a great change which has taken place in the enormous power of the House of Commons, and the enormous increase, under the various reductions of the franchise, of the constituencies which elect the House of Commons. There is also a vast increase in the population of these Islands; and last, but not least, there are—what did not exist at the time of the inception of the House of Lords—a Newspaper Press, and a Colonial Empire. I would ask your Lordships to think of these two facts alone, without referring to any other great changes, and to consider what differences it must have made in this Institution, when a Newspaper Press and a Colonial Empire have come into existence since it commenced itself. But this House has never considered its position, as a whole, since the time before the Newspaper Press and the Colonial Empire were in existence; and these two facts, I think, would go far to support me in my Motion tonight. I am not, at this hour, going into the differences between the Middle Ages and the 19th century; but I think it is not unfair, in an argument of this sort, to indicate the changes going on around us, simply for the purpose of strengthening my Motion. I think I have shown, in the remarks I have already made, a *primâ facie* case why an Institution of antiquity should require, if not reconstruction, if not new machinery, at least a slight readjustment, and some repair;

and I venture to say that my modest proposition is little more than a request for a coat of new paint. I believe that an Institution of this antiquity, however efficient and however popular it may be, cannot exist without some small occasional modification. But I have to raise the question—Is this House efficient, and is it popular? Now, my Lords, the question of efficiency is a very delicate one, because it affects us all; but I think one may say, without risk of contradiction, that no human institution is perfect, and that it would be a very bad compliment to this House to suppose it was as efficient as it might be made. Your Lordships will admit that the Institutions of the 13th century are not likely to have been minutely calculated for the requirements of the 19th century. But, putting these general considerations aside, I think it is only fair to say that all admit the brilliancy of some of our Members and some of our debates. I believe that those lawyers who practise before the Private Bill Committees of this House think that our Committees are at least not inferior, and possibly superior, to those of the other House. What is the conclusion I draw from these two circumstances? It is that we possess an Assembly containing men of great ability, great business capacity, and great common sense. What further conclusion do I draw? It is, that neither the House nor the country derives the full benefit of this. We can put this to a very simple test, and it is this—Do our decisions command the respect and carry the weight that they deserve? I think this may be very easily tested, and very easily ascertained. Anybody who analyzes the list of the House of Lords will see that it contains a nucleus of men of the very highest distinction; and a few figures which I will lay before you, as compendiously as possible, will show that I am not rash in making this assertion. We have in this House 27 Bishops, every one of whom must have won his way to his position in this House by sheer merit, and by hard work. It is perfectly impossible to say that these 27 eminent individuals are not, by reason of their past career, an ornament to any Assembly. We have 24 Cabinet Ministers, or Peers who have been Cabinet Ministers; we have 21 Ambassadors, or Peers who have been Ambassadors; we

have six Governors General, or Governors Principal; we have two Peers who presided with great distinction over the Assembly of the House of Commons; we have eight very eminent Judges, besides the two Chancellors who sit in the House; we have two Field Marshals, exclusive of the blood Royal; and I have, therefore, made up a list of 73 individuals in these categories who may all be called men of the highest distinction in the country. Besides these, there are no less than 40 Admirals, Generals, and Ministers of rank inferior to Cabinet rank, past or present. That makes 113 men of high distinction. Then there is the Poet Laureate, whom we all are proud to welcome to this House, and no one can say that anything but distinction has been conferred on the House of Lords by the admission of Lord Tennyson. There is, at least, one Senior Wrangler; and there is my noble Friend on the Cross Benches (Lord Houghton), who has written some verses that will last as long as the language will. [*A laugh.*] I am sorry my reference to my noble Friend has caused a smile; but I am quite certain it is undeserved. Well, in that list I have designated 116 individuals who would be gladly included in any Second Chamber in the world. Let us compare this Assembly, with these 116 persons, with the most powerful and efficient Second Chamber that exists in the world. I do not suppose anybody conversant with the two Assemblies denies that, in point of weight of power and of authority, the Senate of the United States is the first Second Chamber in the world. Why is it that the Senate should exercise more power than the House of Lords? Why is it that it has greater power entrusted to it? Why is it that its decisions are decisions from which there is practically no appeal? I do not think it is from the individuals who compose it. I venture to say that the Senate of the United States does not comprise as many distinguished individuals as the House I am now addressing, and I will state why that is so. In the first place, the Cabinet Ministers of the United States have no seats in Congress. In the second place, there is a constant drain on the public men of that country to fill Governorships, and various State Offices; and, in the next place, as there are only two Representatives for each State, the

difficulty of getting into the Senate is very great. Why is it, then, that this Body in the United States exercises so much more power than your Lordships? It is not because they are an Elective Body—at least, I do not believe it is, because we have had great experience of Elective Second Chambers, and we know that, as a rule, Elective Second Chambers are not very valuable Institutions. I am not now going into the relative difference between the House of Lords and the Senate of the United States. I am not going to compare these two great Bodies. It would lead me very much beyond the scope of my Motion and my time; but I have only indicated the comparative difference between the two in order to show that there is some cause for inquiry from that point of view. In considering the weight of the decisions of the House of Lords, there are one or two points of practical importance to which I wish to direct your attention. The first is a point of some importance—I mean our quorum. The quorum of the House of Lords, as your Lordships are aware, is three. We have some opportunity of comparing that somewhat antiquated quorum with the quorums of other Assemblies. It is quite true that a quorum of the House of Commons is 40; but the House of Commons is a much more numerous Body, consisting of about 150 more Members. That, however, does not really bear on the argument; because when the House of Commons only contained as many Members as the House of Lords—before the Union with Scotland—its quorum was as great as it is now. I can give some experiences of the quorum of the House of Lords; but I would select two which throw some light on the subject. One occurred within my own recollection, and the other is somewhat legendary. I remember, since I have been a Member of this House, a noble Earl (the Earl of Leitrim), who afterwards met with a tragical end, addressing a quorum of your Lordships, consisting besides himself of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, and the Minister who had to answer him, for four mortal hours by the clock—when this vast Hall in which we are seated contained only these three individuals.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: I beg the noble Earl's pardon. I remember the

occasion, and I was present part of the time.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: The noble Lord's attendance, I understand, was only partial, and not for the whole time, so I may say three and a-half persons were present. Striking an average, I think that will be a satisfactory figure. One cannot but feel that that was a great waste of the time of the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack, whoever he might have been, and that the obvious remedy would have been found in the practice of the House of Commons. A more legendary instance to which I will allude is one attributed to the period when the late Lord Lyndhurst was on the Woolsack. There was then a noble and learned Lord addressing the House on a question, apparently of no great public interest, and addressing it at some length. Lord Lyndhurst was naturally anxious to attend a dinner to which he was invited, and as the clock got nearer to 8, that learned person grew more and more impatient. He made every sign; he took out his watch; he interrupted; he might have feigned sleep for all I know; but this produced no effect on the noble and learned Lord who was addressing the House. At last the Lord Chancellor said—"This is too bad—can't you stop?" There was no stop. At last Lord Lyndhurst rose, in the full grandeur of despair at the situation, and said—"By Jove, so and so, I will count you out;" and it was well within the province of the late Lord Lyndhurst, because he and the learned Lord who was addressing the House were the only Peers present. I think the Select Committee might find some matter for consideration in the quorum of your Lordships' House. I will pass now to another fact; but I will not dwell on it, because I know the speech that my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will make about it if I alluded to it at length. But I allude to that stock complaint of the barren six months, followed by a fruitful fortnight, which comprises our ordinary Session. Sir Walter Scott, in the course of some very stirring verses, has said—

"One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name."

And if that is so, the House of Lords is in that fortunate position, because it passed an age without a name, followed

by an hour crowded with life at the end of the Session. But, my Lords, I do not think this is a desirable position for your Lordships' House. I believe that some remedy might be found for it, and I am quite sure that a Select Committee would do no harm in considering it. Well, my Lords, we know that a great part of our legislative functions are conducted in a somewhat fruitless manner at this season of the year. We have no Bills introduced into this House except Bills of such a lofty morality that they cannot be presented point blank to the coarser palate of the House of Commons. I am sometimes reminded, when I think of these things, of an anecdote which is told of the Emperor Napoleon III. It is said that when he was a child his favourite amusement was watering his garden; but that the nurse, to take care that he should suffer no danger, always put warm water in the watering pot. I am always reminded of that anecdote when I think of the artificial atmosphere in which we are compelled to pass our measures. Then there is the question of Joint Committees. I believe that a system of Joint Committees would, to a large extent, relieve the congestion in one House and the inanition in the other by an amicable consideration of Bills. I do not know whether it would really be so; but I venture to point it out as a subject of inquiry. As to private legislation, surely a great deal might be done by Joint Committees on Private Bills. I do not think your Lordships always know the enormous expense and trouble of persons coming to Parliament for private legislation. I believe I am not misinformed when I state that one abortive project last year, which did not succeed in passing the Committee of this House, cost no less than £60,000. It was passed this year; but I venture to think that even if it were only in regard to the question of Joint Committees, it would be worth while to appoint a Committee of this House to inquire. There is another point which I only wish to allude to in passing; but it does affect the weight of the decision of this House—I mean the character of our Divisions. It does, no doubt, lessen the effect of our Divisions when the habitual attendants of the House on great occasions are swamped by a sudden influx of regular absentees. Now, my Lords, I do

Lord Ellenborough

not believe that the system can permanently continue without serious detriment to your Lordships' House. I do not wish to dwell upon it, because I am guarding myself to-night most scrupulously from indicating any plan or scheme of my own; but I believe the appointment of a Committee would do much towards strengthening of our position. I ventured to ask whether this House was efficient. I have endeavoured to lay before your Lordships the reasons, on both sides, which makes one feel that its efficiency is not so great as it ought to be. Let me now say a word about the popularity of this House, and when I say the popularity, I mean popularity in its largest and in its widest sense. My Lords, as regards the popularity of this House, I should be inclined to say this—that it is neither so popular as its friends assert, nor so unpopular as its enemies make out. I believe that there are a certain number of our Members who have great contact with the people at large—great touch of the population of this country; but they have not, and they cannot have, the constant compulsory connection with the nation that adds so much to the strength of the House of Commons. Now, that is perfectly true; but I think that in spite of all this we may represent some vital principle more powerful than popularity, and which may take the place of popularity, and I think that is a subject which is very well worth considering. We have a great variety of very complex interests which might be represented in this House. There are the various portions of our vast Empire—our commerce, our professions, our Churches. All these might very well be represented in this House. Now, my Lords, how far are they represented? Take the Churches. We have a considerable number of Bishops, and I think the Episcopal Church of this country is well represented in this House. We have a considerable number of Roman Catholic Peers, which I regard as a great advantage, and as redressing the want of Roman Catholic representation from England and Scotland in the House of Commons. We have some Presbyterians here, but we have hardly any Dissenting Peers, and I believe that the Dissenting interest is one which is well worthy of being represented in this House. There is,

therefore, an immense preponderance of the representation of the Church of England. I make no complaint of this; I only notice the fact. But let us take the professions that might be represented in this House. The Army is well represented; the Navy is tolerably well represented; the law is well represented; but the profession of medicine is, so far as I know, not represented at all. My Lords, it is very easy to say that the profession of medicine is not wanted in this House. But I remember very well a distinguished Leader who has gone from us, but whose name will never be mentioned in this House without respect, who said that his policy was entirely a sanitary policy, and he summed it up in the motto, *sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas*. But surely it cannot be maintained that when sanitary questions are put in the forefront of the policy of the Government, this House would be any worse off for having some assistance from the great Faculty of Medicine. Well, we have men of science. I see the noble Lord opposite (Lord Rayleigh) who was Senior Wrangler, and whom we are proud to see a Member of this House. The late Lord Crawford was also a Member of this House; but, considering the nature of this Chamber, men of science might be better represented than they are. Then there is literature, which might very well be more largely represented, and which has, I believe, been more largely represented than it is now. We have some great literary men. I will not name them for fear of provoking any expression of jealousy or discontent. But literature might very well be more largely represented than it is, because this is a House in which men of letters might very well encounter the troubles and the storms of politics, without all the hard work that requires to be undergone in the other House of Parliament. Then there are the commercial and mercantile interests of the community. We have four or five noble Lords connected with the banking and railway interests. I view those Representatives as persons of great importance in our debates; but I do not feel, I confess, that the great commercial interests of this country are so adequately represented in this House as they should be; and when we consider how enormously they are represented in the other House, we must feel

that we have a certain inferiority in this respect. As regards that branch of my subject, I think it may be summed up in a sentence, by saying that there is too much receiving of rent in this House and too little paying of rent. We represent too much one class; we see one side of the shield too much. I see a Lord from Ireland shakes his head. I know what he means; but he must know that we are all in the same boat. Then there is the question of the Arts. This House prides itself greatly on its knowledge of the Arts. There are no questions which are so fiercely debated in this House as questions of taste, and there is no question which has caused so much Party excitement in the House of Lords in recent years as the question of the removal of the Duke of Wellington's Statue, and yet we have no artists amongst us. I cannot doubt, however, that these debates would be greatly improved by the infusion of some of the artistic element. India is fairly represented, for we have two Governors General (the Earl of Northbrook and the Earl of Lytton) and two Governors Principal (the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Napier and Ettrick) who have had contact with India; but the Colonies I regard as very inadequately represented in this House, considering the many millions whose interests we have to regard. I do not think that five Representatives are enough for this, when we recollect that one of those five Representatives is at his post in Canada, that another is at his post at Constantinople, another has not yet returned to his post, and we are thus reduced to two Peers in this House who have practical contact with the Colonies. I venture to say that that is not sufficient. Well, my Lords, there is another class which is absolutely not represented in this House, and I suppose it is absolutely necessary that it should be unrepresented. That is the labouring class. I dare say it is absolutely impossible that the labouring class should be represented in this House; but I would ask your Lordships to think of the numbers and the power of the working classes of this country. Do you not feel that it is a great deficiency in this House that that enormous power should be absolutely unrepresented. ["No!"] I hear a noble Lord say "No." I wish I could agree with him. I believe one reason of our rela-

tive weakness, when compared with the House of Commons, is that we have no representation of the labouring classes. I only mention this as part of the case with which we have to deal. I shall sum up this part of my subject by saying that we want, if possible, new elements—an infusion of the ideas of other classes—new representatives, new sources of information. I believe that if we could obtain this without a radical reconstruction of the House, the House would be very largely the gainer. But this is only an indication. I do not regard my authority as of the slightest value in a case of this sort; but I will read words which are of the very highest authority. These are words spoken by the noble Marquess opposite the Leader of the Conservative Party in 1869—

"It appears to me, however, that the deficiency which may be recognised in the constitution of the House of Lords has been imprinted on it by the lapse of time, and does not belong to its original constitution. That deficiency consists in this—that we want a larger infusion from those large classes among whom is to be found so much of the wealth and power of the country. We belong too much to one class, and the consequence is that, with respect to a large number of questions, we are all too much of one mind. Now, that is a fact which appears to me to be injurious to the character of the House as a political Assembly in two ways: The House of Lords, though not an elective, is strictly a representative, Assembly, and it does, in point of fact, represent very large classes in the country. But if you wish this representation to be effective, you must take care that it is sufficiently wide; and it is undoubtedly true that, for one reason or another, those classes whose wealth and power depend on commerce and mercantile industry do not find their representation in this House so large or so adequate as do those whose wealth and power depend upon the agricultural interest and landed property. We have, indeed, a certain number of mercantile Representatives in this House. They are admirable in every way, and I confess that if it were possible to increase their number the House would be a large gainer by the change. And it would be a gainer also in another way. We want, if possible, more representation of diverse views, and more antagonism. On certain subjects, it is true, we have antagonism enough—on Church subjects, for instance, and on the interesting question as to who should occupy the Benches opposite. But there are a vast number of social questions deeply interesting to the people of this country, especially questions with reference to the health and moral condition of the people—and on which many Members of your Lordships' House are capable of throwing great light, and yet these subjects are not closely investigated here, because the fighting power is wanting, and the debates cannot be sustained. Now, if it were

possible that the machinery proposed by the noble Earl could be to any extent effective to correct this evil, the advantage to the deliberations of your Lordships' House would be very great indeed; and it was in that sense that I said I should like to see the proposition of the noble Earl carried further."—(3 *Hansard*, [195] 463-4.)

I regard that as a very weighty testimony in support of my argument. That speech was delivered in a discussion of a favourite remedy which has often been proposed to this House—the remedy of Life Peers. That is far too large a question to deal with at present; but since the debate took place, by a sort of side wind, three official Life Peers have been introduced into this House, and I venture to submit to the better judgment of your Lordships' House whether it would not be a fair question on the part of this Committee to consider whether the principle might not with advantage be extended. My Lords, I do not know if it would be possible, in regard to the representation of classes, to adopt at all the principle which, in judging matters, is called the principle of assessors, and in the Congress of the United States is called the principle of delegates—I mean consultative and temporary Representatives, persons who may be summoned to “deliberate and advise,” instead of to “deliberate and determine,” in the old form of the Rules of the Judges of this country. But what representative elements does that House include? It is difficult to see more than three—the Church, the hereditary principle, and landed property. There is no need to discuss these on this occasion. I am not considering the points on which this House is strongest; I am endeavouring to point out some of the weaknesses and deficiencies in this House; but I should like to make a remark as to the position of the Church in this House. We have 26 Bishops and seven Peers. The Church is represented in this House, therefore, by the favour of the Crown, largely tempered by the chances of survival. I remember pointing out in 1878 the great disadvantages which would accrue to this House when the seven Bishoprics then in contemplation were all filled up, because the junior Bishop of the seven would have to wait for six vacancies on the Episcopal Bench before he could enter your Lordships' House. I will give you one illustration

of what the disadvantage of that may be. The most brilliant speech I have probably ever heard in this House was the speech of the Bishop of Peterborough on the Irish Church Act of 1869. If these seven Bishoprics had not been in existence at the time the Bishop of Peterborough had been made a Bishop, he would not have been in the House until the year 1878; and we would have lost one of the principal ornaments of this House until that time. The creation of Bishoprics is very largely increasing, rather in deference to the spiritual wants of localities—and very properly so—than to the increased efficiency of this House; and I venture to point out that if these Bishoprics go on being numerically extended, it will be absolutely necessary, if we do not wish Bishops to enter this House when they are too old to adapt themselves to the forms and methods of the House, and if we wish them to enter before they are superannuated, it will be absolutely necessary to adopt the principle of delegation. With regard to property, the House of Lords represents a great deal of land; but there is even a change with regard to that. When the House of Lords consisted largely of a territorial aristocracy, the land was the main source and sign of wealth in this country. That has long ceased to be so. The great fortunes made in commerce exceed all the landed income by a very great deal, except such of your Lordships as are fortunate enough to possess urban property. Not merely has land decreased in its relative value, but in the last few years it has decreased in absolute value. That seems to me to affect largely the relations of this House, as being the mainstay and representation of property. I will take another point worthy of consideration. When this House was the House of territorial aristocracies, it was composed of Members who had properties which were, practically, inalienable; but that has long ceased to be the case. The legislation passed by the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns), and the legislation for Scotland, in which I had some hand, has made it possible for any Member of this House to alienate his estates. That that alienation of land is going on at a rapid rate cannot be doubted by anyone who watches the course of events. The other day *The Times* published the largest num-

ber it has ever published; and why? Because it had six pages of advertisements of land for sale. No one can shut his eyes to the fact that this must make a great change in this House. It is quite true that, as men become wealthy, they are very liable to be made Peers; but it cannot be disguised that the connection of the present Peerage with property in land may be, to a very large extent, affected by the causes to which I have alluded. But I will take this comfort to myself—that if this House had contained all the wealthiest men in the country, it would be so much the worse for this House. I confess that, in these days, when the taxes on property become more frequent, I think there would be considerable danger to the existence and security of this House if it contained all the men of the largest property. The Emperor Nero is supposed to have wished that all his enemies had but one neck, that he might, with one blow of his sword, put an end to them all; and a body, mainly composed of all the great owners of property, more especially of landed property, becomes a mere target for attack, and concentrates upon itself the hostility and rapacity of all other classes. Only to give one instance, to show how dangerous it may be to an Institution to become overloaded, I will take the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. That Church, at the time of the Reformation, is said to have possessed—I am speaking from memory—at least three-fifths of the land of Scotland. What was the result? That Church was found to be extremely powerful, yet its Disestablishment only took a single day to accomplish. That was the result of having too much property. I should be glad to see this House strengthened by a greater accession of men who have wealth in land; but I should be sorry to see it become the most contemptible Assembly in the world—an Assembly of plutocrats. Having discussed the actual state of this House, and having ventured to point out some deficiencies in this House, which, I think, are matters not unworthy of your Lordships' attention, I venture to say in this century in which we live there is especial necessity to notice this subject. We are living in the full blaze of the 19th century. Every Institution is canvassed and examined; there is no hope that we can escape in-

quiry, and I do not believe we wish to escape inquiry. As it is, we do not escape inquiry. There are voices both from within and from without calling for some such inquiry as that which I have advocated. The voices from without demand both revision and improvement. I need hardly say I should never think of asking your Lordships to accord this Committee from any fear of reform. If no higher motive would induce your Lordships to consider the matter, I should say that reform has come too late. Bodies that begin to reform themselves when the hand of the destroyer is upon them do not live to complete the task. It was too late for the Senate to deliberate when the Gaul was in their midst; it was too late for the House of Commons to discuss abstract questions when Cromwell was at the Table. It will be too late to move for any Select Committee when the voice which calls for radical reform or abolition becomes loud and universal. I would not ask any high-minded Body to deliberate under a menace. But what is heard now is not a demand for abolition. It is a calm discussion of the position and utility of this House; inquiries as to the possibility of propping up this ancient structure; schemes for improvement, not plans for destruction; and I firmly believe what the people of England want is no abolition and no violent reform of this House, but simply to have as efficient a Second Chamber as can be furnished. Now, my Lords, this public opinion makes itself heard in every speech that is delivered on the subject. It makes itself heard in every magazine that is published; it makes itself heard in all the newspapers. If your Lordships wished to shut your ears you could not but hear, and if you wished not to see you could not but see; but I believe it is your Lordships' anxiety both to hear and to see; and it is for that reason I am bringing forward this proposition to-night. I am strengthened in this belief by many circumstances both public and private, but mainly by the fact that, besides the voices from without that call for amendment or reconstruction, there are also voices from within. My noble Friend on the Cross Benches has written an article in which, though vindicating the general position of your Lordships' House, he called for some revision of its Business arrange-

ments. My noble Friend (the Earl of Dunraven) has lately contributed an article in which he makes some stringent suggestions as to the alteration of the procedure of this House; and an hon. Member who sits in the other House—the eldest son of a Peer who sits in this House—I mean Mr. Brodric, a Member of the Conservative Party—has published in a Conservative review an article calling for some revision or some remodelling of the constitution of this House. He discussed plans; but it is not my business to discuss plans in connection with my Motion. That is a matter for the Committee. I welcome any practical suggestion, more especially from those who have sat in this House, who know the work of it, and who are convinced that something may be done in the way of reform. I am not in love with paper Constitutions and paper Second Chambers. The Abbé de Sieyès would have constructed a dozen such Chambers in a week; but none of them would have lasted longer than that period. I have given my reasons why I believe some measure of inquiry is requisite. Let me now say briefly why I have adopted the method of a Select Committee. A Select Committee with regard to a measure of importance may be one of two things. It may either be a hatching machine or a sepulchre; it may either be the grave or the vivifying principle of any measure which is submitted to it. I am anxious for this Committee to be a hatching machine. I am anxious that those who have practical and substantial suggestions for the reform of this House may bring them to this Committee, and may, if they are substantial, receive strength and endorsement from the proceedings of this Committee. If, however, the schemes which may be brought before the Committee are added, I am anxious that they should remain so. I would have the Committee as large as you like, or as small as you like. In my humble opinion, the larger it might be made the better it would be; but what I would ask would be that it should be as largely and broadly representative of the different sections and interests in this House as possible; that it should fully and fairly, and with unprejudiced mind, inquire whether the status, the basis, and the scope of your Lordships' House can be improved. It may be as slow

and gradual as it chooses, as long as it gives an exhaustive consideration to the subject. If it found that the procedure or position of this House can be amended, it would then be its duty to report a scheme. If it came to the conclusion that the position of this House was absolutely perfect, it would then be its duty to give its reasons for this conclusion. But, it may be asked, why, instead of the uncertain medium of a Select Committee, do you not bring a substantial proposition before the House? I think there is a very good reason for that. I should not care to proceed summarily in a matter of such vital importance, even if I had the power of doing it. I do not believe that any individual in your Lordships' House—not even the noble Marquess who leads the other side, or the noble Earl who leads this side—would have the slightest chance of carrying any substantial proposition by his own unaided authority in this House. I may be wrong, but that is the strong conclusion to which I have come; and I need hardly say, if they have no chance, my chances would be small indeed. But I am inclined to believe that your Lordships might not be unwilling to listen to any well-considered proposition proceeding from a well-chosen Committee of this House; and it is for that reason, mainly, I have adopted that proceeding on this occasion. I know it is urged—a sort of metaphorical argument—that this House is so ancient a structure that it is better not to touch it, lest it fall about our ears; but if I pursue that argument to its logical conclusion, I should say it is a somewhat dangerous one to urge, because if the House is in such a condition that it will not bear to be touched, it does not need much foresight to see that it will soon become an unsafe structure. I do not believe that the argument is used by anybody in this House. I believe it is used by the false friends of this House, or, if I may borrow a phrase from Sir Stafford Northcote, by the “bonnets” of this House; and I do not think it is one of which further notice may be taken, except to point out that, if it has any validity at all, it has a painful validity upon this Assembly. I believe the House and the nation will not take this view of the House of Lords, and that it would view with the greatest satisfaction the spectacle of this House, without outward

pressure of any kind, endeavouring to reform itself and examine its own construction. I believe such a proceeding would have a most salutary effect on public opinion; and, my Lords, as we have no constituencies, it is on public opinion that this House must rest for its true strength. I have to thank your Lordships for the patience with which you have listened to me, and have to apologize sincerely for the length of my observations. I do not think it would have been respectful to introduce so large a subject without some statement of the reasons which have induced me to do so. But before I lay my Motion on the Table, I would ask one favour at the hands of your Lordships. It is that in considering this proposition you should consider it without any prepossession as to the quarter from which it comes. No one knows better than myself the insignificance of the individual who now addresses you. I can assure you, from the bottom of my heart, that I would gladly have waited and stepped into the background if anybody of more importance had taken up the question. But we who are the friends of Reform have waited long enough. "*Rusticus expectat dum de fluit annis*," which may be freely translated by "One may die of thirst while the river runs away." I feel that every day of the postponement of this question does harm. Every day that passes over this House, and that confirms the outside public in the belief that this House is very unwilling or afraid to investigate its own position, does harm. As to the Party side of the question, apart from the individual aspect of my Motion, I have simply to say that there is no Party side, because it is a matter of general and universal interest. But I will say this—that no more Conservative Motion, in the highest and best sense of the word, has ever, in my time, been submitted to this House. I have no doubt that noble Lords opposite will not consider me the most suitable exponent of the Conservative creed; but I think they will allow that Conservatism is not petrefaction, or blindness, or deafness, or a folding of the hands in sleep; but that the truest Conservatism consists in seasonable, moderate, and timely reform. After six centuries of unchanged existence, no one can consider it a premature proposition that a Committee for

the investigation of the system of this House should be proposed on this occasion. But that is all that this proposition pledges your Lordships to do. It has no larger meaning and no larger scope than that. It may surely be called a moderate and a Conservative proposition. I have used the word Conservative in its highest and best sense; but, in its mere Party sense, I venture to say it is an advantageous proposition from a Conservative point of view. It can be no secret to your Lordships that the more ardent spirits of the Party to which I belong do not wish for the reform of the House of Lords. They wish for its abolition. They wish, with the view of uprooting it, to point it out both as unreforming and as unreformed. They wish to point it out as a mediæval barque, stranded, by some strange chance or irony of time, across the teeming harbour of the 19th century, and acting only as an obstacle to more active and useful shipping. When you wish to disestablish an Institution, you do not permit it to reform itself; you shut it out from air and light. You prevent any refreshing and beneficent influence from reaching it, and gradually you put in progress that decay to which it is your intention to appeal as the prognostic of approaching dissolution. I hope your Lordships will not play the game of your enemies on this occasion, but entertain a moderate proposition for inquiry and reform. More especially do I urge it at this moment, when the House of Commons, for the third time in less than 60 years, is broadening and strengthening and increasing its own foundations, and when, within the last two years, the House of Commons has devoted an entire Session to the amelioration of its own procedure. I think the rejection of inquiry at such a moment as this would present not merely a bad appearance, but would indicate a real defect. If these considerations are not sufficient to induce your Lordships to grant my proposition, let me bring forward the most practical consideration within my power. It is this—It is our mysterious destiny to sit within this House. I think, under these circumstances, it is our obvious duty, as well as it is our obvious interest, to make this House as powerful and as respectable as possible. The doors of this House only open inwards. I dare say if they opened outward as well

—if there were any chance of their being thrown open—that some of your Lordships who wished for the enlargement of the scope of this House would be willing to relapse into an attitude of expectancy. But there is no such prospect. The sole chance of political usefulness that lies to your Lordships lies within the walls of this House; the sole chance of increasing your opportunities of political usefulness lies in developing, in increasing, and in strengthening the power of this House. I venture to think that any such strengthening must be preceded by inquiry, and it is for that reason that I venture to ask your endorsement of the slight, the gradual, and the moderate proposition for an inquiry which I lay before you on this occasion. If I might sum up in one simple phrase what I believe the best friends of the House of Lords wish for, it would be this—As regards the individual, greater responsibility; as regards the body, the broadening of its foundations, and the enlargement of the scope of its opportunities. I believe that any measure you could adopt will have that object, and will make this House worthy to be remembered among all the illustrious generations of Peers which have preceded you. I would ask you in this connection to remember the eloquent words which were uttered by Mr. Burke, a name ever to be honoured in either House of Parliament. He said—

“We have a great hereditary heritage here, those who have their own honour, and the honour of their ancestors, and of their posterity to guard.”

I think it is impossible to have a nobler conception of a hereditary Chamber, because it presents the aspect of a triple responsibility — a responsibility that governs the present, that has a finger to the future, and a finger to the past. I claim that the Peers who now inhabit this House are at least not inferior to the Peers who sat in judgment upon Warren Hastings; but I firmly believe that you will best fulfil that sublime function of guarding the honour of generations both living and dead, and of generations yet unborn, by embracing vigilantly every opportunity of testing the soundness of the structure of this House by examining its foundations, and by adding, as far as may be done, dignity, efficiency, strength, and power to that ancient In-

stitution of which you are the existing trustees.

Moved, “That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of promoting the efficiency of this House.”—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, that their Lordships would concur with him in congratulating the noble Earl opposite on the eloquence and the moderation, as well as the courage, with which he had introduced the subject. There was need for consideration of the motive power which actuated their Lordships' House. Not long ago a measure was on the second reading carried by seven votes; but in a subsequent Division it was negatived by three votes. There were 516 Peers, of whom eight were minors and six permanently employed abroad. Of those, 132, or upwards of one-quarter, were more than 70 years of age. Some of those noble Lords might be supposed to be unequal to the duties of their position. But they had no power to divest themselves of their functions; once a Peer always a Peer. In the other House a Member was at liberty to resign his seat; and the question was whether some such power ought not to be possessed by their Lordships. During the last Parliament, out of the 516 noble Lords only 332 spoke or voted. In 1876 the number was 330; in 1877, 369; in 1878, 303, and the maximum was reached in 1879, when the country was much interested in foreign affairs, and the number was 394. The average during the whole period was 345. That seemed to show that it would be none the worse if some of their Lordships resigned their legislative powers. There was among their Lordships a representative element in the Scotch and Irish Peers, of whom the former were elected for each Parliament and the latter for life. In a recent great Division only one Scotch Peer was absent, and that Peer held an official position, and did not wish to take part in the question. On the Division on the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, at which 336 Peers were present, only three Scotch Representative Peers were absent. Thus, if the proposed Committee entered upon the question of Representative Members of that House, they would only be increasing an element which already existed. Their Lordships had done away with proxies; but by the repeal of the Standing Order

they could be revived. It was undoubtedly true that the constitution of the House did not command so great respect as was desirable. The noble Earl had referred to the undoubted talents of the Episcopal Bench and of the Lords of Appeal. There was no reason why the principle of Life Peerages should be confined to those two classes. The nation was not confined to the Three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland; and he could not help thinking that if they could see their way to introducing into the House, either as Life Peers or as assessors, Representatives of the Colonies, some of those who had done good service in India, and who understood what were the opinions and feelings of the various races over whom we held sway, they would add to the weight and influence which they possessed in the country. There were, too, distinguished Generals and Admirals, who shrank from accepting hereditary Peerages from want of adequate fortune, who might make serviceable Members of that Assembly. It might be said that a handle would thereby be given to unscrupulous Ministers for Party purposes. But such methods had already been employed, and in 1711 and again in 1832 Peers had been created for the special purpose of carrying particular measures. There was no danger of that House losing its independent character. On the Compensation for Disturbance Bill no fewer than 15 Peers who had held Office in a Liberal Administration had voted against their Party. He would not enter into other reforms of the House, such as the absence of any appeal to a Speaker on points of Order, and of any authority to control irrelevance. He entirely agreed with what the noble Earl opposite had said. His proposal would no doubt stir up mixed feelings on this side of the House; but it was in truth and reality a most Conservative proposal. If they resisted reform they would only play into the hands of their opponents. Nothing would more effectually stem the tide of democracy than a satisfactory reform of their constitution and procedure. The electorate of this country was extremely fickle, as was shown by the General Elections of 1874 and 1880. Unless there were an efficient Second Chamber, political life would become nothing better than a scramble for place,

power, and profit; and in order to make their Lordships' House such a Chamber he would cordially support the Motion of the noble Earl.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I quite agree with my noble Friend who has made this Motion that this is not a Party question. It is one that concerns the whole House and the Conservative Party in it as much as the Liberal Party. It is a matter upon which the whole House should have an opinion, and not one upon which the Government need take the initiative in directing their followers. The noble Earl stated that he had never had a seat in the other House of Parliament. Many years ago I was a Member of that House, and I look back to those days with the greatest interest and pleasure. But I cannot forget that for the last 38 years my political, official, and Parliamentary life has been really centred in this House. Though holding those Liberal opinions which as a young man I adopted, still it is impossible for anyone so long connected with the House of Lords as I have been not to have a sort of Conservative feeling with regard to it. I have this feeling all the stronger owing to the kindness of my noble Friends in this House, and of the great indulgence that I have met with from noble Lords opposite. My noble Friend has brought forward a very important question in a most remarkably able speech—a speech characterized by more than his usual ability, by a variety and incisiveness and a sympathy which I am sure your Lordships heartily appreciate. My noble Friend says that we can hardly pretend that no reform is necessary when he instances the great advantages conferred on another Assembly by the reforms which have taken place with regard to it. The principal fault I have to find with the speech of my noble Friend is on account of the statement, two or three times repeated, that he himself proposed nothing to your Lordships. A great deal turns on that. If we adopt the words of his Motion, we shall be asserting and implying that there is inefficiency in this House. And I am very much afraid that if we made any such admission without seeing pretty clearly our way to the result of the Committee which the noble Earl desires to have appointed, we should be weakening and not strengthening this Assembly. The attributes of this House are judicial,

deliberative, and legislative. Thirty-eight years ago, when I entered the House, there were in it remarkable men, eminent statesmen, eloquent Prelates, great lawyers. I must say that I do not see the slightest degeneration in this respect at the present time. In regard to the judicial functions of the House, I am not sure that they are quite logical; but I believe that, with the assistance which it receives from its traditions, the legal decisions of this House have given the highest satisfaction to suitors and the public. With regard to the deliberative functions of the House, I do not believe that the power of debate is diminishing in this House; and in the speech of my noble Friend to-night we have had an illustration of this, and an indication that that power of debate is likely to be continued. With regard to legislation, I entirely agree with the opinion of my noble Friend that there is something of a scandal which does harm to this House in the fact that on ordinary occasions the attendance of noble Lords is not large, while upon the occasions of Party Divisions the Benches are absolutely crowded by those who do not seem to attend to politics at all. I own that that is a great grievance. I think the noble Earl would have done some good if he had pointed out how this could be prevented. If he had done so, I should have been more inclined to vote for his Motion. The question of the quorum, to which the noble Earl also alluded, is, I think, only a small one. There is no doubt that it is a grievance that Bills should be crowded into this House at the end of the Session; but what particular recommendation could the Committee make on that point? The noble Earl did not give us any indication.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I suggested that a Joint Committee of both Houses, by some amicable arrangement, should consider that matter.

EARL GRANVILLE: I agree with the noble Earl that the system of Private Bills requires great revision. I think that the time and money that are spent is a scandal. But this is not a matter that the House of Lords by itself can deal with. It appears to me that it is a matter for a Joint Committee of both Houses, and that such a Committee might lead to very valuable results indeed. The noble Lord mentioned a

point of great importance—that there is a disadvantage in the fact that this House, with one exception, only represents one form and one section of religious belief. I agree with him on that point. I also quite agree that it is most desirable that rich men representing commerce and trade should become Members of this House; but I am afraid that in many cases their sons might become bankrupts in the next generation, or they might purchase an enormously valuable estate and become just as good landowners as the present Peers. I should also be glad to see an addition of literary, artistic, and scientific men to this House. No one rejoiced more than I did when Lord Macaulay entered the House, and when my noble Friend on the Cross Benches (Lord Houghton) was raised to the Peerage on account of his literary and also his political services. The recent accession of the Poet Laureate I regarded as a distinction to this House. I greatly regretted that your Lordships decided in the case of Lord Wensleydale that the Royal Prerogative should not be used for the creation of Life Peers. I believe that would have been of great use. As I understand my noble Friend, he, while guarding himself from any definite proposal, made special reference to the Senate of the United States. If the suggested Committee was to meet and proposed that the House of Lords was to have all the powers of that Senate in regard to international relations and other cognate subjects, I am afraid there would not be the slightest chance of any practical result arising from that recommendation. I cannot conceive anything more unlikely than that the House of Commons, which is now grown so powerful, would consent to confer on the House of Lords new and unprecedented privileges. In regard to the Life Peerages, that is a very different thing. My fear is, that if this Motion was now granted, we should have a mere fishing Committee from which we do not know what would issue. I am afraid that would not strengthen the House of Lords. But if on this point of Life Peerages there were an intimation from the opposite Benches that the House would be likely to reconsider its opinion, I should be most anxious that a Committee should inquire into that subject. If there is no indication of that change of opinion,

and if we are merely to appoint a Committee which is almost certain to arrive at no satisfactory result, and which would not be supported by the House at large, I should be unwilling to vote for the Motion. I have not yet made up my mind what vote I shall give, and it will depend on the language of noble Lords opposite.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I venture to think that the last sentence of the noble Earl is scarcely consistent with his assertion that this is not a Party question. If it is not a Party question, it cannot matter two straws to the noble Earl what noble Lords on this side of the House think or say. My own feeling with respect to the Motion is, that, without for a moment laying down the doctrine that no change in this House is possible or desirable—a proposition which I would not lay down in regard to any institution—yet that we cannot vote for change in the abstract until we know the nature of the change which is to be made. To appoint a Select Committee such as that proposed by the noble Earl the Mover of this Motion, hardly seems to me the right method of proceeding, according to the precedents which we have to guide us. The noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery), in the speech with which he introduced his Motion—and I may here state that I fully concur in the eulogy passed by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs upon that speech, as one of the greatest eloquence and ability—in that speech the noble Earl referred especially to the precedent of the House of Commons as one that would guide us in attempting to reform this House. Well, the House of Commons was reformed, because it was alleged that it did not in its composition answer the Constitutional theory upon which it was based. I do not know that anybody has advanced such a doctrine with respect to this House; but, be that as it may, it is certain that the House of Commons was never reformed by referring its constitution to a Select Committee. When public opinion arrived at such a point that it was thought it was good to reform the House of Commons, and when that opinion was shared by the House of Commons itself, the mode of procedure was that the Government ascertained what was the measure that it was their duty to propose to Parlia-

ment, and, without shifting their responsibility to a Select Committee, they brought down that measure and laid it before Parliament. If there ever were any considerable reform desired in this House, and eventually carried out, I venture to say it will not be done by the previous appointment of a Select Committee. It will be done by some proposal coming from the Ministers of the Crown, as in the House of Commons. Then, again, I do not think sufficient ground has been shown for taking any action, either in the indication of the evils to be remedied, or the remedies to be applied. Take the question of numbers to which the noble Earl referred. He says it is a great evil that the ordinary attendances should be so small, and the attendances so large on an occasion of importance. I was surprised to hear that argument, until I remembered that the noble Earl has not passed much time in the House of Commons, because in the House of Commons it is the most ordinary phenomenon in the world. A question is debated there by very few persons for the greater part of the evening, and when the evening draws to a close and the Division Bell rings, numbers of Gentlemen who have been employing themselves quite as profitably elsewhere rush in. I do not believe a deliberative Assembly exists in which the ordinary attendances at common-place and routine work bear in any way a proportion to those which are to be found upon the occasions of critical and Party Divisions. Then there is another point which, no doubt, is a matter that requires great consideration, and that is the character of those who form the Members of this House; and I agree with the noble Earl that it is a misfortune that we have not persons of a faith different from that of the Church of England and Roman Catholics, and that it is a still greater misfortune that we have not representatives of the industry and commerce of this country in very much larger numbers. There are, no doubt, many subjects with which we cannot deal as thoroughly and efficiently as we could desire, and the presence of such representatives would greatly assist our deliberations. Such men have been raised to Peerages from time to time, and among them we may remember men like Lord Overstone and Lord Ashburton, and others; but they have

always been exposed to the difficulty—that in the second generation, if they remained in trade, the stability of their position was open to some doubt, and if they left trade, in the next generation they ceased to represent the industry on account of which they were created. The noble Earl said he would assent to this Committee if a certain intimation came from the other side; but I demur to that statement, as wholly inconsistent with his doctrine that this is not a Party question. In what I am now going to say, I represent no one but myself. I undoubtedly have always held that the appointment of Life Peerages, if strictly limited so as to prevent the House from being swamped by the Prerogative of Ministers of the day, would increase the facility of the House for performing its proper Business, and strengthen both its reputation and ability. If the Crown possessed the power of creating an unlimited number of Life Peerages, the independence of this House would pass away; but there is no reason why they should not be limited either to an absolute number, or to a number to be created every year, which will effect the same object, and will, I believe, be a very large contribution to the power of this House to discharge its proper duties. But, my Lords, what is the real evil? Why is it that my noble Friend applies his matchless eloquence at this moment to the constitution of the House of Lords? There is one reason, but I cannot imagine that it would have any effect on his impartial mind, and that is because the majority in the House of Lords happens to be Conservative. But that, of course, is a phenomenon which is probably temporary, at all events in its present degree; and the circumstance that the majority in the House of Commons is large in the other direction, and that, to a certain extent, jealousy is aroused between the two Houses by the observance of that distinction, that is obviously the result of the peculiar circumstances of our own day, which will probably last a very few years, and on which it would be very unwise to base any legislation. But there is, no doubt, another reason—that everybody says that Parliament does not work, and that the machine is not going. Is that the fault of the House of Lords? I should say the real truth of the case is this. Parliament does not work; and

the other House, owing to circumstances peculiar to itself, is able to cover its inactivity by a profusion of words which gives the appearance of extreme energy and work, while we, unfortunately, have a tendency to taciturnity in this House which exposes the nakedness of our programme. If we only talked as much as the House of Commons, everybody would think we were just as active as they in effecting legislation. I will only say that if that is really the motive of my noble Friend, then the taciturnity of this House has become a great public evil, and I would earnestly ask my noble Friend to employ his oratory in trying to persuade noble Lords who sit here to take a more active part in the debates of this House than they do now. At the bottom of the question lies the essential difficulty of settling what is to be a Second Chamber in these days. Every sane man knows you must have a Second Chamber. It is generally admitted that, with one exception, this is the most efficient Second Chamber in the world, and that one exception, the Senate of the United States, is produced by circumstances and possesses power, and is the result of a condition of things wholly unlike anything which ever existed, or can possibly exist, in this country. Therefore, you are in the face of this position—that you must have a Second Chamber, and you have not anywhere an example of a better one than that of the House of Lords. I heartily concur in all the noble Lord has said as to the public interest involved in giving to this House all the strength and all the ability that can be obtained. I equally join him in that pathetic reference to the mysterious destiny which has placed us inside a building where the doors only open in one direction; but I do not see that any advantage will be obtained by appointing a merely fishing Committee with no definite mission, with no clear Order of Reference to guide it. I should be very willing to consider any special proposals which the noble Earl, or anyone else, has to make; but if I may use language of the same kind as the noble Earl, I should say our Institutions were at this moment in the course of a somewhat rapid evolution; that changes are taking place not, perhaps, in their form, but in their substance, their relations, and their essential power; that these changes are affecting

the House of Commons far more powerfully than they are us, and that after a few years have passed very considerable differences will exist in the position and power and character of Parliament in this country; and unless some pressing need, unless some clear evil is shown, we should not take the present time of rapid transition to undertake gratuitous changes, the end of which no man can foresee.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I argued against the Motion of my noble Friend, in the form in which it stands, solely on the ground that I did not like to appoint a Committee without any specific view as to what was to come out of it, and I wished to know what sort of encouragement would be given from the opposite Benches as to any result coming from it. The noble Marquess argued very strongly against a general fishing Committee; but he has given a very strong opinion in favour of some limited creation of Life Peers. Now, that is a very important question, indeed, and one most worthy the attention of the Committee. I do not propose any definite plan with respect to it; but if my noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery) would mark in his Motion that this is one of the objects with which the Committee is to act, I should most cordially vote with him.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY thanked the noble Lords who had spoken for the complimentary references made by them to the speech with which he had introduced the debate. He was inclined to think that behind the opposition in words which the noble Marquess opposite thought it to be his duty to show, there was a but thinly-disguised sentiment in favour of the proposal before the House. He fully appreciated the difficulties of the noble Marquess, who led a Party which was not supposed to be so much in favour of change as the Liberal Party. He must confess, however, that he was very much disappointed with the reply made by his noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. From what had fallen from the noble Earl, it was only too clear that in this matter the Government had no fixed policy, and were content to hand over the guidance of the House to Her Majesty's Opposition. He made this remark in no carping spirit. He was a plain and humble individual, and he

took the language of the noble Earl to have a plain meaning. The noble Earl had, however, done one thing—he had robbed the proposal before the House of any Party character. The Committee which he proposed had been condemned as a “fishing” Committee, whatever that might mean, and because no indication was given of the objects which the Committee was to carry out. He thought, however, he had made it clear that it would be the duty of the Committee to suggest the best means of promoting the efficiency of the House; but he did not think that it was any part of his business to anticipate the resolutions that such a Committee might arrive at. He could not believe that there was any serious danger to the Constitution to be apprehended from such an inquiry, because he believed that that House was as safe in the hands of a Committee of its own Members as it would be in those of the House itself. The criticism which his proposal had provoked might have induced the belief that the Select Committee was not to be appointed by their Lordships, but by those gentlemen who were good enough to spend their time in scattering explosives about the country. He reminded their Lordships, moreover, that if his Motion were agreed to, the Committee would not be nominated by him, but by some of their Lordships who were more experienced in these matters; and it was known how careful their Lordships were to select the proper Members. The noble Earl argued that his proposal for the appointment of a Committee to promote the efficiency of their Lordships' House indicated the existence of inefficiency, and was, therefore, a slight upon the House. That was an extraordinary interpretation to put upon his language. Now, he (the Earl of Rosebery) did not profess to be a master of English; but if he had wanted to say that there was any inefficiency in their Lordships' House he thought that he would have been able to say so. All that he said was, that however efficient their Lordships' House was it might be made still more efficient. The noble Earl had referred to Private Bill Legislation, and had expressed his willingness for a Committee to be appointed to consider that subject, and he had also said that he was willing to appoint a Committee to consider the question of Life Peerages. Both these

subjects would be considered by the Committee which he proposed to appoint, and, therefore, he did not see the ground there was for complaint that had been made against it. The noble Earl also said he was somewhat of a Conservative as regarded this House, and had become so by long residence. But at this moment the Ministry of which the noble Earl was a most distinguished ornament was bringing in one of the most drastic measures of Reform bearing upon the other House of Parliament, yet the noble Earl was not prepared to bring one-hundredth part of the reforming zeal evinced in that measure to bear upon their Lordships' House. The noble Earl had said that the question of the Quorum was a very small question; but that observation reminded him of the plea which was made in regard to the illegitimate child—that it was a very small one, and might very well be overlooked. He should feel it his duty to divide the House, and he should do so with the remark that the Division would show who were earnest, and zealous, and true in the cause of reform, and who were not.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I feel it to be absolutely necessary for me to say a few words after the second speech of the noble Earl. I do not think the noble Earl quite understands the position taken up by my noble Friend (Earl Granville). I may mention that the question of Life Peerages was fully and most ably discussed some years ago, when a very considerable majority of your Lordships decided against the system. Now, this House is not like the House of Commons, in whose composition there is from time to time a great change. The composition of this House remains practically the same, and in the absence of proof that a large majority in this House desire to change its composition, it would be idle to inquire into the subject of the institution of Life Peerages. I have always felt very doubtful about the expediency of Life Peerages myself; but if it is thought that by some such system you could introduce into the House some well-known men in commerce and trade, I should be very glad that the question should be considered. It is not by any means a safe thing to place the whole constitution of this House into the power of a Committee. I do not think it dignified for this House to discuss the reasons for its existence before a Committee, espe-

cially when nothing may come of an inquiry except a *ridiculus mus*. To throw such questions as that of the Quorum and that of Life Peerages—questions which affect in a great degree the reputation of the House—to throw them before a Select Committee, without any indication of the general feeling of the House, would be the worst step that could be taken. It is not fair to impute a want of reforming zeal to the Government, just because they cannot see their way to accept so wide and comprehensive an investigation as the noble Earl wants to embark upon. It would not be, I will not say Constitutional, but certainly not dignified for the House to engage in an inquiry so vague, and, at the same time, so little calculated to lead to practical results. I feel so strong a sympathy with my noble Friend in his main objects, that I entreat him not to place us in a position in which we shall be forced to vote against his proposal, and be made to appear hostile to all reform in the constitution of the House.

EARL CAIRNS: Some years ago the question of Life Peerages was brought before the House, and no one then thought it necessary to have a Select Committee. A Bill on the subject was brought in by Lord Russell, and was read a second time on the understanding that the character of the checks to be established should be fully considered in Committee. Some Amendments were accordingly inserted in Committee; but subsequently the House changed its mind, and rejected the Bill at the stage of Third Reading by a considerable majority.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN suggested that his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebury) should make Life Peerages a leading point in the Reference to the Committee. If that was done, it might be accepted by the Government, and might relieve Peers on that side from the embarrassment of dividing against the Leader of the House. He sincerely hoped it was still possible to find a *modus vivendi*.

LORD BALFOUR also appealed to the noble Earl not to divide the House after the course which the debate had taken, inasmuch as a Division would be the cause of some considerable practical inconvenience. Many noble Lords sympathized largely with the speech of the noble Earl; and those who did not

sympathize with it must have admired it; but they did not like the form in which the subject of inquiry by the proposed Committee stood on the Paper. Even the noble Earl himself must admit that the terms of his Motion were extremely wide, and that a Committee might go on inquiring for a very long time without exhausting the scope of the Reference.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, a greater amount of sympathy with the Motion existed on the Government Benches than the noble Earl seemed to think. What his noble Friend objected to was a general, absolute, and unlimited inquiry, without any Reference to indicate the particular object to which it was to be directed. He was, however, authorized to say that if his noble Friend would put into his Motion a special reference to Life Peerages, so that it should appear that that was the subject which the proposed Committee was particularly to inquire into, the Government would support him.

THE EARL OF FEVERSHAM said, he did not think that the constitution of their Lordships' House ought to be referred to a Committee; but if such a proposal was made, it ought to be on the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government. If the noble Earl did not say, he implied that that House did not conduct its Business well. On the contrary, he maintained that the Business of their Lordships' House was well done; and if anything was wanting in that respect, it was owing to the late period at which important measures were brought before the House. If Her Majesty's Government would bring measures before the House at an earlier period, the case would be different. He was entirely opposed to the Motion.

LORD TRURO urged that his noble Friend should give a specific Reference to the Committee by saying that it was to inquire into the expediency of creating Life Peerages. Some years ago the question was whether the Crown had the power to create them; but now the question would be different. He was of opinion, however, that after the speeches of the Foreign Secretary and the Leader of the Opposition, it would be both impolitic and inexpedient to agree to the Motion.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he thought whenever that House had to consider the question of Life Peerages

it should have two things—first, the proposition should be made on the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government; and, secondly, more than five minutes' Notice should be given of it. He should vote against the present proposal of the Government, not because he objected to Life Peerages, but because it was an extravagant violation of the ordinary practice of the House to throw it on the Table at such short Notice. It was evidently not part of the settled plan of the Government, and was only adopted by them when, after the debate, they had succeeded in finding out that some of their opponents were in favour of it.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, that, after the appeal of the Government, he had no objection to his Motion being so amended as to read—

“That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means, by Life Peerages or otherwise, of promoting the efficiency of this House.”

That seemed to him to cover the ground.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he had determined not to vote at all; but after what had been stated by the noble Earl, he should feel it his duty distinctly to vote against the Motion.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE was understood to say that he had intended to go into the Lobby with the noble Earl, because he thought the inquiry might have elicited a good deal of information; but after the change which was now proposed to be made, he could not vote with his noble Friend.

LORD BRABOURNE said, he thought that as an unjust outcry had been raised against their Lordships' House, they would do wisely to consent to the Motion, in order to see whether there were any means by which the efficiency of the House might be increased. Even if the proposed words were inserted, it would be open to the Committee to inquire into the whole subject opened by the noble Earl.

EARL CAIRNS did not think the noble Earl could amend his Motion without the permission of the House.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he was entirely in the hands of their Lordships. He, however, preferred his original Motion.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he was quite ready to move the Amendment which had been suggested, if the noble

Earl thought it more regular for him to do so.

Amendment *moved*, to insert after ("promoting") the words ("by life peerages or otherwise").—(*The Earl Granville.*)

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 44; Not-Contents 86: Majority 42.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Selborne, E. (<i>L. Chancellor.</i>)	Carlingford, L.
Grafton, D.	Carrington, L.
Saint Albans, D.	FitzGerald, L.
Northampton, M.	Hopetoun, L. (<i>E. Hope-</i> <i>toun.</i>)
Cowper, E.	Hothfield, L.
Derby, E.	Houghton, L.
Fortescue, E.	Inchiquin, L.
Granville, E.	Kintore, L. (<i>E. Kintore.</i>)
Kimberley, E.	Loftus, L. (<i>M. Ely.</i>)
Minto, E.	Meldrum, L. (<i>M.</i> <i>Huntly.</i>)
Morley, E.	Monson, L. [<i>Teller.</i>]
Onslow, E.	Monteagle of Brandon, L.
Sydney, E.	Mount-Temple, L.
Gordon, V. (<i>E. Aber-</i> <i>deen.</i>)	Ramsay, L. (<i>E. Dal-</i> <i>housie.</i>)
Powerscourt, V.	Reay, L.
Sherbrooke, V.	Rosebery, L. (<i>E. Rose-</i> <i>bery.</i>)
Belper, L.	Skene, L. (<i>E. Fife.</i>)
Boyle, L. (<i>E. Cork and</i> <i>Orrery.</i>) [<i>Teller.</i>]	Sudeley, L.
Bramwell, L.	Thurlow, L.
Breadalbane, L. (<i>E.</i> <i>Breadalbane.</i>)	Ventry, L.
Calthorpe, L.	Vernon, L.
	Wrottesley, L.
	Zouche of Haryng- worth, L.

CONTENTS.

Abercorn, M. (<i>D. Aber-</i> <i>corn.</i>)	Milltown, E.
Salisbury, M.	Morton, E.
Annesley, E.	Mount Edgumbe, E.
Beauchamp, E.	Powis, E.
Bradford, E.	Ravensworth, E.
Brownlow, E.	Redesdale, E.
Cadogan, E.	Romney, E.
Cairns, E.	Rosse, E.
Carnarvon, E.	Selkirk, E.
Coventry, E.	Strathmore and King- horn, E.
De La Warr, E.	Wharnccliffe, E.
Devon, E.	Zetland, E.
Feversham, E.	Bolingbroke and St. John, V.
Haddington, E.	Clancarty, V. (<i>E. Clan-</i> <i>carty.</i>)
Hardwicke, E.	Gough, V.
Jersey, E.	Hardinge, V.
Lathom, E. [<i>Teller.</i>]	Hawarden, V. [<i>Teller.</i>]
Leven and Melville, E.	Hood, V.
Lovelace, E.	Melville, V.
Lucan, E.	Strathallan, V.
Manvers, E.	
Mar and Kellie, E.	

Templetown, V.	Mostyn, L.
Abinger, L.	North, L.
Ashford, L. (<i>V. Bury.</i>)	Oranmore and Browne, L.
Bagot, L.	Penrhyn, L.
Balfour, L.	Poltimore, L.
Brabourne, L.	Rayleigh, L.
Carysfort, L. (<i>E. Carys-</i> <i>fort.</i>)	Saltersford, L. (<i>E. Cour-</i> <i>town.</i>)
Clanwilliam, L. (<i>E.</i> <i>Clanwilliam.</i>)	Saltoun, L.
Cloncurry, L.	Shute, L. (<i>V. Barring-</i> <i>ton.</i>)
Colville of Culross, L.	Silchester, L. (<i>E. Long-</i> <i>ford.</i>)
de Ros, L.	Stanley of Alderley, L.
Digby, L.	Stewart of Garlies, L. (<i>E. Galloway.</i>)
Dinevor, L.	Stratheden and Camp- bell, L.
Donington, L.	Strathnairn, L.
Egerton, L.	Tollemache, L.
Ellenborough, L.	Truro, L.
Foxford, L. (<i>E. Lime-</i> <i>rick.</i>)	Walsingham, L.
Gerard, L.	Wemyss, L. (<i>E.</i> <i>Wemyss.</i>)
Harlech, L.	Windsor, L.
Hay, L. (<i>E. Kinnoul.</i>)	Winnmarleigh, L.
Kenlis, L. (<i>M. Head-</i> <i>fort.</i>)	Wynford, L.
Ker, L. (<i>M. Lothian.</i>)	
Lyveden, L.	

Resolved in the negative.

LORD STRATHNAIRN explained that he voted in the wrong Lobby; he intended to have voted against the Amendment.

On Question, "That the original Motion be agreed to?" Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 38; Not-Contents 77: Majority 39.

CONTENTS.

Grafton, D.	Hopetoun, L. (<i>E. Hope-</i> <i>toun.</i>)
Saint Albans, D.	Hothfield, L.
Brownlow, E.	Houghton, L.
Fortescue, E.	Inchiquin, L.
Hardwicke, E.	Loftus, L. (<i>M. Ely.</i>)
Minto, E.	Meldrum, L. (<i>M.</i> <i>Huntly.</i>)
Morley, E.	Monteagle of Brandon, L.
Onslow, E. [<i>Teller.</i>]	Ramsay, L. (<i>E. Dal-</i> <i>housie.</i>)
Ravensworth, E.	Reay, L.
Wharnccliffe, E.	Rosebery, L. (<i>E. Rose-</i> <i>bery.</i>) [<i>Teller.</i>]
Gordon, V. (<i>E. Aber-</i> <i>deen.</i>)	Skene, L. (<i>E. Fife.</i>)
Powerscourt, V.	Stratheden and Camp- bell, L.
Belper, L.	Sudeley, L.
Brabourne, L.	Thurlow, L.
Bramwell, L.	Vernon, L.
Calthorpe, L.	Walsingham, L.
Carrington, L.	Wrottesley, L.
Clanwilliam, L. (<i>E.</i> <i>Clanwilliam.</i>)	Zouche of Haryng- worth, L.
Egerton, L.	
FitzGerald, L.	

NOT-CONTENTS.

Abereorn, M. (<i>D. Aber-</i> <i>corn.</i>)	Salisbury, M.
Northampton, M.	Annesley, E.

Beauchamp, E.
 Bradford, E.
 Cairns, E.
 Carnarvon, E.
 Coventry, E.
 Cowper, E.
 De La Warr, E.
 Devon, E.
 Feversham, E.
 Haddington, E.
 Jersey, E.
 Kimberley, E.
 Lathom, E.
 Leven and Melville, E.
 Lovelace, E.
 Lucan, E.
 Manvers, E.
 Mar and Kellie, E.
 Milltown, E. [*Teller.*]
 Morton, E.
 Powis, E.
 Redesdale, E. [*Teller.*]
 Romney, E.
 Rosse, E.
 Selkirk, E.
 Zetland, E.
 Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
 Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
 Cloncurry, L.
 de Ros, L.
 Digby, L.
 Dinevor, L.
 Donington, L.
 Ellenborough, L.
 Foxford, L. (*E. Lime-
rick.*)
 Gerard, L.
 Harlech, L.
 Hay, L. (*E. Kinnoul.*)
 Hylton, L.
 Kenlis, L. (*M. Head-
fort.*)
 Lyveden, L.
 Mostyn, L.
 Mount-Temple, L.
 North, L.
 Oranmore and Browne,
 L.
 Penrhy, L.
 Poltimore, L.
 Saltersford, L. (*E. Cour-
town.*)
 Saltoun, L.
 Shute, L. (*V. Barring-
ton.*)
 Silchester, L. (*E. Long-
ford.*)
 Stanley of Alderley,
 L.
 Stewart of Garlies, L.
 (*E. Galloway.*)
 Tollemache, L.
 Ventry, L.
 Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)
 Windsor, L.
 Winmarleigh, L.
 Wynford, L.

Resolved in the negative.

LEGITIMACY DECLARATION ACT (1858)

AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Legitimacy Declaration Act, 1858—Was *presented* by The Earl of ONSLOW; read 1^a. (No. 134.)

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 20th June, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRITS ISSUED—*For Leicester Borough, v. Peter Alfred Taylor, esquire, Manor of Northstead, in the County of York; for Warwickshire County (Northern Division), v. William Bromley-Davenport, esquire, deceased.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Third Reading*—Great Western Railway (No. 1), and *passed.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Colonial Prisoners Removal * [257].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) * [220]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) [109], *debate adjourned.*

Report—Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2) * [229].

Considered as amended—Tramways Provisional Orders (Birmingham and Aston Tramways, &c.) * [180]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) (Barrow-in-Furness Tramways, &c.) * [194]; Customs and Inland Revenue * [206].

Third Reading—Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order * [222]; National Debt (Conversion of Stock) * [186]; Settled Land * [247], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (No. 1)
 BILL (*by Order.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. W. FOWLER, in rising to move, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read the third time upon this day three months, said, that he regretted extremely to have to oppose the Bill; but there was one matter which required the attention of the House, and that was the 63rd clause, which empowered the Company to make bye-laws for regulating the times and conditions under which traction and other engines, or traffic of a heavy or dangerous description, might be passed across any level crossing or over any bridge of the Company's railway. His reason for opposing the Bill was, that this clause seemed to him to involve an alteration of the general law of Parliament by a Private Act. It was, he thought, of the greatest importance that no General Act of Parliament ought to be altered by a Private Act of which adequate Notice had not been given. He had only heard of this provision in the Bill from a letter which had been sent to him; and when he proceeded to examine the clause, it struck him, upon comparing it with the Statute, that it was distinctly an alteration of the general law. In the General Act, there were clauses establishing a code of regulations in regard to the matter dealt with by this section of the present Bill,

which code was clearly altered by the Bill. With the greatest deference, he maintained that if it were necessary to alter the provisions of a General Act which had been applied to the whole of the Kingdom, it ought to be done by a measure introduced by the Board of Trade, so that the House should have a proper and satisfactory guide, and not be allowed to feel that the law was being altered in one particular district, while it was allowed to remain unchanged in other localities. As he had said, the section of the Bill to which he took objection referred to the times and conditions under which traction engines, locomotives, and heavy traffic were to pass across any bridges of the Company at level crossings or over bridges. It also empowered the Company to restrict and limit the weight of such engines, machines, and vehicles, as well as the number which might be taken across or over any level crossing or bridge at the same time. Now, these were matters which were all provided for by the Act of 1878, and the local authorities had power to see that everything was properly arranged. Under this section he understood that the local authorities would be practically put on one side, and regulations might be made by the Board of Trade and the Railway Company to the entire exclusion of the local authorities. In the next place, the clause authorized penalties to be imposed on persons acting in contravention of Section 6 of the Locomotives Act of 1861, in the case of any bridge over the railways of the Company which the Company were liable to repair. Under the Act of 1861 no penalties were imposed, and this was clearly a regulation which altered the general law. It was a most material change. He would not say that it might not be quite right to make a change. He did not say whether it was so or not; but what he contended was that the change ought not to be made by means of a Private Act. He knew it might be said that the clause had been introduced into the Bill in order to secure the safety of the public. That also might be so; but if it was necessary in this particular instance, it was also required for the rest of the Kingdom, and he did not see why the provision should be inserted in a single Act applying only to one railway system. In Sir Erskine May's book upon Parlia-

mentary Practice, it was laid down in regard to the repeal of Public Acts by Private Bills as follows:—

"It has been questioned whether a Public Act may properly be repealed by a Private Bill; and undoubtedly such provisions demand peculiar vigilance, lest public laws be lightly set aside for the benefit of particular persons or places."

He entirely agreed with Sir Erskine May, that any such attempts should be regarded by the House with the utmost vigilance. The House had no Notice of these Bills; nobody knew anything about the provisions they contained; and the Bills themselves were generally brought on and disposed of before half-past 4. Any important question involved in a Private Bill was not fought out in a Committee upstairs, as it would be in the Whole House, where everybody knew what was coming on for discussion. A Private Bill, even when opposed, was discussed in Committee in a totally different way. A certain amount of opposition might, no doubt, be raised, but the opposition was not at all the same as would take place if the questions were discussed in the Whole House. It seemed to him that the result of inserting this section in the present Bill would be to create a great conflict of authorities in the districts affected by it. It would be difficult to know whether the local authorities had the power, or the Railway Company under their bye-laws, and that was a difficulty which ought not to be allowed if Parliament could avoid it. On the contrary, they ought to make the law as clear as they possibly could. He was told, by a circular which had been sent to him, that the trade concerned in the manufacture of these engines would be much affected by the passing of the clause, because, in future, the whole power would be in the hands of the Railway Company to say what the weight of the engines should be, instead of having the matter regulated, as it was now, by a General Act. The Board of Trade, no doubt, would exercise some authority and control; but he maintained that it was a question which ought only to be regulated by a General Act, and that it ought not to be competent for any Railway Company to pass a bye-law which might have the effect of injuriously interfering with trade. It was clear to him that it was the duty of the House to

prevent such a section from being introduced into a Private Act of Parliament which varied the provisions of a General Act already passed by Parliament. His objection was one of principle more than of detail, and in conclusion he begged to move that the Bill be read a third time on that day three months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months." — (*Mr. William Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. PORTMAN said, that, as Chairman of the Committee who had considered the Bill, he was anxious to say a few words in defence of the course which had been taken by the Committee. They had considered that the evidence before them was exceedingly strong in favour of the clause which had been introduced by the Great Western Railway Company into the Bill; and as to any hardship or difficulty that might be thrown in the way of owners of traction engines, in moving them from one part of the country to another, he believed that it existed only in imagination. The best proof he could give the House was this. Mr. Grierson told the Committee, in his evidence, that there were many owners of these traction engines who gave notice of their intention, before attempting to cross a level crossing upon an occupation road. The proposed change in the law would in no way benefit the Great Western Railway Company. On the contrary, it would impose upon them a certain amount of additional trouble and expense, which, however, they were quite willing to incur in the interests of the travelling public, because they felt that it was dangerous to the public safety to continue to allow these engines to cross the railways without notice or regulation of any kind whatever. He could assure the House that, personally, he had taken a considerable amount of interest and trouble in the matter; and he had himself put several questions to Mr. Grierson as to the way in which it was proposed by the Railway Company to carry out any bye-laws which might receive the sanction of the Committee. If he were allowed to quote a few extracts from the evidence of Mr. Grierson, the

House would see that the difficulty which had been raised by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) was quite an imaginary one. Mr. Grierson explained the manner in which notice was to be given, and said—

"There are many owners who do give notice throughout the line.—The Chairman: To whom is the notice given?—Witness: To the nearest station master. If some distance from a station, notice could be given to the ganger, who is always within a mile."

It was further pointed out that the regulations to be laid down would, when drafted, be submitted to the Board of Trade for their approval. He might further mention that, as a matter of fact, this clause was introduced into the Bill at the instance of the Board of Trade themselves. The Committee had Colonel Yolland before them, who explained very fully the reasons which induced the Board of Trade to give their support to the introduction of such a clause. They felt that they had no power to enforce these regulations, unless the matter were taken up generally by the great Railway Companies; and if the House agreed, as he hoped they would, to pass this Bill with this clause in it, he believed the result would be, either that a general law would be enacted on the subject, or that every great Railway Company would take the question up, and introduce bye-laws for themselves, to prevent the inconvenience, and, even more than that, the dangerous risk they incurred of having a serious accident occur from the passing of these engines across their railways without adequate notice and regulation. It was, he thought, most objectionable to sanction their passing of a level crossing without any consideration for the convenience or safety of the line.

MR. DILLWYN said, that, as one of the Directors of the Company interested in the promotion of the Bill, he wished to say that his hon. Friend the Member for Dorset (Mr. Portman) had shown good reasons for granting the powers which had been inserted in the Bill. So far as the Railway Company themselves were concerned, they really had not seen any other course than that which they had pursued. They felt that the Railway Company were frequently exposed to very great danger—he might say to an appalling danger, so far as the public were concerned—and that, at any mo-

ment, a serious accident might be occasioned by the inconsiderate use of the powers claimed by the owners of these engines, who had the right to make use of an occupation road. They now claimed the right of crossing these occupation roads on the level at a slow pace, without giving the slightest notice to the Railway Company, and sometimes within a short time of the passing of a train. The whole gist of the demand of the Railway Company was, that they should have notice, and that the owners of these unwieldy traction engines should intimate to the Company when they intended to cross the railway, so as to prevent a great danger to the travelling public. At present, they were not obliged to give any notice whatever; and, as a matter of fact, the opponents of this clause had refused to give notice until very lately. The consequence was, that the Company were put to considerable trouble and expense, and they had to send persons down to take care that due provision was made for the passing of these level crossings. Without previous notice, it was just possible for an express train to reach the crossing just at the time one of these engines was passing it, which would place the public travelling by it in a position of imminent and appalling danger. He might instance a case in which a train had been pulled up only within four or five yards of reaching one of these traction engines, and an accident might happen any day under the existing state of the law. The Railway Company were, therefore, of opinion that a penalty should be attached; and that it was also necessary to alter the weights at which the engines were constructed, so that the Board of Trade, in the case of excess, should have the power of control in the matter. The object of this part of the clause was to guard against the excessive weight of the traction engines breaking down the bridges, or crushing down the line. Penalties were attached for any breach of the law. The Company did not ask Parliament materially to alter the law, but to make it more efficient, by attaching penalties to a breach of it, and he was sure the House would agree that their demand was only reasonable. His hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) rested his objection principally upon the fact that the making

of a change in the law and the imposition of penalties ought to be done by a General Act, and not by a Private Bill. It was quite true that, to a certain extent, the clause did alter the general law; but what were the Railway Company to do? Under the existing state of things, they found that the greatest possible danger arose to the public. It was said that the Board of Trade ought to bring in a Bill themselves. That might be so; but the Board of Trade had not taken that course, and the Railway Company, being responsible for the working of their own line, had thought it right to put in this clause, suggested, not by themselves, but by the Board of Trade in the interests and safety of the public. It was said by his hon. Friend that the Company had given no Notice to the House of their intention to introduce a clause which would change the general law. They were unable to give any greater Notice than they had done. They had given the full Notice required by the Standing Orders, and no objection was taken except in one or two instances. The clause was generally accepted as a reasonable provision, and the Chairman of the Committee to whom the Bill was referred had told the House the reasons which had induced the Committee to grant these powers. It would be a very hard measure of justice indeed to adopt the suggestion of his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge, and to throw out this Bill because a clause of this nature had been inserted in it, seeing that it was simply a clause introduced at the suggestion of the Board of Trade in the interests of the public, and that the Railway Company were desirous of meeting the requirements both of the public and of the Board of Trade. There were no means of amending the Bill now, and the Railway Company had done all they could to give due Notice of their intention. When the Bill was before the House for a second time, it might have been opposed upon the second reading; and as to the assertion that there was a want of Notice, the Parliamentary agents looked pretty well after these things, and no objection whatever was raised on the second reading. When the Bill went before the Committee, the Committee agreed to insert the clause; and the only effect of adopting the Amendment of his hon.

Friend the Member for Cambridge, would be to throw out a Bill on account of a clause which had been inserted—in good faith both towards the Board of Trade and the public—to endeavour to provide for the public safety, and to fulfil the requirements of an important Department of the Government. It was said that there was no precedent for such a clause. Now, there was a precedent for the course which had been taken in this case. Indeed, there were more than one case in which the general law had been altered by clauses introduced into Private Acts of the Railway Companies. Two years ago a clause was sanctioned by Parliament which bore very much upon the present case. Two years ago the Great Western Railway Company found that the offence of trespassing upon their line had no penalty attached to it. They accordingly introduced a Bill, in which a clause was proposed to enable them to fine persons who were found trespassing on their line of railway. The Committee, to whom the Bill was referred, adopted the clause, and it was inserted in the Bill. The reason which induced the Railway Company to take that action was, that a great loss of life annually occurred in consequence of persons trespassing on their lines of railway; and, in 1882, power was given to them to impose penalties upon all offenders. The clause had worked most successfully, and it had been accepted in principle by the Board of Trade, and by the House. Indeed, in the Railway Bill now before the House, his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had introduced a clause exactly similar to that which the Great Western Railway Company put into their Bill in 1882. Surely that was a precedent to satisfy the House that Parliament had not abstained from altering the general law and imposing penalties, where they were of opinion that the necessities of the case demanded it, in order to put a stop to practices which the general law had been found nugatory to prevent. He hoped the House would agree to read the Bill a third time. It would be a very hard measure indeed to throw out a Bill introduced for other purposes, on account of a clause inserted specially at the instance of the Board of Trade, and required in the interests of the public safety. At any rate, the

House might well pause before they rejected the Bill on that account, because it would have to go to “another place,” where there would still be an appeal. His own opinion was that the proper course for his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge to have taken would have been to appeal to the House of Lords, if he entertained so strong an objection to the principle of this clause; but it would be extremely hard to throw out the measure, as his hon. Friend was now endeavouring, simply on account of one clause contained in it. If the Bill were read a third time now, it would go up to the House of Lords; and if that House disapproved of the clause, they had full power to strike it out.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that although, as a rule, he was generally inclined to view with suspicion the proposals and action of Railway Directors, he wished to express an opinion that, in this case, the House ought to support them, and not be led away by the appeal of the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler). He would point out to the hon. Member that he was taking a heavy and an unpleasant responsibility upon himself, which he (Lord Randolph Churchill) thought the House would feel disinclined to share with him, and that was that if, owing to the statements the hon. Member had put forward, the House threw out the Bill, and an accident occurred, in consequence of carelessness on the part of those in charge of a traction engine, which involved loss of life, that loss of life would be attributed to the action of the hon. Member. What was the Motion of the hon. Member? He thought it was a pure technicality, and rather a miserable technicality. Yet, for the sake of this technicality, the hon. Member was willing to risk the loss of human life. At the time the Locomotive Act was passed in 1861 these traction engines were very little known or understood, not having been fully developed; but he thought that anybody who lived in the country would know how extremely little care was exercised in conducting them by the persons in charge of them, and what trouble they gave to the county authorities by breaking down the bridges and cutting up the roads. Accidents continually arose from the total want of

caution which distinguished the persons placed in charge of them. He thought the person, who had put the present clause into the Bill had strong reason for doing so. All they had done was to do that which the House of Commons always tried to enforce upon Railway Companies as part of their duty — namely, that they should make proper provisions for the safety of human life. Under those circumstances, he trusted the House would support the efforts of Railway Directors to comply with the suggestions of the Board of Trade.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, that, as one of the travelling public, he must add his voice to that of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock in opposition to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler). He was satisfied that this clause was a necessary one; and it would be highly objectionable, because it altered the general law, to say that a hard-and-fast line should be drawn, and that it should not be accepted. It was most necessary, from time to time, to frame bye-laws for regulating the use of railways in the interests of the safety of the public; and, not unfrequently, when bye-laws were passed, they became subsequently incorporated in a General Act. This was an experiment which the Great Western Railway Company proposed to carry out, and he believed it would prove of great advantage to the travelling public. The Company simply asked, by a bye-law, to give protection to the public; and this bye-law was not only approved by the Board of Trade, but had been introduced at the instance of that Board. It was a source of extreme danger to have these heavy traction engines passing over a line of railway, without any practical control being exercised over them, they being merely conducted at the simple motion of the persons in charge of them. All that the clause did, was to provide that the Board of Trade should have the supervision of any regulations which might affect the moving of traction engines over level crossings, and that Department might safely be trusted to exercise their discretion in a proper manner. These locomotives formed, at the present moment, an element of great danger to the travelling public. According to the evidence of Mr. Grierson, before the Committee, all

that was required was that the owners of the engines should give notice to the railway authorities, before proceeding to move them, so that proper precautions might be taken for the protection of the public.

MR. JAMES HOWARD said, that one might suppose, from the character of the remarks which had fallen from previous speakers, that Railway Companies left these level crossings totally uncared for and unattended, and that the public could cross and recross them at any moment they thought proper. But what was the fact? At level crossings there was a gatekeeper. ["No, no!"] There was at every level crossing he was acquainted with; and he could only say that if the Railway Companies did not place a gatekeeper at every level crossing, they ought to do so. Level crossings were essentially dangerous, whether in charge of a gatekeeper or not, and if Railway Companies were so negligent of the safety of the public as to leave a level crossing uncared for and unattended, they were highly reprehensible. He hoped the House would allow him to direct their attention to one important fact. These traction engines had now been in general use for 20 or 25 years, and no accident had ever occurred to a railway train through the passing of such an engine over a level crossing. He had asked the officials of the Great Western Railway Company the other day if they could give a single instance in which an accident had happened from a traction engine passing over a level crossing, and the reply was — "No, we cannot; but we have been very near it." If an accident should happen, it would be in consequence of the neglect of the Company in not properly supervising their railway; and it was clearly their duty to guard their own property. He would put the case upon higher ground. Steam power had become a necessity in modern agriculture. Agriculture, in the present day, could not be carried on without steam power, and but for the assistance it gave, a large portion of the strong land of the country would go out of cultivation; Parliament ought not, therefore, to sanction impediments to its use. The Railway Companies were empowered to build bridges, and they ought to see that they were strong enough to resist

damage by the passing over them of these steam traction engines. Those machines ought to be used, subject only to regulations laid down by the local authorities.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not consider it a part of my duty to express an opinion upon Private Bills as a rule; but this is an exceptional case, in which, in the public interest, seeing that the public safety is concerned, it is as well that I should give the House my view on the matter. I must confess that I think the course pursued by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) a most extraordinary one. He actually proposes that the Railway Company in question should be punished, by being treated in the manner he has suggested, in consequence of there being a clause in the Bill which was not inserted in their own interest, or at their suggestion, but at the suggestion of the special Department charged with the duty of watching over the public safety. He raises a question of principle, and asks whether it would not be desirable to settle the whole matter by a General Bill. I dare say it would; but the hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well what are the difficulties in the way of passing a General Bill. He knows that if we had to wait until we obtained a favourable opportunity for introducing such a measure in a Session crowded with general Business, such as this is, that we should have very little prospect of bringing it to a successful issue. Meanwhile, he knows that there is a constant source of danger existing on this particular line, which this clause is intended to obviate. One of the Inspectors of the Board of Trade (Colonel Yolland) has reported in favour of such a provision, and has declared that accidents which might have been attended with most serious results, and brought about untold loss of life, have several times been within an ace of happening in consequence of the want of sufficient precautions in this matter. The hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Howard) says there is no danger to be apprehended, because the Railway Companies are obliged to keep caretakers to take charge of the gates at every level crossing. The hon. Gentleman evidently knows a great deal more about traction engines than he does about the management of railways; because, as a

matter of fact, caretakers are never placed at level crossings over occupation roads. It seems to me that it would be unfair to burden Companies with such an obligation as that proposed; and I think the scheme in the Bill a very reasonable one, and that there is not the slightest fear that it will interfere with legitimate trade, for their bye-laws will have to be submitted to the Board of Trade, who will take care that everything is contained therein necessary for the public safety. I hope the House will not throw out the Bill, because, as I have said, the Department with which I am connected has introduced this provision purely in the interest of the safety of the public.

MR. MACLIVER said, that after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain), he trusted his hon. Friend (Mr. W. Fowler) would not proceed to a Division against the third reading of the Bill. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had opened up an interesting topic by his speech; but, at the same time, he (Mr. MacLiver) was bound to say that no Company in the country had ever taken greater care of life and property on their line than had the Great Western. They were greatly to be commended for the policy hitherto pursued; and, therefore, he desired to join in recommending that the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. W. FOWLER said, he had no wish to put the House to the trouble of a Division. Therefore, he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment. He wished, further, to say that it would be perfectly easy for Her Majesty's Government, if so minded, to allow the Bill to be read a third time, on the understanding that the clause would not be proceeded with in "another place." His object in moving the rejection of the Bill had been to get a general expression of opinion from the House on the matter. He begged leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put, and *agreed to* (Queen's Consent signified).

Bill read the third time, and *passed*, with a New Title.

Mr. James Howard

PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (LABOURERS' ACT) (No. 4) BILL.—[BILL 202.]

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan.)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he should like to ask the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) what was the stage, and to what district of Ireland the Bill referred?

MR. DILLWYN said, the stage they were taking was purely a matter of form—namely, that the Bill be considered prior to being read a third time.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he must apologize for making any remarks upon a question of form in connection with a Private Bill; but his point was this—that there had been a Bill brought down from Committee upstairs, which, in his opinion, had been altered for the worse to such an extent that he should feel it his duty to oppose it on the third reading. If the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) was unable to tell him what the Bill was, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would be obliged to ask someone else. Perhaps he would be putting himself more in Order in these observations if he moved that the debate be adjourned. He supposed such a Motion would be in Order?

MR. DILLWYN said, the stage was merely that of Consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is that the Bill be now considered.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he believed that on that Question he should be in Order in moving "That the Debate on the Motion be adjourned."

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the most convenient course would be that the Bill should stand over for Consideration by Order for a subsequent day.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR wished to know to what district the Bill referred?

MR. COURTNEY said, the Bill dealt with the Nenagh Union, County Tipperary. He did not know whether that

was the Bill to which the hon. Member wished to draw attention.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: It is exactly the Bill.

Consideration, as amended, deferred till Wednesday next.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—
"RESULTS FEES."

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that teachers in the poorest parts of the West of Ireland are deprived by the National Board of half "result fees" unless the pupils who, on account of their extreme poverty, are exempted from any school fees in those parts lay down shilling for shilling with National Board of the second moiety; were not the teachers paid the full amount of results fees a few years ago without any charge upon the pupils, and what is the cause of the change in the rule; and, is it the fact that the result of compelling children to pay "school fees" in those poor districts, where they were never obliged to pay, and where they can scarcely get clothing to cover themselves, is that many of them stay away from school because of their inability to pay the fees?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is true that, at the start, the Government paid the entire of the results fees earned by teachers without reference to contributions; but this was sanctioned only when the system was in its infancy, and has not been done since 1874. Several changes of practice were made from time to time, and, in 1876, the Government sanctioned payment of a contingent moiety in schools in non-contributory Unions, on condition that the local contributions from all sources equalled such moiety. Unless those contributions equalled the whole moiety, nothing was paid by the Government. In 1880 this rule was relaxed in favour of the teachers, by allowing payment of so much of the contingent moiety as would be met by local contributions from all sources—not merely by school pence as indicated in the Question. The Commissioners on National Education are unaware of any cases where pupils are compelled to pay school fees contrary to usage, or where

they are obliged to remain away from school owing to their inability to pay the fees demanded. Perhaps the hon. Member will give an instance?

MR. HEALY said, he did not wish to give an instance, as it might be said that the teacher communicated with him; but he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would inquire into the state of facts in Connemara, with the object of seeing whether the people were not too poor to pay any contribution which would enable the teachers to get the benefit of results fees?

MR. TREVELYAN: Yes; I will look into the matter with special reference to pressure being put upon the pupils.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—ANNUAL EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS—NAMES OF EXAMINERS.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland conceal from the public the names of the examiners appointed by them to conduct the annual examination of teachers; whether, as a consequence, questions, or perhaps whole pages of questions, have frequently been given, outside the prescribed course, on the teacher's programme; whether the Commissioners of National Education will for the future, like the Universities, South Kensington Department, and the Intermediate Education Board, place upon each set of questions the name of the examiner on that subject; and, whether the names of the examiners appointed to conduct the next July examinations will be given; and, if not, would he explain the reason?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that there is no concealment whatever in the matter, and that it would be impossible to put the names of the Examiners on the examination paper, as their preparation, as well as the examination of the candidates' answers, is a joint work, and not done exclusively by individuals. The Commissioners have furnished me with a memorandum of the system of examination adopted, which seems both efficient and fair. I should be glad to show it to any hon. Member who wishes to see it.

Mr. Trevelyan

MR. HEALY: Will it be laid on the Table?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have no objection to that.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELY DISPENSARY, CO. FERMANAGH.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is with the concurrence of the Local Government Board for Ireland that the Ely Dispensary, in the town of Derrygonnilly, county Fermanagh, is used as the head-quarters of the Orange Flute Band, where its uniform and musical instruments are deposited; do the members of Derrygonnilly Orange Lodge use this Dispensary as a place of meeting; are the Orange flags stored there; and, are these flags, and party emblems, hung out from its windows on Orange anniversaries?

MR. TREVELYAN: The replies to the inquiries made in this case have not yet been received. The Question has been on the Paper three days; but, no doubt, it was necessary first to send to the County Fermanagh for a report, and subsequently to have the matter considered by the Local Government Board.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE CORONERSHIP OF LEITRIM.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether arrangements have been made for the election of a successor to fill up the vacancy in the office of coroner, which took place in county Leitrim on 6th May last; and, if not, will he have the necessary steps taken without further delay?

MR. TREVELYAN: I understand that no arrangements have yet been made to fill up the vacancy. The law does not empower me to take any steps in the matter. The course prescribed by the Statute is, that any two Justices may deliver to the clerk of the peace a certificate of the vacancy, and the Lord Chancellor, on receiving the certificate, is to issue a writ for the election of a new Coroner. The Lord Chancellor is prepared to issue such writ on the proper preliminaries being complied with.

MR. BIGGAR: But if two local magistrates do not think fit to sign a notice, can there be no election?

MR. TREVELYAN: There has been some such difficulty on former occasions,

and official pressure had to be brought to bear. I will look into the question.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — FEMALE TELEGRAPH CLERKS, DUBLIN OFFICE—SPECIAL DUTY.

MR. BIGGAR: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, Why were three terms of special duty, in 1883, with per diem allowance attached, which were supplied from the Dublin Telegraph Office last year, given to one female telegraphist? Is it true that, on the third occasion, although absent from the office on sick leave, instructions were sent to said telegraphist at her private residence to proceed on this duty; and will he see that these special duties are fairly divided amongst the Dublin female telegraphists?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, there were only a limited number of telegraphists qualified for the special duty referred to by the hon. Member; and, so far as he was able to ascertain, the duty had not been unequally apportioned. With regard to the particular case mentioned of a female telegraphist being asked to perform one of these special duties when in ill-health, he explained that it was to assist at an office at the seaside, and it was thought that the change would do her good.

PERU AND CHILI—THE PERUVIAN BONDHOLDERS.

MR. WILLIAMSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether or not he can confirm a statement, made in a circular recently issued by the Peruvian Bondholders' Committee, to the effect that the approval of Her Majesty's Government had been given to the sending of a Representative to Chili in the interest of the Bondholders; and, whether it is to be understood, by the sending of this Representative to Chili, that Diplomatic action by the Government, in regard to the claims of the Bondholders, has now ceased?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, that on application being made, an ordinary letter of introduction to Her Majesty's Minister in Chili was sent to the agent of the Committee of Peruvian Bondholders. This letter contained no reference to the object of the mission; and, as stated in the letter forwarding it, only authorized Mr.

Pakenham to extend to Mr. Smiles the civilities offered by Representatives of Her Majesty to gentlemen travelling abroad. No approval whatever by Her Majesty's Government of the proposed mission was asked for or given. The Committee had acted entirely on their own responsibility in sending out an agent to Chili, and his mission was of a private character. He could not say that the mission of Mr. Smiles would terminate the diplomatic action of the Government, with regard to the recent Treaty, as there was no connection between the mission and diplomatic action. He had already informed the hon. Member that no action in favour of the Bondholders as such had been or would be taken by the Government, and it might be hoped that these questions would be settled by private arrangement. The Government only interfered to protest against a violation of accepted principles of international law.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked, whether the noble Lord was aware that he, as Chairman of the Committee of Peruvian Bondholders, called with Mr. Smiles at the Foreign Office and saw Sir Julian Pauncefote, who expressed his entire approbation of Mr. Smiles's mission, and stated how glad he was that Mr. Smiles was going out?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am quite aware of what transpired at that interview; but I do not consider that anything justified the issuing of this circular.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked, whether the noble Lord was aware that the hon. Member who put the Question was a member of the firm of Balfour and Williamson, who were greatly interested in the affairs of Peru and Chili, and that the Question was prompted by private motives?

[No reply.]

MR. RAIKES: After what the noble Lord has admitted——

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have admitted nothing.

MR. RAIKES: I understand the noble Lord to say he was perfectly aware of the interview with my hon. Friend and Sir Julian Pauncefote.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I said I was quite aware of what passed at that interview, and that nothing that passed at that interview in any way

justified the issue of the circular in question.

MR. RAIKES asked, whether the noble Lord was not now willing to admit that the circular or the statement contained in it had been demanded after the interview?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he would admit nothing, his answer having been clear, and, as he should have thought, satisfactory.

MR. RAIKES: The noble Lord was aware that this interview had taken place; and I wish to ask, whether he is not willing to withdraw his previous statement that no approbation on the part of the Foreign Office had been solicited or asked?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not withdraw it—quite the contrary.

NAVY—H.M.S. "VIVID"—FATAL CASUALTY AT PLYMOUTH.

MR. MACLIVER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If his attention has been drawn to the collision which occurred at Plymouth on Sunday June 8th, when H.M.S. *Vivid* cut down a pleasure-boat in the Hamoaze, causing a loss of two lives; and, whether an official inquiry is intended to ascertain if any one is responsible for this disaster?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN, in reply, said, that on receiving the report of this lamentable occurrence the Board of Admiralty ordered a court martial to be held upon the officer who was in command of the *Vivid* at the time.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881— LOANS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. LEAHY (for Mr. O'SULLIVAN) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that parties looking for loans in Ireland under the Land Act of 1881 are often detained from three to five months after the preliminaries are complied with before they get the first instalment of their loan; and, if so, will he take any steps to facilitate the proceedings in such cases?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, he was informed that there were very few, if any, cases of delay in the working of this scheme. Those which occurred were the fault of the applicants themselves. Great difficulty was experienced in getting forms of application properly filled up and worked out.

Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice

ARMY (COMMISSARIAT)—GARRISONS IN IRELAND.

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that the greater portion of provisions and necessaries required for the mess in connection with the garrison at Mullingar is supplied from England; and, whether this is also the case with regard to other garrisons in Ireland; and, if so, whether he intends to take any steps towards remedying such a state of things?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, it is left entirely to the mess of each regiment to decide whence to obtain its supplies, and it must mainly rest with the local tradesmen whether a mess finds its advantage in dealing with them.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SEC. 14—HOUSE SEARCH BY THE POLICE, DURRUS, BANTRY, CO. CORK.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on the morning of the 14th inst. Inspector Frayelli and a party of Constabulary armed entered the house of James Francis O'Regan, of Durrus, Bantry, county Cork, and, upon the plea of searching for arms, seized forcibly and carried off several copies of a paper called *United Ireland*, and also a number of private letters belonging to Mr. O'Regan and other persons; and, if this be the case, whether he will cause these letters to be immediately returned to Mr. O'Regan; and, whether he will take steps to punish Inspector Frayelli for seizing private and lawful property.

MR. TREVELYAN: District Inspector Frizell and a party of Constabulary entered Mr. John O'Regan's house to search it, under the Lord Lieutenant's Warrant, issued under Section 14 of the Prevention of Crime Act. They found some documents which they considered to be of a seditious and illegal character, and which they seized. Thinking it necessary to continue the search through a number of other documents, the District Inspector, to lessen the inconvenience to the family, and with the consent of Mr. O'Regan, took them away for the purpose, wrapped in an old newspaper. This happened to be a copy of *United Ireland*, and that is the only ground for

the suggestion that copies of that paper were seized. The newspaper was subsequently returned, with such of the documents as it was not considered necessary to detain.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether the right hon. Gentleman considered it desirable to leave to the discretion of policemen in Ireland the decision of what papers were seditious? He might say that he had distinct information that these papers were all of a private character. ["Order!"]

[No reply.]

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS ACT,
1875 (IRELAND)—AMENDMENT.

COLONEL COLTHURST (for Mr. MELDON) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When it is proposed, as promised, to introduce a Bill to amend the National School Teachers Act, 1875 (Ireland); and, if it is proposed to introduce a Bill to effect this object alone, or is it intended to promote legislation to include this question in a general Education Bill?

MR. TREVELYAN: I hope to introduce the Education Bill in time to have it passed, in the case of its meeting with a reasonable amount of acceptance from Members interested in the question. It is proposed to include other subjects in the Bill, including the provision of sites for schools.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—
GENERAL GORDON.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the date of the last tidings received from General Gordon by the Government; have the Government yet learned whether General Gordon received (a) their Despatch of 23rd April 1884, or (b) their last Despatch of 18th May 1884; and, have the Government taken any, and, if so, what steps, since the 23rd May, to communicate with General Gordon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The date of the latest despatch from General Gordon is, as I have already stated, the 10th of April. At least 20 different copies of the despatch of the 23rd of April have been sent by different routes. A large discretion has, however, been left to Her Majesty's Acting Consul General to multiply messengers and to use whatever means he may con-

sider advisable. I am not aware that any of these messengers started later than May 21. The Mudir of Dongola thinks that one of these messengers has entered Khartoum. On the 19th instant a message was received through Her Majesty's Consul at Suakin from Colonel Chermide, to the effect that one of these messengers whom he had despatched on the 13th of May, having been taken ill near Berber, had sent on his brother and a companion with the despatch of April 23 by boat to Khartoum, where he remained for three hours. General Gordon, or another Englishman, came to the boat with him, and gave him a letter. On the road from Berber the messengers were pursued, and the bearer of the letter was killed; but, as the same messenger was the person who stated that he and his companion had been at Berber and gone, it seems, on a day subsequent to that on which it is now alleged to have fallen, these statements must be read with caution. I may also mention that a telegram had been received from Mr. Egerton, stating that Major Chermide telegraphed on the 19th that 21 Tahoori pilgrims arrived at Suakin the day before, 38 days from Khartoum, which place they reported quiet, with provisions cheap, and that Gordon had news from Kassala of the defeat of the Haden-dowas.

MR. GIBSON: The noble Lord has, in his statement, made the remark that some of the information which had reached the Foreign Office must be read with great caution. I wish to ask whether the Government have received any answer with reference to their despatch of May 18th?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have given the House all the information in our possession, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman may assume there is no news in respect to it.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Will the noble Lord say, whether the communications with General Gordon include the appointment of messengers by Zebehr Pasha?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: One of these messages has been sent by an agent selected by Zebehr Pasha.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: By Zebehr as an agent of the British Government communicating with General Gordon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That does not necessarily follow. Her Majesty's Government considered it might be one means of communicating with him.

EGYPT—ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT—TREATY WITH ABYSSINIA.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state the terms of the Treaty lately made by Admiral Hewett with Abyssinia?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Neither Admiral Hewett's Report nor the text of the Treaty have yet been received; and, pending their receipt, it is not in my power to make any statement in addition to that which I made on the 12th instant.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN) — PROPOSED RAILWAY BETWEEN BERBER AND SUAKIN.

MR. BOURKE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can give the House any information with respect to the alleged proposed railroad between the Red Sea and the Nile?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My right hon. Friend at the head of the Government stated the other day, in the House, that the question of the possible construction of the railway from Suakin to Berber had been, among other subjects, under the consideration of the Government. I do not think it possible for me at present to add anything to that statement, except to say that certain preliminary steps have been taken by the Government with the view to such a possible contingency; but, up to the present, the Government have not come to a decision to construct such a railway.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

[BILL 109.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. TREVELYAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that as no statement was made on introducing the Bill, it would be respect-

ful to the House that he should make some remarks on the present occasion, although it was very seldom that so important a Bill as that, and one which excited so much interest, could be argued in so narrow a compass. The Bill contained two propositions—the first, to render the closing of public-houses on Sunday perpetual throughout those parts of Ireland where they were already closed; and the second, to extend Sunday closing to the five towns which were at the present time exempted. Those were propositions which could, to a certain extent, be argued together; because if it could be proved that the effect of closing public-houses on Sundays was advantageous, they should have a reason, not only for making it perpetual in the parts of Ireland where it was at present in force, but for extending it to those towns where it was not in force; unless some special reason could be shown to the contrary. Now, on the question whether Sunday closing had been a blessing to the community, there was certainly a difference of opinion; and the unfavourable view was expressed, as well as it could possibly be expressed, by a very important deputation which waited on him on January 27th last year. That deputation handled the case against Sunday closing very ably; and he promised not to put by their views lightly, and to make extensive inquiries as to the operations of the Act where it was in operation, and its probable operations in the parts where it was not already in force. He directed those inquiries with special reference to the arguments used by the deputation. He called, as he promised to call, for the opinions of a great number of Government officials all the country over, some of whom were responsible for the order of the various districts; and others, the Local Government Board officers, who were conversant with the social state of the country, and who had both of them considerable opportunity of collecting the public opinion of the country on subjects which could not be classed as political. He had studied the statistics resulting from those inquiries closely, in the light of the very broad combinations in which they had been placed by the advocates and opponents of the measure, and he had come to the conclusion that Sunday closing had been a great and almost

unmixed benefit to those parts of the country where it had been in operation, and that it might be hopefully and confidently extended to the five exempted towns. The Sunday closing measure practically came into operation in the last quarter of 1878. It was supposed to come into operation immediately it passed; but the existing licences, running until the 18th of October in that year, 1879, was the first year in which experience was had of the working of the new system. In the four years preceding Sunday closing, the Sunday arrests for drunkenness were as follows:—In 1875, 5,200; in 1876, 5,900; in 1877, 5,600; and in 1878, 5,400. He was now referring to Ireland outside the five exempted towns. Late, in 1878, came the Sunday Closing Act; and, in 1879, Sunday arrests dropped at once to 2,400. In the towns that were exempted from the Act, except so far as it curtailed the hours of sale, the arrests for Sunday drunkenness were in 1878, 4,500, and in 1879, 4,300. Now, the diminution in one year of Sunday drunkenness by one-half of what it had been was, in itself, a gain to humanity of enormous magnitude. Sunday was the day on which the working classes had leisure, and the day on which the habits of the week, and often of the life, were formed. Therefore, the sudden fall of 50 per cent in the Sunday drunkenness meant that a great number of young working men and lads would never acquire drinking habits; and that a great number of homes would, in the future, be spared an amount of misery which it was scarcely possible to calculate. Many statistics had been adduced, and with considerable success, to show that, in the exempted towns, there had been a great falling off of drunkenness; but what those figures had not proved, and what they could never prove, was that it would not be a great benefit to Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Waterford, and Limerick, if, between one year and another, the number of persons intoxicated on Sundays suddenly fell off to one-half what it was at present. This was a point which had, he thought, been passed over by the opponents of the measure. There was an immense margin for improvement in the amount of drunkenness in those towns; for, relatively to population, Sunday drunkenness was five times as great in

the exempted as it was in the other parts of Ireland. In the exempted towns the population was 681,000; the Sunday arrests in last year were 2,923; that was, 1 in 230 of the population. In the rest of Ireland, the population was 4,650,000; the Sunday arrests were 3,736. That was, 1 in 1,220 of the population. If hon. Gentlemen could bring together any figures or arguments to shake that fact, they would do much to defeat the Bill; for upon that broad, simple, and significant fact, the main argument of the Bill stood, and he believed it stood safely. He would next take the proportion of Sunday and week-day drunkenness in the exempted and included towns respectively. In the non-exempted towns, there were 3,736 cases of Sunday drunkenness, and on week days, 64,800. That was, in the part of Ireland where Sunday closing was in force, there was one case of Sunday drunkenness to 17 of week-day drunkenness; while, in the exempted districts, the cases of Sunday drunkenness were 2,923, and of week-day drunkenness were 18,689, or one case of Sunday drunkenness to six of week-day drunkenness. That was to say, instead of Sunday being purer and better, it was in the non-exempted towns somewhat more disreputable and discreditable than any other day in the week. But, beside the evidence of figures, he wished to lay before the House the evidence of men who were well qualified to judge; and it was impossible to exaggerate the importance of the testimony he had obtained from the Bishops and clergymen of the two Churches, and of other denominations, doctors, Town Councillors, Poor Law Guardians, and other professional classes, all of which had been frequently quoted, and was well known. He wished also to have official opinion, and in considering the question he had determined to institute an inquiry which would cover the whole of Ireland and the whole case, and he accordingly addressed a number of questions to all the Resident Magistrates, the questions being almost entirely taken from the arguments upon which the opponents of the Bill relied for their opposition. The first question was—"Whether the Act tends to promote the peace of the country, and order and sobriety?" To this question, from Connaught, he got 21 answers, all of them favourable to the Act; from

Munster, 26 answers, 24 being strongly favourable, one unfavourable, and one doubtful, or, at any rate, cold.

MR. HEALY: What district of Munster did the doubtful answer come from?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he was not able to supply the hon. Member with that information on the spot. From Ulster he obtained 12 answers, all favourable; and from Leinster 18 answers, all favourable. The next question was—"Whether the Act had led to an increase of shebeen houses." Sixty-two stated it had not led to an increase; six that it had; and six spoke in a qualified manner, stating it had not done so to any considerable extent. The next question was—"Whether it had led to unlawful sales, and drinking in unlawful hours?" It was obvious here a very favourable answer could not be expected; for, of course, a restricting law always increased the occasions for breaking the law. To this question, out of 74 Resident Magistrates 25 answered in the negative very decidedly, and 20 very decidedly in the affirmative. The others gave qualified answers, implying that the difference was not very appreciable; but it was plain that there was a considerable amount of drinking in unlawful hours and evasion of the Act on Sundays. The next question was—"Did it lead to an increase of illicit distillation?" Out of 74 Resident Magistrates, all but three were in the negative, and these three were to the effect that it might possibly have done so. On this point, the general figures showed that the number of illicit stills detected in seven years before the passing of the Act, was 840; while, in eight years, under the Act they only numbered 740. It should be remembered that last year there were only eight cases of illicit stills found in the whole of Scotland, and that was higher than in the nine previous years. But if the arguments of the opponents of the measure were valid, as Scotland had been for many years under the operation of the Act, the country should now be filled with illicit stills. Finally he asked—"What is the opinion as to the justice and expediency of the Act among the people whom it most affected?" Upon this point, the Reports of the Resident Magistrates, as to the public opinion of their districts, was most remarkably strong in

favour of the Act. The result was virtually such as to settle the opinion and the action of the Government. The Executive might have left the matter alone, and might have remained in ignorance of the feeling about it; but when once they had inquired and satisfied themselves that the opinion of the people was favourable to the permanence and extension of Sunday closing, he maintained they could take no course but that which he now asked the House to take. Besides the inquiry of Resident Magistrates, they inquired of a few Inspectors of the Local Government Board. Two Reports he had got, and two only, from them. The first stated that in a very important town of Ireland there was a considerable number of publicans in favour of the Bill; and added that some of the leading publicans already closed their houses on Sunday, and that others would willingly do so if they were emancipated from the pressure and commercial danger of competition. The other Report was from Dr. M'Cabe, who stated that he had spoken to many persons well acquainted with the wishes and feelings of the artisans and labourers of Dublin on this question. The result of all the information he had gained, as to the wishes of the class who were supposed to make use of public-houses on Sundays, and who would be inconvenienced by the measure, might be stated thus—The artisans and labourers might be divided into three classes: first, the honest and hard-working men who devoted their wages to the support of their families; they did not resort to public-houses on Sundays, and were in favour of the total closing. If he (Mr. Trevelyan) had been making this Report, he should have left out the word "honest," because there was no question at all of the honesty of the artisans and labourers of Dublin. The Report proceeded to state that the second class, consisting of hard drinkers, was in favour of public-houses being open at all hours and in all places; and these people could get drink, whether the public-houses were open or not. The third was a very numerous class; including those who were weak of purpose and easily led by bad company to drink. These would be safe from temptation, if public-houses were closed on Sundays, and they were in favour of being spared a source of temptation

which they had not always courage to resist. He would add that, with regard to the wives in all the three classes, they were in favour of total closure. That was the opinion, so far as it went, in favour of the Act, and it must be remembered that it was a growing opinion. As the Act became more and more familiar to the people, as a generation grew up, whose habits were formed under its influence, the class who resented it and tried to evade its provisions would become smaller and smaller. The experience of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act in Scotland was certainly in favour of a similar measure for Ireland. He had received a letter from an intelligent and influential Scotchman, who had a considerable acquaintance with Scotch working men, being one himself for a long period of his life, and who had raised himself from the position, and who had had great experience of the operation of the Act. His correspondent said that he could well remember the great amount of irritation which the closing of licensed houses at first caused; but, year by year, the law was becoming more and more accepted. Sunday drinking was almost unknown, and attendance at work on Mondays was much more punctual and regular. His correspondent even went so far as to say that the Scotch drinksellers themselves would hardly ask to have the Act repealed. It would be said that this was all very well for the country districts and smaller towns in Ireland; but it would not do for the large towns and for Dublin. His Excellency, therefore, thought it right to consult the Recorder and the Dublin Magistrates, directing attention especially to the probability of disturbance in consequence of the Act being put in force in Dublin. On this last point, their answers fully re-assured Lord Spencer and those who acted with him. With one exception, all the gentlemen who were responsible for the peace of Dublin were in favour of Sunday closing. Indeed, the position of the excepted districts was one especially disadvantageous to those who were responsible for the preservation of order, for it was not a good thing to have one law for one place, and another for another. The Dublin Metropolitan Police district was infested by roughs from the neighbouring petty sessions districts, who came into Dublin for the sole purpose

of getting drink. But any question as to the difference between the large towns and the rest of the country was entirely disposed of by the evidence of Glasgow. Glasgow had twice the population of Dublin, and an Irish population very much larger than Limerick, and twice larger than that of Waterford. The Forbes-Mackenzie Act came into operation in 1854. During the three years preceding, the average number of persons arrested for drunkenness on Sunday in Glasgow was 26; during the three years following, the number was less than 10, and, as compared with week-days, there was now, on an average, nine or 10 arrests on a week-day and one on Sunday. The Chief Constable of Glasgow reported that the police-stations were now extremely quiet on a Sunday, especially the Central Station, and that there was often not a single arrest on that day. That immense advantage had been purchased without any detriment to the public peace. In Edinburgh the effect of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act was that the Sunday arrests fell from an average of seven to an average of two. He also held in his hand a Return of the arrests for drunkenness in Scotland in towns of over 29,000 of a population. He took that number because it came as near as possible to the population of Waterford; and therefore the comparison with Irish towns, other things being equal, was perfectly legitimate. In Aberdeen, between 6 on Saturday morning and 6 on Sunday morning—that was to say, roughly, on Saturday, there were 413 persons arrested for drunkenness in the course of the year. On Sunday there were only 32. In Edinburgh, there were 935 persons arrested for drunkenness on Saturdays; on Sundays there were 98. In Glasgow, 5,956 persons were arrested on Saturdays; on Sundays there were only 427. In Perth, 77 persons were arrested on Saturdays; and only 6 on Sundays. In Greenock, which was a remarkable exception, 713 persons were arrested on Saturdays; and 36 on Sundays. In Paisley, 482 on Saturdays; and 71 on Sundays; and, if he took his own constituency, which grouped was about the size of Waterford, there were 74 people arrested on Saturdays; and only 6 on Sundays. These Returns afforded a pretty fair conclusive answer to the allegation that secret drinking would take the place

of public drinking on Sundays. In his own house, a man was surrounded by wholesome influences, which prevented him from going wrong; but, in a public-house, he was served as long as he had money to pay, or people to treat him; and the company he met there was made up of the sort of people who were likely to lead him onward in the downward track. There was a great deal of talk about there being one law for the rich and another for the poor. In his opinion, they ought to have one law for the rich and another for the poor—[*Laughter.*]—he meant the same for the rich and for the poor. He was quite certain that if the poor, like the rich, drank only at home at their meals, there would be much less drunkenness among them; it would be a very good thing for the rich man, who frequented the bar of an hotel, if he could be made to desist from doing so; and if the poor man had not enough of self-control to have a stock of drink to suit his requirements, he must be a very poor man indeed. They were told that, by passing this Act, they would be confining these people to their wretched homes. Their homes would be wretched as long as they spent in keeping up the splendour of gin palaces the money which should make their homes comfortable. In arguing this question he felt sure hon. Gentlemen forgot how very large proportion of the working men's income went in drink. It was not an exaggeration to say that in numberless cases as much as 7s. or 8s.—or one-third—of the weekly wages of working men, earning a guinea, or 23s., or 24s., frequently went in this way. What would be thought of a landed proprietor or professional gentleman, who spent one-third of his income in drink? Why, he would be regarded as a fit person for a lunatic asylum. He wanted to pass this Bill in order that there might be one law for both the rich and the poor; for he was in favour of no distinction being made between them. That the poor might learn what was best in the habits of the rich; that they might take their Sunday meal in the company of those who looked up to them for assistance; and have enough left out of their weekly earnings to make that meal a much better one than it often was now; and to enable them to take Sunday excursions, with their children, which were much better for their health and happiness

than all the public-houses in the world. In order to do that, they must abstain from public-houses, and from drinking in them on Sundays. He was convinced that an experience of five or 10 years, or a generation, would make the people almost unanimous in approval of the Act if it were extended, as the Bill proposed. It was for these reasons that he earnestly hoped that the House would give a second reading to the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

MR. M. BROOKS said, he was sorry that the Bill had been sprung upon the House unexpectedly; and that, in consequence, neither of the hon. Gentlemen who had given Notice of their intention to move its rejection were in their places. He also regretted that someone more competent than he was had not risen to oppose the Bill in the interest of the working man. The working man, unfortunately, was not represented in that House. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had dwelt at length upon the decrease in the convictions for drunkenness, and had given the House a great many figures, in order to prove—if they were correct and not misstatements made to him by the fanatics who had so great an interest in the Bill—that a great deal of good had resulted from the working of the Sunday Closing Bill in Ireland. Figures, it was well known, would prove almost anything. Although the right hon. Gentleman had shown—and, no doubt, it was correct—that, at the present, there were fewer convictions for drunkenness in Ireland in consequence of the working of this Act, he (Mr. M. Brooks) could assure the House that, although drunkenness might have decreased in the country districts, where the people had been prevented from following their ordinary and natural habits, the aversion and hatred towards the English people and the English Government had increased. He believed, indeed, that the administration of this law had been more disastrous in its results to the people than the drinking which formerly prevailed. He, for one, would rather see his fellow-countrymen free than sober. He believed that the Irish working man was not so free to indulge in social companionship

as was his English or Scotch fellow-subject. From his connection, extending over many years, with the Irish working men, he had reason to know their opinions very well. He could say with great confidence, therefore, that, at least, a moiety of the working men of Dublin, if they had the power to send Members to the House to represent their opinions in regard to their freedom to indulge in social companionship on Sundays, would send Members who would certainly oppose the present Bill. He spoke in the interests of working men. He had no connection with brewers, or distillers of drink; neither had he any connection with the gentlemen whom the Chief Secretary for Ireland had described as fanatics, and who were the promoters of this Bill in Ireland. Dublin was the headquarters of that agitation; and, as between the so-called liquor interest on the one hand, and the practical Sunday closers on the other, he had maintained all through an impartial attitude on the question, and he intended to do so to the end. He was unable to concur in the views of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of Sunday closing, and he could not support the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the good effect of Sunday closing in Scotland, and had read the opinion of a Scotchman upon the subject. He (Mr. M. Brooks) would read to the House, in the same way, the opinion given in a letter, by an ex-constable of the Royal Irish Constabulary, whose name for obvious reasons was not published, but which he would be willing to give to the right hon. Gentleman. The letter referred to the manner in which the Act was evaded, how shebeening had increased, and how this kind of legislation tended to give an impetus to the multiplication of infamous places of secret drinking. In reference to the answers which the right hon. Gentleman quoted as having been received from the county magistrates in favour of the Bill, he desired to point out that the great majority of these magistrates were Protestants and Sabbatarians. It would, therefore, be somewhat singular if they were not found to be in favour of Sunday closing; and that applied more especially to the North, where the people were almost Scotch in their habits and feelings. They would not permit the Catholics of Ireland to in-

dulge in the harmless amusement and recreations which were common in all Roman Catholic countries as well as in Ireland; and he attached no weight whatever to the opinion of the county magistrates, who would prevent Irishmen from enjoying themselves in clubs or other places on Sunday. He did not quite gather whether the letter read by the right hon. Gentleman from Dr. MacCabe was understood to be from the Cardinal-Archbishop or from the Inspector of the Local Government Board of that name. He believed it was not the Cardinal-Archbishop; because His Eminence had not only spoken to him (Mr. M. Brooks) on the subject, but had written a letter to his hon. Colleague (Dr. Lyons), which he thought would have great weight. In that letter, which was written within the last few weeks, His Eminence had plainly expressed his opinion that total closing would be productive of evil results. Therefore, he had reason to know that Cardinal MacCabe was averse to the passing of the Sunday Closing Bill for Dublin; while with regard to his hon. Colleague, he would have been there that day to oppose it were it not for the sudden way the Bill had been brought on. As to whether there had been a decrease of drunkenness in Ireland since the passing of the Act, he should like to mention a few facts to the House. In 1882 there were five detections of illicit distillations in England, eight in Scotland, and 881 in Ireland. Last year the detections in England were 11; in Scotland, 16; in Ireland, 883. He asked the House what these figures meant? What was the use of shutting up public-houses when they were unable to shut up the shebeens? Nothing more dangerous to the people of a country could exist than illicit places for the distillation of spirits. Although 883 were discovered by the police, it was commonly believed that for every one detected there were five in existence. Many persons in Dublin knew that illicit distillation was common among the people, because they were prevented from obtaining their drink in a lawful manner. The result was, that the people were, not only poisoned by bad drink, but they were made law-breakers; for the opinion prevailed among working men and others that there was no harm in breaking the law in this respect. The right hon. Gentle-

man said that public opinion in Ireland was in favour of the Bill. He (Mr. M. Brooks) denied it. He believed there were not a dozen clergymen or laymen outside the "fanatics" who favoured the Bill. As he said, there had been a letter from the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin on the subject, in which he said that, if not disastrous, it would certainly be most imprudent. [Mr. BLAKE: Produce the letter.] It was not in his possession. ["Oh, oh!"] He supposed that the Dublin Corporation might be taken to fairly represent public opinion in Ireland, and they had expressed themselves in opposition to the Bill by presenting a Memorial to that effect at the Bar of the House. He would ask whether their opinion, and that of more than the majority of the Irish people, ought to have no weight against the opinions of English and Scotch Members? The law would not be the same for the rich as the poor. Clubs for the rich were open not only late on Saturday night, but through the whole of Sunday, while the public-house—the poor man's club—was closed; and he thought that the effect of the Bill would be far from advantageous to the mind of the working man, who saw these clubs open in all the best streets, while the public-houses were shut. The present occasion he believed to be inopportune, for within a few months the working men would have an opportunity of expressing their views under the new Franchise Bill through their elected Representatives in that House. He was clearly of opinion that if they were to have the Representation of the People Bill passed, they would have such a number of Members of Parliament opposed to the Bill sent to that House that they would oppose it successfully. Was there any urgency in the matter? He could see none. The Member who originally introduced this Bill was The O'Connor Don, and he, as well as his supporters, had been superseded by two Gentlemen who were both opposed to Sunday closing. He wished to mention that the constituencies in Ireland had rejected those who expressed themselves in favour of the Bill. This had been the case in Dublin both in 1874 and in 1880. In the former year Sir Dominic Corrigan, a man whose name was universally respected, and Mr. Jonathan Pim, put themselves forward as in favour of Sunday

closing, and were both superseded. He believed that no candidate who had ever gone before an Irish constituency as an advocate of Sunday closing had been returned to Parliament. He, therefore, was warranted in saying that this was a piece of class legislation that would be rejected if the working men who would be affected by it could give their voice on the subject.

Mr. BLAKE said, the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Mr. M. Brooks) had made a series of most extraordinary statements, without giving a single fact to support them. He (Mr. Blake) denied that the last statement of the hon. Member was accurate. As a member of that Church to which the hon. Member, unfortunately for himself, did not belong, he could not allow him to state that one of its highest dignitaries was opposed to Sunday Closing. The hon. Member had stated, in the most distinct manner, that the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin (Cardinal MacCabe) had written a letter expressing opinions adverse to the Bill. He (Mr. Blake) held in his hand, however, a letter, which had been printed and published for some time, and which had not received any contradiction, purporting to be signed in 1882 by the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin, and the Bishops of Limerick, Waterford, and several other dioceses, to the effect that they believed Sunday closing had diminished drunkenness, and that the Act should be made complete and effective, by the inclusion of the exempted cities. He took it for granted that the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin, who wrote to that effect in 1882, would not write in the opposite direction in 1884. If his Eminence had done so in that short time where was the evidence? The hon. Member had further stated that the majority of the people were not in favour of this measure. The fact was that he (Mr. Blake) held in his hand declarations from a large number of Bishops in Ireland, some 19 or 20 in number, in favour of the Bill, including that of the Archbishop of Cashel, whose name would, he was certain, be received with great respect by many Irish Members, and who was anxious that the Bill should become law with as little delay as possible. There was therefore ample evidence in favour of the Bill; but he regretted to say that there was one

Bishop in all Ireland—and he was so sorry for him that he would not mention his name—who had expressed himself not in unison with the other Bishops of Ireland. As to the argument of the hon. Member that the Corporation of Dublin were opposed to Sunday closing, the fact must be borne in mind that the vast majority of the Town Council were engaged in the liquor traffic, which was a very strong interest in the City of Dublin. It would, therefore, be an exceedingly extraordinary thing if they were to pronounce an opinion favourable to the Bill. The liquor traffic interest, indeed, was so strong now in the Council that it was a fact that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Meath (Mr. Meagher), for whom he had the greatest respect, was engaged in the liquor traffic, and was now Lord Mayor of Dublin. Another gentleman who was Lord Mayor elect was also engaged in the licensed trade; and the fact was, that no one had now much chance of getting into the Corporation who was not a publican. There could not be a stronger argument advanced for the lowering of the franchise in Dublin than this state of affairs in the Council; for, as the franchise stood at present, the public-house interest was in the ascendant. When that was done, he felt confident that the vast majority of working men would show themselves in favour of the Bill when selecting their municipal or Parliamentary Representatives. The hon. Member for the City of Dublin said that no Member who was an advocate of Sunday closing had ever been elected for an Irish constituency. Well, from the first hour, he (Mr. Blake) had been an advocate for Sunday closing, and had been four times returned for the City of Waterford, and had been returned for the county at the last Election, although, on this point, his sentiments were well known; and there were several other hon. Members in the same position. The reason the Bill was not extended to clubs was, that drinking was seldom carried on to excess in them, while the working man needed protection against himself. There was nothing which would afford such benefit to the country as a measure of this character. His own opinion went far beyond its proposals; and he believed that if a Seven-day Closing Bill was introduced and passed,

and even every other statute in favour of Ireland, including Catholic emancipation, repealed, in 25 years' time the country would be in a far better state than it was at present. There was nothing for which the present Government deserved more credit, or more support, than their action on this question. He had understood that there was an intention on the part of some Members to talk the measure out; he would, therefore, abstain from quoting statistics. He could do so at length if he chose, and they would establish the fact that there was nothing so well calculated to add very materially to the peace, morality, and prosperity of the country as this measure, very inadequate though it was, for checking the greatest evil under which Ireland suffered.

MR. EUGENE COLLINS said, he was sorry that on that, as on many previous, occasions, he should be obliged to oppose this Bill. He had given the subject involved probably as much attention as most men in his time, and the result of his most deliberate consideration was that he had not changed the opinion which he formed many years ago. He found no fault with the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had submitted that important Bill to the House. That right hon. Gentleman had dealt fairly with his main features; he had produced abundance of statistics from his own point of view, and he stated what he believed to be the opinion of the people of Ireland. Well, that was a very important subject. The measure had been before the House and the country for many years, and was very simple so far as concerned the principle involved. Instead of dealing with it upon its merits in general, he (Mr. Eugene Collins) preferred to take the challenge that had been offered to the opponents of the measure by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and to deal with it as shortly and as explicitly as it was in his power to do. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that, in his opinion, and in the opinion of the authorities he had consulted, the passing of this Bill would be a great blessing to Ireland. He (Mr. Eugene Collins) did not dissent from the doctrine that a limitation of intemperance would be one of the greatest blessings that could be conferred, not only on Ireland, but upon any country; and he would be the last man in the

House to question the honesty, sincerity, and goodwill of those who advocated the measure—including, in the first place, that of the Catholic clergy who supported it. He respected that section of public opinion which he admitted to be in its favour, and he also respected those Colleagues of his in the House who honestly supported a measure of this kind. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had given a large body of statistics, derived from a certain source, and he had also consulted statistics. He (Mr. Eugene Collins) had had no opportunity, as the right hon. Gentleman had, of consulting the Resident Magistrates and other officials, who, no doubt, spoke their honest conceptions on the subject. But he had consulted the only public document at his disposal—one which the right hon. Gentleman would not be disposed to question—namely, the Criminal and Judicial Statistics of Ireland for the year 1883, and it had not borne out the results claimed for the Bill. By this document, he found that there had been a decrease of intemperance of 38 per cent in the exempted towns; whereas, in the rest of the country, there had been a decrease of only 7 per cent. And, comparing 1883 with 1873, he found there had been a decrease of intemperance of 40 per cent in the exempted cities, and an increase of intemperance to the amount of 20 per cent in the rest of Ireland. He freely admitted that the amount of intemperance to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred was greatly to be deplored; and that the fact that one in 230 in the exempted towns was addicted to intemperance was an evil of a grave character; but the contention of the opponents of the measure was that, with facts before them such as he had cited, they could not shut their eyes to these facts and take up statistics such as those of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. There was an interesting matter—he would not trouble the House long with it—but it was that of the effect of Sunday closing in Wales. Taking the evidence from Wales, they would find not only that Sunday closing had not contributed to the diminution of intemperance, but that it led not only to intemperance, but also to evils of a grave character, which they would deplore still more. At a meeting in Wales, presided over by a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church, who was a great advocate of temperance, he found

some strong observations, which he should not read to the House, addressed to that temperance meeting by a Roman Catholic clergyman. He stated that the effect of Sunday closing in Wales was this—that it had become the practice, since the passing of the Bill, for women to get in on Saturday night as many barrels of beer as they could smuggle past the policemen. That existed all over the town. The same clergyman gave his own personal experience of those houses. He said—

“A more terrible sight could not meet the eyes of a clergyman than the scenes which were to be found in such places. The rooms were full to suffocation. There was a cask in the corner of the room, another stored under the stairs, and probably another elsewhere.”

He was unwilling to read the next sentence—[*Cries of “Read!”*—though, probably, he ought not to pass it over—

“They saw young girls sitting on the knees of young men with their arms round their necks, both the girls and the young men smoking.”

This clergyman said that he signed a Petition in favour of Sunday closing in Wales; but experience had so changed his opinion, that nothing would induce him to do so again. Another Catholic clergyman who followed spoke in even stronger terms. His (Mr. Eugene Collins's) contention then was, that experience of this legislation, as well as information derived from the official statistics which he had received, strengthened the case of the opponents of this Bill. Another point which had always struck him was this—The people of Ireland, no doubt, had their faults, like others. No doubt, they had been more addicted to drink—[“No, no!”]—more addicted to drink in some parts of the country, than some of them were elsewhere. But would anyone so malign the poor people of Ireland, as to say they were more addicted, in a general way, to the immoderate use of intoxicating liquors, than the people of other countries that most of them were acquainted with? It also occurred to him that there was no compulsion to use these drinks; people were not bound to go into public-houses. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had alluded to three classes mentioned by one of his informants. One class he called the honest, industrious classes; but, as the right hon. Gentleman had done, they would omit “honest” as being superfluous.

As a rule, they were said to be in favour of closing. Then there were the habitual drunkards, who had the need of restrictive legislation, but would always find means for their indulgence. And, finally, there was a third class of weakly people, who gave way too readily to temptation. He would not touch the latter classes, but would deal with the honest, industrious population of Ireland. Whatever men's views might be, politically, morally, or in religion, he would say that, to restrain respectable men who were able to control themselves, who knew what was best for them, who went on a Sunday to a place of recreation with their respectable wives and their families—to deprive these men, by a severe legislative measure, of the opportunity of getting refreshments for their families seemed to him a monstrosity. It seemed almost a cruelty to impose such a limitation upon these poor people. Let hon. Members consider their own case if that were done to themselves; if they felt that refreshments of that kind were necessary and desirable for them, and they were told that they were not to have an opportunity of getting such refreshments; and if that were done by this drastic legislation, what would be the feelings of an independent Member of this House? The licensed victuallers and vintners of Ireland were a numerous body; and, taking them as a body, he believed they were as respectable, straightforward, honourable, well-living, and orderly a class of traders as you would find in any community. He challenged any Member of the House to dispute that statement, which was not a proposition, but an absolute fact. And if that statement could not be disputed, he should like to know why it was they were to be destroyed, in a sense—he would not say destroyed altogether—but damaged most certainly, without meeting them upon as fair and equitable a basis in the matter of compensation, as any other class in the community would be entitled to if they were deprived of a large portion of their business. This point deserved consideration as a matter of justice, equity, and right. On the 5th of March, 1880, he heard the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, speaking in that House, upon a Motion introduced by the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), make this statement—

"I think we ought to go as far as this:—I am not prepared to say whether there is a case for compensation, or whether there is not a case for compensation, because that must depend upon particulars that are not now before us. We ought not to allow our prejudices with regard to this particular trade, or our sense of the enormous mischiefs associated with its working, to cause us to deviate by one hair's breadth from the principle upon which Parliament has always acted in analogous circumstances—namely, that where a vested interest has been allowed to grow up, the question of compensation should be considered when such vested interests were proposed to be interfered with by Act of Parliament. What I am prepared to say is neither more nor less than this—that the Licensed Victualler has the same right to fair consideration that is enjoyed by persons following every other trade or calling which is interfered with by Act of Parliament, and to whom compensation is awarded owing to such interference. We must not allow—I need not say that Gentlemen on this side of the House will not allow—any political feeling or prejudice to interfere with the rectitude of our judgment, or prevent us from giving the same measure of justice or indulgence to Licensed Victuallers that we should give to any other class in the community."—*(3 Hansard, [251] 469.)*

He would conclude with those just and equitable observations. He had submitted, as best he could, the case of the opponents of the Bill. If Government, with its strength, should pass the measure, he hoped they would give consideration to the points he had submitted to the House, on the authority of its Leader, as to the question of compensation to licensed victuallers. If he might venture to give advice, it would be this—that if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, after considering all the circumstances, while giving effect to the feelings of a large minority, or perhaps a majority, of the people of Ireland, could be induced to allow the licensed houses throughout the country to remain open for two hours on Sunday, he believed he would meet the case with a considerable amount of equity and justice; and he believed the measure would be accepted in a more friendly spirit than it would be now by a large section of those who were identified with the trade and by a large section of the public.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, the hon. Member for Kinsale (Mr. Eugene Collins) had endeavoured to make a good deal of capital out of the state of things in Wales, where Sunday closing had proved a comparative failure; but he (Colonel King-Harman) would remind the hon. Member that the Bill they were

discussing now had reference not to Sunday closing in Wales, but to Ireland; and it had been shown, over and over again, that the circumstances of the two countries were totally different. He should like to make a few remarks upon the part he had taken, and which he was about to take, in regard to the question of Sunday closing in Ireland. In 1878, when The O'Connor Don brought in a Bill on this subject, he (Colonel King-Harman) had grave doubts upon the question. He doubted whether the proposed closing of public-houses on the Sunday would be for the welfare of the country or not; and, no doubt, many hon. Members would recollect the part he took in the discussion of the Bill. He doubted the wisdom of the proposal for two reasons. In the first place, he feared that, if the measure became law over Ireland, it would lead the people of that country into the pernicious habit of private drinking. In the second place, he feared it would lead to the multiplication of illicit drinking-houses, commonly known as shebeens. Eventually, however, he yielded to the enormous force of public opinion as shown by the enormous mass of Petitions from every class and creed; but he did so with an amount of hesitation; and, after a good deal of consideration, he moved that the Bill should be tried as a temporary measure for three years. Ultimately, a compromise was effected, and the Bill was passed for five years—a term which they considered would give it a full and fair trial. Well, he was bound to say that the result of the trial, and of the experience which had been gained, was that his doubts had been entirely removed. The evidence produced showed that the working of the measure had been entirely beneficial to the people and the country. There had not been any increase of private drinking, nor had there been an increase of shebeens, and the measure seemed to have done nothing but good. The consequence was, that he believed the immense majority of the people of Ireland were in favour of the measure before the House. He freely acknowledged, and he was glad to be able to do so, that there was a large body of respectable publicans in Ireland; but he had reason to believe that the majority of them were in favour of Sunday closing, provided that it was made universal. In conclusion, he would say that he

should vote for the Bill; because, in doing so, he felt that he was voting for a measure which was wholly and entirely for the good of the people, and the prosperity of the country.

MR. HEALY said, he thought it must be very gratifying to the supporters of temperance on this occasion to be supported by the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman). He (Mr. Healy) remembered, as a spectator in the House during the Session of 1878, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman was to be found among the most bitter opponents of this measure, and he would be remembered as sitting up, night after night, and moving, in a most vehement manner, obstructive Motions against Sunday closing. At that time the hon. and gallant Member had grave doubts on the subject it appeared; but now he was the Father Mathew of the County of Dublin coming forward to vote for the Bill, yielding, as he said, to the force of public opinion.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: What I said was that five years' experience had induced me to vote for this Bill.

MR. HEALY said, he would, of course, accept the explanation of the hon. and gallant Gentleman; but he must pardon him (Mr. Healy) for saying that, if he were to put his construction upon the hon. and gallant Gentleman's change of views, he should put it as change of constituency. *Autres temps, autres mœurs.* When the hon. and gallant Gentleman was Member for Sligo he opposed Sunday closing; but as the half-pay officers and the gentry of Rathmines supported Sunday closing, when the hon. and gallant Gentleman became their Representative, he stood forward as a supporter of it. The Irish Members had considerable fault to find with the administration of the Licensing Law as it stood at present. He had pointed that out previously, and he thought the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have done well if he had directed some attention to that aspect of the subject. He had pointed out that it was a notorious fact in Ireland that the Sunday Closing Act was made use of by the police as a means of persecuting licensed victuallers and others who held popular opinions, and that people of an Orange tinge might keep their houses open and sell drink galore. He, himself, was a

witness three months ago of a proceeding by a Resident Magistrate, which completely overrode the Licensing Laws. That magistrate directed, on a Sunday, the publicans to keep their houses open; at least, he gave it to be understood that he would not allow his police to prosecute the publicans. Now, what power resided in that gentleman, which enabled him to override in this manner the provisions of an Act of Parliament? Then they had the fact of publicans, who dared to hang out green flags from their houses on National festivals, having their licences opposed by the police; and others, who closed their doors and hung out crape on the occasion of Mr. Parnell's arrest, treated in a similar fashion. Look, then, at the treatment of his hon. Friends (Messrs. Harrington and O'Brien) in Bandon and Charleville. His hon. Friend the Member for Westmeath (Mr. Harrington) never tasted drink of any kind from his childhood, so that it would not be supposed that he would be a very great opponent of temperance; but when he and his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) were being entertained at Charleville and Bandon after a meeting the police broke in and took the names of those present, and they were fined. What did the Chief Secretary for Ireland do in that case? Did he remit the fines as he did in other cases? Not at all. Now, the Irish Members were not prepared to place themselves further at the mercy of every bumptious sub-constable, and every officious Resident Magistrate and District Inspector. Look, then, at the way the Government managed their business. They brought forward the Bill that day, knowing well it could not pass. Now, the Irish Members urged the Government to bring forward the non-contentious measures, and try and get them passed. There was the land purchase scheme so much desired. There was the Education Bill, to which, beyond some small details, there would be no general objection, and there was the Endowed Schools Bill, to remedy rankling grievances like that at Swords and elsewhere. What was the answer of the Government to these appeals? No; you first must swallow the Sunday Closing Bill. Was that the way Scotch Business was treated? Would the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate make such an an-

swer to the Scotch Members if there was any Bill which they desired to have pressed forward in preference to another? Not at all. But they, the Irish Members, were to have the Bill pressed, whether they liked it or not, at the dictation of a few supporters of it. Now, he begged to tell the Government that, if they desired to pass Irish measures, they must consult the wishes, the feelings, and the opinions of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Why was Mr. T. W. Russell to be consulted, and the Irish Members not? Were measures of that sort to be settled in the Lobby and not in the House itself? He believed himself there was a strong feeling in Ireland in favour of Sunday closing in rural districts. So when they were asked to come down and support temperance, he said "Yes," and he was in favour of the principle of the Bill. He had voted for Local Option, and would do so again. But he objected, and the Irish Members objected, to the manner in which the Government proposed to deal with this and other questions. He was not prepared to see a measure pass which he believed was not honestly administered. The Government said—"You will have to pass this Bill, or we will not give you anything else." Well, they would see whether this Bill would pass. The question of Sunday closing generally was not at issue. That was secured by the existing Bill. There was great difference of opinion in the large towns, and in view of that he regarded the pressing forward of this Bill to-day as sheer waste of time. The Chief Secretary for Ireland quoted a remarkable set of figures in regard to Scotch towns of arrests for drunkenness. He (Mr. Healy) should like to say a few words in regard to these arrests. The Police Acts in Ireland were quite different from those of Scotland. In Scotland, and in England also, if people were seen going home, even if they could not stand perpendicular, the police left them to go. But in Ireland, if a man could not maintain his perpendicular, he was instantly taken and lodged in gaol. But the Chief Secretary for Ireland stated that the results of statistics, in regard to Scotch towns of over 30,000 inhabitants, showed the number of arrests on Sunday for drunkenness was very much less than on other days of the week, and added that this was a great argument

in favour of Sunday closing. He (Mr. Healy) did not think it was conclusive; because, if a Scotch workman spent all his wages on Saturday, he would have nothing to spend on drink on Sunday. Then, again, as to the persons administering the Bill. He believed that if they wished to have temperance laws successful in Ireland, they should have a totally different class to administer it. It now lay with the police, who favoured certain individuals, and let others off; and even when they came to the police court the magistrates, as a rule, dealt with two publicans of different politics in totally different ways. They would let off with a fine publicans who were of the Government or Tory side of politics, and would not endorse their licences, while they took care to go to the extent of endorsing the licence of anyone convicted on the other side. He wished to know whether the Bill would be administered, like the existing Sunday Closing Law, by partizan magistrates, who were the curse of the country, and who did not do their duty impartially any more than the police. When they had in a town 20 or 30 Orange magistrates, and the publicans belonging largely to the popular Party, they must expect the magistrates to punish more heavily the men belonging to the popular Party than they did the others. In fact, he was not satisfied with the machinery, and he thought it was a question which might well be taken into further consideration. He would suggest that only two Resident Magistrates should have power of dealing with licensing cases and the jurisdiction. The Resident Magistrates, bad as they were, had, at all events, some official responsibility; and, for his part, he would entirely abolish the jurisdiction of the ordinary Orange Justices in such cases. If the licensing question was to be dealt with at all, it would be far better that it was to be dealt with by a responsible Government official than by distrusted partizans. A Castle official, even if he were a Clifford Lloyd or a Captain Plunkett, would be preferable in such cases to the ordinary magistrates of Ireland. Therefore, if the Bill was passed, the question of the endorsement of licences ought not to be left to ordinary Petty Sessions Justices. He objected to that or any other Bill being left to the adminis-

tration of the ordinary Orange magistrates. They had groaned too long already under the influence of "Justices' justice" in Ireland. Nationalist publicans might expect something like decency from the responsible Resident Magistracy, but none from the ordinary Justices of the country. He knew a magistrate in the county of Cork who would give a decision for a glass of whisky. [*Cries of "Name!"*] If he were to name anyone, he supposed it would be said he was attacking an absent man; that he was exposing that person to intimidation; and that he was misusing the Privileges of the House in a manner he should not do. But he might say that, at Bantry, lately, in opposition to the wish of the parish priest, the magistrates trooped into the town, at the licensing sessions, at the bidding of one man, and, contrary to the opinion of the local Catholic clergymen and of all the respectable inhabitants, granted a publican's licence to be set up opposite the chapel door. He denied, further, that the constables in the City of Dublin administered the law firmly and impartially. It was notorious that those who were in high quarters in Dublin, presiding over the police, accepted bribes in many cases, in order to have the law evaded. It was notorious that illicit drinking was winked at by means of bribery by many of the Police Inspectors of Dublin, and he did not believe those men would administer the law fairly. Unfortunately, in many other cities of the country the police were open to temptations of that character. Therefore, he should like to know how the Government proposed to deal with this question. He was strongly of opinion that a measure such as this should be tentative, and should not be made permanent without further inquiry. He was in favour of its continuance in the country places; but, as regarded the five exempted towns, he thought there was much to be said against the proposal, and that there ought to be further inquiry. He believed the Government was not serious in attempting to pass the present Bill. The fact was, they had made certain pledges with the temperance people of Ireland, and had put this Bill down for a Morning Sitting, at which there was no chance of passing it, so that they might be able to say—"We have kept our

promise, and washed our hands of you, and the Bill must now drop." Instead of doing that, the Government should have considered the Irish legislation as a whole. Before he sat down, he could not help alluding to a statement of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Blake), from which it might be inferred that drinking was greater in Ireland than in England and Scotland. Statistics were opposed to that view, and he believed the proportion was smaller. He protested against the Bill, which had been put down only to redeem a pledge given to Members friendly to the Government, while they had not pressed forward the Bill dealing with the purchase of land, or the Education Bill.

MR. EWART said, he would not follow the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) in the "cursory" remarks with which he had occupied their attention. The last half-hour and more he had inveighed against the Government for their management of the Business of the House; against the magistrates of Ireland for their alleged unfair and corrupt administration of the law; and he was especially heavy upon the Constabulary for partiality and misconduct. There appeared to be little in Ireland that pleased the hon. Member; but he (Mr. Ewart) felt that there was very little difference of opinion, that those classes did not come up to the standard of the opinion of the hon. Gentleman. At any rate, his speech did not touch the merits of the Bill. It was true he admitted that public opinion in Ireland was in favour of the Bill. That remark seemed to have been the only one pertinent to the subject in the hon. Member's speech. The speech was valuable in so far as it enabled time to be spent till the hand of the clock stood at 7. [MR. HEALY: And so is your own.] Well, he would be as brief as possible. He would not imitate the hon. Member for Monaghan, but would condense his remarks into the smallest possible space, and he would first say, that he regretted very much that domestic anxiety caused the absence of his Colleague (Mr. Corry), and that the Bill would not have the advantage in debate of one who, from the time this question was first raised, had been a hearty and active supporter of it. But, really, the time for lengthened argument required in discussing the necessity for it in Ireland had passed.

It was admitted, on all hands, that the monster evil of their time was intemperance, which brought in its train nearly all the pauperism and destitution of the country, and much of the disease, immorality, and vice that unhappily prevailed. In the opinion of the Judges, the clergy, and the physicians—and they could all confirm it by their own experience—intemperance filled their workhouses, their lunatic asylums, and their prisons. It made more widows and orphans than war and pestilence. It burdened the rates; and, in that way, oppressed all classes, including especially the industrious, struggling, worthy poor. As regarded Ireland, there was almost as much money spent in drink as would pay the rental of the land; and if it were possible at once to stop this expenditure, their country might well hope to prosper. Drink not only wasted the money, but unfitted the man for active, intelligent industry. Instead of draining and improving his land, the Irish farmer too often spent his time at the fair, or the market, needlessly; or at the Sessions, or at the "Bank," or in indolence; and he failed to perform his duty to his family, and brought discredit on his country. Well, the experience of the last five or six years in Ireland had shown—and he would not argue the question, or go into statistics about it, for it could not be denied—that there had been a great benefit to the country generally from the existing law. It was a great point gained to have the temptation of the open public-house removed one day in seven. He would admit that they could not make men sober by Act of Parliament; but, by such Acts of Parliament as this, they could do something to bring about a better state of things; and, in doing that, they would be correcting another great evil—that of the secularization and desecration of the sacred day—and they would be aiding the ministers of religion in their holy work. Then, he would like to know why, of all men, publicans should be allowed the privilege of trading on Sundays, while those who supplied needful wants, such as butchers, grocers, and others, were prohibited, and properly so, from following theirs? He was happy to believe that a considerable number of publicans themselves who had seven-day licences would rejoice to have six-day licences all over the trade. In passing

the Bill they would elevate the trade of the publican to a higher level. As far as the town he represented was concerned, there was a wonderful unanimity. All classes of men—and women too, for they and their children were the greatest sufferers—all ranks and creeds, all parties, were, for once, united in supporting the measure; and, instead of there being the disorder in the town which was once predicted, if such a Bill as this should be passed, the news which he hoped would ere long reach them was that, notwithstanding the opposition of the hon. Member for Monaghan, the Bill had received the Royal Assent, which would be received with rejoicing there, on account of Belfast being included in the Act.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I am one of those who are most anxious to see progress made with this Bill, and I have risen, principally, in consequence of one or two remarks which fell from my hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). Speaking in a sort of half-hearted opposition to the Bill, my hon. Friend alluded to the action of the Irish Parliamentary Party with regard to it. Now, the Irish Parliamentary Party, as far as I know, are, as a Party, taking no action at all with reference to this Bill. Indeed, as a matter of fact, I believe the truth to be that a very considerable majority of the Members of the Irish Parliamentary Party are in favour of the principles of the Bill. What was the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan himself? Certainly it was not a speech in opposition to the principles of the Bill. He acknowledges that the Bill, as far as it relates to the country generally, has the approval of the majority of the people; and, as far as it relates to the five large towns, he does not venture to express an opinion at all. I sympathize very largely with many of the remarks of the hon. Member with reference to the administration of the Bill by some of the policemen in the country districts of Ireland; but I contend that that forms no reason why the passage of the measure should be delayed. I have a very strong opinion as to the interference of the police in these matters, and as to the granting of licences by magistrates. I should like to see the whole question of licences placed on an entirely different basis—the power of granting or

withholding licences taken away altogether from the magistrates, and vested in some way in representatives elected by the people. At the same time, I do not think that the remarks of my hon. Friend ought to induce the House to delay the progress of the Bill. It is not often my fortune to agree with the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman); but, certainly, he made one remark to-day with which I do agree, when he said he believed that a large proportion of the publicans of Ireland were in favour of the principles of this Bill. I represent a constituency in which the publican vote is about one-third of the whole, yet, when I was elected, I was an avowed supporter of the principles of Sunday Closing; and I have never, since I have been a Member, received any representations on the subject from my constituents, except those of cordial approval of the course I have always taken upon measures of this character. My hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan himself recently represented a borough in which the publicans were a strong power, but which has always been true to the principles of Sunday Closing. I rose merely to make it clear that this is not a question on which the Irish Parliamentary Party are taking united action, and that it is one in which, individually, a large majority are in favour of the proposals now before the House.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he thought it right to say that his hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had been misunderstood. It was only due to his hon. Friend to explain that the question of that Bill was considered by the Irish Parliamentary Party, and they passed a resolution, condemning the manner in which the Bill had been introduced, and the hon. Member for Monaghan only gave expression to that resolution, which was passed when the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. John Redmond) was absent from the country. He (Mr. Harrington) had always been a temperance man; but, from his knowledge of the country, he did not believe they had materially advanced the cause of temperance by the Sunday Closing Act. Though the number of arrests might not be so large, the difference in cases of drunkenness was not very material, because a great deal of drunkenness was carried on, when they

were not under the eyes of the police. He was quite satisfied that the hon. Member for Monaghan had correctly described the state of things, when he said that a certain class were favoured by the local police—he would not say by the local magistrates—and when a retired policeman obtained a publican's licence, he might keep open from Sunday morning until late on Sunday night, without anyone interfering with him. One reason why he could not vote in favour of the Bill was that it was enormously increasing another class of crime, quite as dangerous to the morality of the country as drunkenness. There had been an enormous increase in the number of cases of false-swearing. No one could attend a Petty Sessions Court, and hear there cases against publicans, without being made aware that the amount of false-swearing was simply alarming. He might appeal to magistrates sitting in the Northern parts of Ireland, whether the law, which gave the publican the right to take the oath in his defence, had not enormously increased the amount of perjury? He had himself attended cases in Petty Sessions, where two or three policemen had distinctly sworn to a breach of the licence, and the publican, his wife, and other people had sworn to what was totally opposite to their statement. Therefore, he did not think the Chief Secretary for Ireland was justified in resting his whole case for the Bill on the number of arrests for drunkenness. There was another point in the administration of the Act which he objected to—that was the portion of it which allowed certain houses to keep open as long as they liked to sell drink, such as hotels and clubs, whilst others were forced to close. In addition to this, in any garrison town in Ireland, any young man who desired to obtain drink had simply but to walk across the road to the nearest barrack, make the acquaintance of a soldier, and he could spend the entire day in the canteen, and with his friends, if there were 100 of them, get as drunk as he liked. Whilst they had not a strictly fair and impartial administration of the law, they could not expect that men who took up these questions, and who wished success to the cause of temperance, would be very warm advocates for another partial and patched-up measure. As the hon. Member for the City of Dublin

(Mr. M. Brooks) had pointed out, the closing of public-houses in that City on Sunday would be the means of enormously increasing the number of shebeen-houses; and if the officials of Dublin were consulted, they would undoubtedly testify to the fact that one of the greatest evils in the City was these shebeen houses, as they were most repulsive in other respects besides the illicit selling of liquors which took place in them. He maintained that any enormous increase in those houses would be fraught with the greatest danger to the morals of the City; because, in sending young men to them in search of drink, they would be sending them to places where they would learn evils infinitely more hurtful. He should always give his support on the side of temperance, when he believed that a measure with that object would be fairly and impartially administered; but he certainly was not a warm supporter, if he could be a supporter at all, of the measure introduced by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, because of the manner of its introduction, and the undue prominence which had been given to it, and because, also, it was very little demanded by the people of Ireland. For himself, he believed that the public opinion of the country was utterly indifferent to the measure. They did not believe, in the first place, that it would be administered impartially; and they did not believe it would achieve that which was promised of it; and, still further, they did not believe that the stigma of intemperance, which some hon. Members had endeavoured to fasten on the people of Ireland, could be justified.

MR. O'BRIEN said, he wished to explain why he should vote against the Bill. He scarcely liked to do so; but there was evidently a wide difference of opinion amongst those with whom he generally acted with regard to it. It was his misfortune to differ with the principle of the Bill, and also with the manner in which it was likely to be administered. He objected to the way it would be administered, for reasons which had been very fully set forth in the course of the debate, as the one great effect of it would be to divide the publicans into two classes—policemen's friends and policemen's enemies—and would result in this, that all the attention of the police would be devoted to

watching the Nationalist publican, while those publicans who in any way had commended themselves to the favour of the police would be allowed by them to carry on any amount of Sunday trading without interference. After the remarks of the hon. Members for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and Westmeath (Mr. Harrington), he did not think it necessary to enter into the controversy raised by the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to whether the Sunday Closing Bill had decreased intemperance. He believed that there was much more Sunday tipping going on now than ever there was, and that it was more demoralizing in its effects than when carried on openly. The people, no doubt, kept out of the way of the police; but they must not suppose that there had been a decrease in Sunday drinking, because there had been no obtrusive Sunday drinking and fewer arrests for drunkenness. But what he maintained was this, that the advantage, such as it might be, was not sufficient to counterbalance the loss of self-respect among the people who regarded this measure as a kind of Coercion Act imposed on them, not by their own will, but by the propaganda of a small set of well-intentioned Sabbatarian foreigners who had settled down in Dublin, no doubt joined—as they saw they had been—by some Irish Members for whose opinions he had the highest respect. The people in some parts had debarred themselves voluntarily in this particular; and the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. John Redmond) had spoken of the feeling in favour of this Bill in his constituency; but throughout County Wexford there was, no doubt, a very strong feeling in favour of Sunday closing; but this had existed for years before Sunday closing was ever heard of. It was so carried out in the diocese of Ferns, and in the archdiocese of Cashel, and that by the simple force of the religious feeling; and he ventured to say that it was carried out much more efficiently there now than it would be carried out under the sanction of an English Act of Parliament to enforce it. He maintained that this legislation was not demanded by any considerable section of the Irish people. If it were required by them, they would take a very easy and summary mode of making their feeling on the matter felt. On the contrary, he believed that there was a very

strong feeling of resentment amongst the Irish people against this sect of Puritans, who wished to impose their own opinions forcibly on the Irish people, and who really desired to treat the Irish people as though they were dipsomaniacs, and required to be put under restraint. They objected very much to these men coming to the House in the name of Ireland, and asking the House to subject them to a law which the House dare not subject England to, and to a law to which the Members of the House themselves did not, so far as he could judge, by any means subject themselves. It was not by legislation of this kind that they could hope to find very much improvement in the moral condition of the Irish people. He believed that instead of drunkenness causing pauperism, as the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. Ewart) seemed to imagine, it was to a very large extent that poverty and misery were the cause of drunkenness. The lives of the Irish people were sufficiently joyless already; and he thought that the Legislators of that House would be far better employed in doing something which would substantially improve the condition of the Irish people than by assisting in debarring them of one of the few enjoyments they had—an enjoyment which he maintained was partaken of by the great bulk of the people in the most perfect moderation. In every class there were people who ought to be treated by exceptional legislation; but the true remedy was to educate the people better than they were now educated, and to improve thereby their means of enjoyment. Unfortunately, there was an utter absence of anything like incentives to lives of sobriety; and, until some improvement was made in the material condition of the people, legislation of this kind would be perfectly worthless, and would be resented by the Irish people. The simple result of this measure would be to increase the attraction to drink by driving people into secret places, and thus to widen the gulf, which was already sufficiently wide, between the law and the sympathies of the Irish people.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he held the view largely shared by a large number of Members from Ireland, and it was this, that while thoroughly agreeing with the principles of the

measure, he was firmly convinced that the administration of the measure in certain districts in Ireland had been most flagrant, and such as not to increase the confidence of the people in the impartiality of the Magistracy, or the Police. He would mention the case of a most respectable publican in the town he had the honour to represent, named Scallan. On the pretence of seeing if the Act was carried out, he noticed that the police forced their way into the house, and behaved in a manner which occasioned the family much annoyance. The police and the people were not on good terms in Ireland, and the enmity was likely, whilst such legislation had to be administered, to continue for a very long time. He did not think that, under the circumstances, it would be advisable to place further powers in their hands, which would enable them to interfere further than they already did with the interests and the liberties of the people. At the same time, as their Representative, he felt it his duty to support this measure, because his constituency was thoroughly in favour of it. He could not help remarking how ready the Government were to introduce a measure of this kind, when, only the other day, they offered the most strenuous opposition to an important Bill relating to the housing of the labourers in Ireland introduced from those Benches; and he found it extremely difficult to explain the action of the Government in giving prominence to this measure, and rejecting the other altogether. Personally, he did not like this Bill, or, indeed, any measure which restricted the liberty of the subject, and he believed that the great effect of it would be to increase drunkenness and the illicit sale of liquor. When in Portland City, in the State of Maine, having heard a great deal about the Maine Liquor Laws, and the freedom of the place from public-houses, he made inquiries and found that, although there were no ostensible places for the sale of liquor, there were over 80 places where liquor to any extent could be obtained; and, as a matter of fact, in that model city there was more liquor consumed and more drunkenness than in any other city of the same proportions in America. The tendency of this kind of legislation seemed to be to increase the desire of people for drink, no doubt, in accordance with what seemed to be

one of the laws of nature prevailing with most people—to try and get the things that were denied them. They might call it obstinacy, if they liked; but people who, in the usual course would not care much about drink on Sunday, would, when prohibited by a British Act of Parliament, do all in their power to get it. He was firmly convinced that the publicans of Ireland opposed this measure in the most honest and straightforward manner, and that no opposition was given to it by them for interested motives. The publicans were as honest and as deserving a class as was to be found in the whole country. There were no people who more loyally supported the public institutions than publicans; and those in Ireland supported their country and religion, and had proved themselves over and over again in the various cities and boroughs of Ireland most capable citizens. He was perfectly convinced that their opposition to it was not because it might have the effect of taking a small sum of money out of their pockets, but that it was due to the fact that their experience had told them that it was not wise to interfere with the liberties of the people. He pitied the unfortunate men in Ireland who, if this Bill became law, required some stimulant on Sunday and were unable to get it. It was almost impossible for any man in that House to conceive the same experience; and if it was proposed to pass such a law with the view of making it impossible for hon. Members of that House to get stimulants on a Sunday, very few indeed would think of voting for such a measure. Much as he disliked the Bill itself, he was obliged to support it for the reasons he had given.

MR. BIGGAR said, he was not disposed to see the Bill talked out, because he had always voted for a Sunday Closing Bill for Ireland; and he thought he had also voted in favour of Sunday Closing Bills for England. He admitted, however, that he did not like the present measure; and if it had not been for the fact that his constituents were strongly in favour of it, he was not perfectly certain how he would vote on the present occasion. His constituents had no particular interest one way or another in the measure now before the House. Before the Sunday Closing Act was passed, the people of the county of

Cavan, irrespective of religion or politics, had agreed to put into operation, as far as they were concerned, Sunday closing. They thought that what was good for them was good for their neighbours; but he questioned very much whether they would take this view, if they knew that the effect of the Bill would be to increase secret drinking. In his own case, he knew that it would not be good for him to take six glasses of punch; it would be quite the reverse. But he admitted that "half-a-glass" would do him good. But there were others who could do with the six glasses; and he had known those who said that no material benefit was to be derived from so small a quantity as half-a-glass of whisky, which they alleged would not warm the bottom of the tumbler. His constituents lived in a purely rural district, in which there were no large towns, and they had no knowledge of the wants of the residents in large towns; but their personal observation induced them to believe that the present Sunday Closing Bill was required for populous places. They had no knowledge of what the *bond fide* traveller was; and, consequently, they saw no reason why all public-houses in Ireland should not be closed on a Sunday. He remembered being in Edinburgh on a Sunday, when the Forbes-Mackenzie Act was in operation, and there he saw more drunkenness than he had ever seen. The result of Sunday closing in large towns was that shebeens were established; and, from his own observation, in places where Sunday closing was in force, he had seen more young men staggering home drunk on Sunday, when strong drinks were supposed not to be sold, than on any of the other days when the drink could be obtained in any quantity. No doubt, that was due to the villanous stuff which was supplied at the secret drinking places. If the drink was obtained in the legitimate way, no evil consequences followed; and he could not help thinking that the advocates of teetotalism who wished to pass these very stringent laws were carrying their wishes in restraint of the liberty of the subject too far. Let them look who these teetotalers were. They could tell such hon. Members by the colour of their faces; and, by the way, he observed that those teetotal Members who were supporters of this Bill had very little colour. If a medi-

cal man was called in to examine them, one of the first things he would prescribe for them would be a limited amount of some stimulant which, he would tell them, would very much benefit their health. In the same way, if he (Mr. Biggar) were permitted to prescribe for these Gentlemen, he would suggest a little Irish whisky. His constituents were in favour of the Bill; and, whether they were right or wrong, he was disposed to vote in favour of their opinions.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he should vote for the Bill, because he believed the people of Ireland wanted it. A similar Bill had been very successful in Scotland, and had given great satisfaction to everyone, except in the matter of the *bond fide* traveller, who, he believed, was a very drunken party indeed. It seemed to him that if they should ever make a Sunday Closing Bill successful, they must abolish the *bond fide* traveller altogether.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, the hon. Member who had just spoken (Sir George Campbell) had been very unfortunate in his reference to Scotland in stating his support to the Bill. In the first place, he had occupied some minutes of the time of the House; and, in the next, he had made a reference to the presumed success of the legislation for Scotland which was altogether unfounded in fact. His very successful legislation on temperance lines in Scotland, as compared with the hitherto one-sided legislation in Ireland on the same lines, had eventuated in this—that every man, woman, and child in Scotland, from the navy working on the railway to the infant at the breast, drank per annum a gallon more of whisky than sufficed for each head of the population of Ireland. Now, if that was a specimen of the success attending on the temperance legislation for Scotland, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) hoped no such success would attend such professed temperance legislation for Ireland. Notwithstanding the Forbes-Mackenzie Act, and the other so-called Temperance Acts, and the teachings of such teetotal luminaries from that land as sat in that House, Scotchmen continued to be, with scarcely an exception, one of the most drunken people in Europe. They did not drink as much, he admitted, as some other people of

the Anglo-Saxon race. Statistics proved that the most alcohol in the year—per head of the population—was consumed in England and Wales; so he could fearlessly say that, in both these countries and in Scotland, more intoxicating drink was consumed in proportion to the population than was consumed in Ireland. In England, it averaged about seven gallons per head per annum; in Scotland, about five gallons; and, in Ireland, it was equivalent to about three and a-half gallons per head, converting the various liquors consumed into the equivalent of proof spirits. And yet, on the presumptive success of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act, they were to have similar legislation commended to them in Ireland. He was not an opponent of temperance principles. He practised them in his own person, and recommended them to his friends; but he objected very much to this self-glorification of Scotland, which was held up to them as though it should be a model to Ireland. The Forbes-Mackenzie Act might have had some success in moderating, or lessening in some degree, the drunkenness which prevailed, or would prevail if no such Bill had been passed for Scotland; but it had not brought the consumption of alcohol down to anything like the proportions which prevailed in Ireland. Hon. Members who supported the Bill should bear in mind that no such measure had been ever introduced into England; and, notwithstanding the supposed success of the Scotch measure, the people there still drank every year a gallon of whisky more per head than they did in Ireland. He regarded it as most unfortunate that the other Government Bill for Ireland should have been postponed in order that this measure should be proceeded with. Ireland stood in a different position in this matter to Scotland and England. He would be very glad, indeed, if in Ireland the poorer classes of the people drank less whisky; because, of every 1s. worth of whisky which Irishmen drank, nearly 10d. dropped into the till of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Irishmen paid lately in one year £3,500,000 for the same quantity of whisky as they paid £950,000 for in 1851. It was not so bad in former years. There was a time when it was only 3d. or 4d. tax on the 1s. expenditure; but while the

duty on beer, the common beverage of the English people, measured by its strength in proof spirits, had been reduced from 12s. 6d. to less than 2s., per gallon, that on whisky, the common beverage of the Irish nation, had been largely increased—namely, from 2s. 8d. to 10s. He did not wish the duty on whisky to be reduced; but he desired that the additional money derived from that duty in Ireland should be applied to Irish purposes. [*Cries of "Question!"*] He could tell those who interrupted him, that the Bill would not be forwarded by those means. He considered that the Bill was premature; in itself it might be a good Bill; but it ought to be left to the decision of the future Representatives of the enlarged constituencies in Ireland, as they would represent the classes of the people who would be most affected by it. He did not want to stand in the way of a Division, though he did not mean to take part in it himself; but he protested against a Bill of such a kind being forced through the House in such a way, when there were many far more pressing Irish subjects demanding attention, and notably that with reference to labourers' cottages.

MR. HICKS said, that the question was in this position—that, for the great part of Ireland, there was a Sunday Closing Act, which had expired, and had been renewed, and would again expire, unless the ordinary course of renewing it was followed. As, no doubt, it would be perfectly independent of the Bill, Sunday closing in Ireland, therefore, was already provided for, and would continue. There appeared to him to be two reasons why the Bill should not be read a second time. One was, that, in principle, it was virtually in operation already in Ireland; and the other, that its effects had not been fairly and truly tested. The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) said that the Bill worked well in that town; but there the people were in favour of it, and it was, in fact, in operation before the Bill was agitated at all. The hon. Member below him (Mr. Harrington) said there was less obtrusive drinking in Ireland, but more secret drinking in private houses, and that statement had been endorsed by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar). Then, with regard to Wales, the evidence they had before them from the public

meetings held in that country, was to the effect that the Welsh Sunday Closing Bill had failed. These circumstances ought to show the House that the subject was one that was open to a great deal of controversy; and that being so, it seemed to him reasonable that, seeing they had already an Act in operation from year to year, applying to all Ireland, excepting the five large towns, the promoters of the Bill should be content with that, until they had an opportunity of referring the subject to the consideration of the Irish people.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I do not intend to detain the House for more than a few minutes; but for a great many years I have taken an interest in this Bill; in fact, from the time that I began to be convinced, now 12 or 14 years ago, that the feeling of the people of Ireland was very strongly in its favour. I do not believe that that feeling has weakened since then; and, as far as I can understand the question, from the views of the Representatives of the country, on the vote on this subject, it will again appear, as it appeared on a former occasion, that a very large majority of the Irish people desire the passing of the Bill. The experience which has been gained from the experimental working of the Act already in operation, shows that the feeling in Ireland is ripe; and after that experience, extending over several years, it is not unnatural that an attempt should now be made to bring about the uniform operation of the law in all parts of Ireland. What I do think is reasonable is, that, after the whole of this Morning's Sitting has been spent in the debate, and after the subject has been as thoroughly thrashed out as any subject that comes before us, the supporters of the Bill should expect that hon. Gentlemen opposed to the Bill should allow a Division to be taken on the second reading. They are, of course, entitled to speak on the subject. I do not say that, because the Bill was debated on former occasions, they are not entitled to the fullest opportunity of being heard; but the second reading of the Bill is very far indeed from the passing of the Bill. Both in Committee, and other stages, they will have opportunities of raising their objections to both the principle and the details of the Bill. What I do think is, that it is

not fair to the people of Ireland—and it would be most unfair of all to the people of Ireland on the part of any of those who believe themselves to be especially the Representatives of the people of Ireland—if the votes of the House are not allowed to be given on the second reading. Let us see what the feeling of Ireland is, as decided by the votes of its Representatives. That, I think, will be felt to be a fair appeal. After the debate that has taken place to-day, I cannot but hope that Gentlemen will reserve themselves for the opportunity they will have of renewing their discussion upon this Bill at a future stage. I will not myself in any way prolong the discussion, but content myself with making this appeal. I hope that those opposed to the Bill will have such moderation and equity in their manner of proceeding, as to allow us to pass to a Division on the Motion to read the Bill a second time, so as to test the sense of Parliament at large, and particularly of Irish Representatives, as expressing the sentiments of Ireland on this matter; because this, at any rate, is a subject on which it is right that Irish ideas should be heard.

MR. KENNY said, he would admit that there was a majority of the people in favour of the Sunday Closing Bill; but everyone who knew anything of Ireland, knew also that there was a strong minority opposed to it. The right hon. Gentlemen at the head of the Government professed to have great regard for the opinions of the Representatives of Ireland on questions affecting Ireland, and had wished that the sense of the majority among them should be permitted to prevail; but the fact was, that Irish Members constantly found themselves overwhelmingly outvoted by English Members on Irish subjects. There had been other measures before the House, in the course of this Session, upon which the opinion of the Irish Members was united, and which no Irish Representative opposed, yet the followers of the right hon. Gentleman came in and voted against those Bills and rejected them. He thought it a strange thing on the part of the Government that they should attempt to spring on the House a Bill of that kind, at a time when most of its opponents were absent. There were several hon. Gentlemen representing Irish constituen-

cies known to be bitterly opposed to the Bill, who were absent. Of the opponents he referred to, the hon. Member for Dublin City (Mr. M. Brooks) was the only one who happened to be present. The hon. Members for Tipperary (Mr. Mayne), Waterford (Mr. Leamy), and Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) were absent. Some of them were in the House a few days ago; but they had not the slightest idea that the Bill would be brought on that day. He did not deny that, in the abstract, public opinion was in favour of the principle of the Bill; but he could not support it, because the licensing legislation had been used for corrupt purposes, and for the persecution of people who held popular views in the country. He quite agreed in the statement that the Government had thrown away a day which might have been devoted to the consideration of other measures upon which the Irish Members were united.

MR. WARTON said, that the Prime Minister had come down to the House, at the end of the debate, to give the weight of his authority to an appeal to allow a Division to be taken; but it was his (Mr. Warton's) duty to complain, in answer to that appeal, that the Government made it a practice to put down an immense number of Orders of the Day—sometimes 20 or 30—and thus gave themselves the power, according to what they might select, to take the second reading of any measure they pleased on the following day. That was what had been done in the present case. He did not know whether the Government were aware of it or not; but some of the prominent opponents of the Bill, representing Irish constituencies, whose opinions the right hon. Gentleman professed to be very desirous of eliciting, were absent from the House, and had no idea that the Bill was going to be taken that day. As regarded the Bill under consideration, he thought the Act of 1878 should be regarded in its true light as a compromise. In this world we could not get all we wanted, and we ought to be content with what we could get. A contrast had been drawn, in the course of the debate, between drinking in a public-house and drinking in a private house. But that was a mistake. The true comparison was between drinking in a licensed house, and drinking in an unlicensed one, or shebeen, as it was

called in Ireland. Since 1878 those shebeens had largely increased in number.

It being ten minutes before seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes to Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at five minutes
after Nine o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 23rd June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—
National Debt (Conversion of Stock) (145);
Union Officers' Superannuation (Ireland)*
(146).

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4)* (119); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9)* (120); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10)* (121); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3)* (122); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act)* (123); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Waterworks)* (124); Fisheries (Ireland)* (77).

Royal Assent—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 15]; Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 14]; Bankruptcy Frauds and Disabilities (Scotland) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 16]; Metropolitan Police [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 17]; Gas Provisional Orders [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xxxix]; Land Drainage Provisional Orders [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xli]; Water Provisional Orders [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xli]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xlii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xliii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xlii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xlii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xlii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xlii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. xlii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) [47 &

48 *Vict. c. xlix*]; Commons Regulation Provisional Order [47 & 48 *Vict. c. l*]; Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) [47 & 48 *Vict. c. li*].

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I rise for the purpose of fulfilling the promise made on my behalf last week. Your Lordships are already aware that in consequence of the bad state of Egyptian finance, owing to the burning of Alexandria by the troops of Arabi, owing to the cholera, and to the great expense in the Soudan, aggravated by the fall in the price of almost everything which Egypt produces, Her Majesty's Government came to the opinion that it was absolutely necessary to change the Law of Liquidation. They proposed to the Powers to meet in Conference to consider what should be done in regard to that change. Your Lordships are aware that Germany, Austria, Italy, and Russia accepted the invitations. France accepted the invitation in principle, but desired to have an exchange of views before formally acceding to the proposal. I will now state to your Lordships what is the result of that exchange of views. I am afraid that it will be rather wearisome to your Lordships; but I think that the best way that I can state the result is to read to your Lordships two despatches that are to be found in the Papers that we are presenting to-night. On June 15, M. Waddington sent to us a despatch of which the following is a translation:—

“London, June 15, 1884.

“M. le Comte,—In our interview of yesterday we arrived at a complete agreement on all the preliminary questions raised by the proposal contained in your Excellency's circular despatch, dated the 19th of April last. The moment has therefore arrived to record in writing the terms of this agreement. In his despatch of the 29th of April, of which a copy was delivered to you by Count d'Aubigny, M. Ferry, after accepting in principle the proposal of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, added the following considerations:—‘The very character of this proposal indicates that the modifications upon which the Powers will have to deliberate involve the examination of certain questions connected with the Law of Liquidation which it is impossible not to take into account. Hence the French Government hopes that the Ministers of the Queen will not refuse to allow of these questions being made the object of a preliminary exchange of views, which is indispensable in order to determine accurately the mandate of the Conference and to insure the (successful) result of its labours.’ The ex-

change of views proposed by M. Ferry having been accepted by your Lordship, I hastened in our first interview on this subject on the 2nd of May clearly to determine the ground which the Government of the Republic intended to take as their standpoint from the commencement of our negotiations. It was of importance, in the first place, to remove two ideas, two prejudices, widely spread in the English Press, relative to the re-establishment of the *condominium* and to the alleged military projects of France in Egypt. Consequently I declared to you that the French Government had no idea whatsoever of furthering the re-establishment of the Anglo-French Control in Egypt. No doubt we retain the conviction that this control produced, while it lasted, good and salutary effects, and that under its influence Egypt was tranquil and its finances prosperous. But we are fully aware of the reasons which at the present time necessitate the rejection of any idea of a return to a system which events have overthrown. The *condominium* is dead, and we have no idea of resuscitating it. It is solely from the point of view of the collective interests of Europe, and of the share therein which we legitimately represent, that we shall henceforth consider Egyptian affairs. The other misunderstanding which it was expedient to remove had reference to the intention which English opinion has often attributed to us to substitute a French occupation for the English occupation at the date of the recall of their troops by the Government of Her Majesty. I declared to you that the Government of the Republic was ready to give the most formal engagements on this point. This determination was inspired by the confidence we have that Her Majesty's Government will not hesitate on their side to confirm distinctly the solemn declarations made by them on repeated occasions that they would do nothing to prejudice in any way the international situation in Egypt secured by the treaties and firmans, and would evacuate the country when order should be re-established. There would thus be, as it were, between the two Governments a synallagmatic engagement, embracing on the part of England a provision for evacuation at a fixed period, which could not be prolonged without a fresh consultation of the Powers, and on the part of France a formal engagement not to proceed, in any case, to an armed intervention in the Delta of the Nile without a previous understanding with England. After explaining the views of my Government on these two very important points, I pointed out to your Lordship that it would be just to stipulate in the interest of the creditors of Egypt, from whom you were going, perhaps, to demand great sacrifices, for certain guarantees calculated to insure the good management of Egyptian finance, and to prevent disorder in the administration, which might speedily bring about fresh embarrassments. Moreover, the future and the prosperity of the whole of Egypt depend on the wise and upright management of its finances, and the precautions which may be adopted for this object will be a source of strength for its government and, at the same time, a check upon it. You thought that it would be possible to find these guarantees in the extension of the attributions and power of the Commission of the Debt; an institution

which has already worked for several years to the general satisfaction, and on which the principal Powers interested have each a representative. I replied that such was also the idea of the French Government. While taking note of my declarations, you were good enough to add that you were authorized by Mr. Gladstone and by your colleagues to tell me that they were very sensible of the friendly manner in which the communication had been made on our side; that they appreciated the disinterested character of the assurances which I had been charged to give you; and that they shared with the Government of the Republic the conviction that the good administration of Egypt was an object of general interest for Europe. In the interviews which followed, you, in your turn, developed the views of Her Majesty's Government, and you explained in concert with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in what manner and to what degree you thought it possible to meet the views of the French Government. I now beg you, therefore, to be good enough yourself to draw up in their definitive shape the proposals which you addressed to me in the name of your Government.

"Accept, &c.,

(Signed) "WADDINGTON."

My answer was sent on the next day—

"Foreign Office, June 16, 1884.

"M. l'Ambassadeur,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 15th instant, relative to the preliminary understanding desired by your Government before accepting the proposal of a Conference to discuss the financial position of Egypt. Your Excellency states in that note the assurances and explanations which your Government are ready to give with regard to Egypt, and you request to be informed of the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the questions thus raised. Her Majesty's Government appreciate the importance of the declarations made by your Excellency on behalf of the French Government. The formal abandonment of any idea of re-establishing the *condominium*, and the assurances for the future that French troops would not enter Egypt without the consent of this country, have rendered practicable and greatly facilitated a full and frank exchange of views. Her Majesty's Government are glad to find that the two Governments are agreed as to the interests which Europe has in the good government and prosperity of Egypt. Nothing shows more clearly the views of Her Majesty's Government on that point than the circular which I addressed to Her Majesty's Representatives at the Courts of the Great Powers on the 3rd of January, 1883. That despatch was written three months after the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir had enabled the British forces to enter into occupation of Egypt. It was submitted to the Parliament of this country, and was communicated to the Powers and to the Sublime Porte. It met with general acquiescence. In it the statement was made that Her Majesty's Government were desirous of withdrawing the British forces as soon as the state of the country and the organization of proper means for the maintenance of

the Khedive's authority would admit of it. To that declaration Her Majesty's Government have adhered and still adhere. It was with regret that they found that circumstances interfered with the progress of the measures taken with a view to that withdrawal; and it is equally matter of regret to them to feel that the time is not yet come when, with due regard to peace and order in Egypt, the English force could be taken away. There is some difficulty in stating a fixed date for such withdrawal, inasmuch as any period so stated may prove in the event to be too long or too short. But Her Majesty's Government, in order to remove any doubt of their policy in this matter, and in view of the declarations made by France, are willing that the withdrawal of the troops shall take place at the beginning of the year 1888, provided that the Powers are then of opinion that such withdrawal can take place without risk of peace and order. They believe that there ought to be a reasonable hope of establishing during a period of three years and a-half the necessary guarantees for an order of things in Egypt which shall be satisfactory. But if this, unfortunately, should prove not to be the case, and if the British Government were then of opinion that some prolongation of the occupation would be necessary, it is not to be supposed that the European Powers would join in objecting to a measure required by the safety of Egypt, an interest which is common in different degrees to all. Her Majesty's Government readily acknowledge the importance for the well-being of Egypt that her finances should be managed in a sound and economical manner. It was for this purpose that in 1876 the Anglo-French Control was originally established. The Goschen-Joubert arrangement gave to the English Controller of Receipts a preponderating position over that of the French Controller, whose duty it was to audit the accounts of the Treasury; but on both of the Controllers important administrative functions were conferred. The Dual Control, as finally instituted in 1879, differed in two important points from the original Control of 1876. The English Controller was no longer intrusted with duties of a more important nature than those performed by his French colleague, and although the powers of investigation conferred on these two officers were limited to financial matters, at the same time the fact that they had a right to be present at the meeting of the Council of Ministers virtually gave to them the right of interference in all questions connected with the administration of the country. They were no longer, as before, purely financial officers. Important political functions were conferred on them. It is unnecessary to dwell on the advantages or the disadvantages and dangers of this system which has now been formally abandoned by the French as well as by the Egyptian and British Governments. It will be readily acknowledged that as long as Great Britain has to bear the burden and responsibility of the military occupation of Egypt it would be impossible for Her Majesty's Government to admit such interference with either the administration or the political government of that country as was allotted to the Anglo-French Control under either of the above arrangements; and Her Majesty's Government do not think that it would be wise or practical after

the withdrawal of the British troops to renew any such system to be worked by a greater or lesser number of foreigners not under the authority of the Egyptian Government. But Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it would not in any way interfere with the position which England should occupy in Egypt, and that it would be an advantage in itself that a limited extension should be given to the power of the Commission of the Caisse de la Dette Publique. Her Majesty's Government are ready to propose to the Powers that within a year of an alteration of the Law of Liquidation being brought into force the functions of the Caisse de la Dette Publique should be extended in the following manner:—The Commissioners of the Caisse would be consulted when the Budget for each year, commencing with that for 1886, is in course of preparation. The Budget would be based as far as possible on the provisions of the normal Budget, which Her Majesty's Government propose to exhibit to the Conference, due allowance being made for any altered circumstances of the country. The Budget for each year being so prepared, in consultation with the Commissioners, the latter would be empowered to veto during the year any proposed expenditure which would produce an excess on the Budget, except in cases of such emergency involving peril to peace and order. This power of veto would also apply to expenditure under the Budget of 1885, although that Budget would not have been settled in consultation with the Commissioners. After the withdrawal of the British troops the Caisse would have, in addition, the power of revenue inspection, so as to insure that the whole of the revenue really reaches the Treasury instead of being diverted to other purposes on its way. The President of the Caisse would be an Englishman. Her Majesty's Government will, at or before the expiration of the English occupation, propose to the Powers and to the Porte a scheme for the neutralization of Egypt on the basis of the principles applied to Belgium, and will make propositions with regard to the Suez Canal in conformity with those contained in my circular despatch of the 3rd of January, 1883. Her Majesty's Government received with satisfaction your Excellency's statement that these proposals are acceptable to France. I have to add that all the arrangements above described are subject to the satisfactory settlement of the financial arrangements which will be proposed by Her Majesty's Government to the Conference.

"I have, &c.,

"(Signed) GRANVILLE."

There is another despatch to M. Waddington. I do not think it necessary to read it to your Lordships, though I am quite ready to do so if your Lordships should wish. It is a despatch which is only a recapitulation of my statement—I admit in a more methodical form—and I think it would be, perhaps, wearisome to your Lordships if I were to read it now; but I am entirely at your Lordships' disposal if you wish

Earl Granville

me to do so. Your Lordships will remark there are five points raised in this Correspondence. The first is, the formal declaration of the French Government of the abandonment of any idea of reviving the *condominium*, and the engagement not to send French troops into Egypt, either before our withdrawal or for the future, without the consent of this country. M. Waddington might have gone further, for this principle has certainly been stated in many speeches both in and out of Parliament; and I think the noble Marquess, both in Parliament and certainly in a recent attack on Her Majesty's Government, stated in most distinct terms that a certain Power on our withdrawal would enter Egypt, and that there could be no doubt who that Power would be. Now, although I never thought it certain or even probable that the French would take this very grave step, yet I entirely agree with the noble Marquess that there is such a possibility, and this possibility is one that would create very great difficulties with regard to any plan of evacuation. The noble Marquess's argument might apply just as much to an evacuation 10 or 20 years hence as to an evacuation one or two years hence. This declaration on the part of the French Government removes this difficulty from our acting on our own policy; and this, as I stated in our despatch, greatly facilitates the way for a full and frank interchange of views with the French Government. My Lords, the next question is, that of our having consented to fix a date for the evacuation of Egypt. I think it was the noble Earl opposite who stated the other day that the report was incredible that we should have consented to any such thing, I cannot help remembering that from time to time we have been very much pressed by the opponents of the Government to fix a date for the evacuation, founded upon the idea that it would give us a greater hold upon the country. I think it will be within the recollection of your Lordships that, as far as military occupations of friendly countries are concerned, there always has been an inclination on the part of the occupying Power to seek for reasons for delaying the cessation of the occupation longer than seemed to others to be necessary, and proved to be the case after the result was known. I could mention seve-

ral cases, but I will merely speak of one—namely, when Lord Dufferin and Baron Gros went on a mission to Syria. Ten thousand troops were sent there for six months; but at the end of six months the French Government thought there was danger of disorder occurring if they retired, and they stayed on month after month; and it was only by diplomatic pressure, chiefly on the part of this country, that at last they were withdrawn 10 months after the time. Napoleon III. was then at the zenith of his power; and I am not aware that at that time there was any complaint raised or suggested that by yielding in that manner to a friendly representation from a friendly Power any insult was suffered or any injury was done to the honour or dignity of France. There is one point which I cannot entirely put out of sight. Up to this time the greatest confidence has been shown in the assurances and words of Her Majesty's Government. Austria and Italy have frequently repeated the confidence they felt in the pledges given by us; and the German Government, certainly not in the least jealous of any position we might have in Egypt, yet in the most friendly and useful way, more than once inculcated on the Porte the expediency of trusting to the assurances we had so formally made. When these despatches are discussed, I hope one answer will be given to the following point. Sixteen months ago we were debating in both Houses of Parliament Addresses in reply to the Queen's Speech, and in both Houses the Leaders of the Conservative Party made a complaint so similar that it appears to have been previously concerted—that there was nothing in the Speech to show when the troops were to be withdrawn. Now, if it were so wrong in us not to declare, four months after our occupation, gratuitously and without any condition, the precise date on which we were to leave the country, I cannot see how it can be wrong now for us, in return for such a very important and unusual declaration as that made by the French Government, and that most important proviso which I have read to your Lordships, to fix a date for coming out. My Lords, the next question is, what answer we gave to the not very unnatural question of the French Government as to what security would be given at the time when we were making

application to the Powers for the good and economical management of Egyptian finance from the present time. The noble Earl said, the other day, that he who holds the purse-strings directs the policy. I have not a word to say against that maxim. I cannot equally agree with the noble Earl when he went on to say that all systems of financial control and audit have exactly the same effect. In this country the Chancellor of the Exchequer is theoretically omnipotent over the Estimates presented by each Department of the State. Of course, the great check upon him is an appeal to the Cabinet, and the *ultima ratio* of the resignation of the Head of the Department. Well, there is not the slightest doubt that the Treasury does exercise a very useful influence over the administration of this country by its audit check; but as to the Auditor General, he has not the slightest weight in regard to the policy of the country. What is quite clear is that, between these two extremes, there are to be found checks, wise and useful, in the financial sense, without being an interference with the political and administrative government of the country. Now, my Lords, Sir Evelyn Baring arrived in this country about seven weeks ago. He had long and important conversations with myself and other Members of Her Majesty's Government. One of the first questions was naturally the pressing one of finance; and on this he speaks with great authority, not only as a successful Minister of Finance, but as one who has combined the post of Controller under the dual system and that of Her Majesty's Diplomatic Representative under most difficult circumstances at Cairo. Now, the opinion of Sir Evelyn Baring, given to me before I had any sort of communication with M. Waddington on that question, was that it was very desirable, in the interests of the Egyptians and ourselves, while no interference with politics or administration should be allowed, that the Powers of the Caisse de la Dette Publique should be extended to a certain degree. I do not pretend to understand finance, and I do not intend to speak upon it; but I am assured that the powers given to the Caisse are of a practical character, and I believe that the opportunity of consulting the Commission of the Caisse, although they will have no votes and no power to decide, will

strengthen our hands in checking unnecessary expenditure, and that the power of putting a veto on any expenditure in excess of the aggregate amount of the Budget will exercise a strong stimulus in favour of economy, and strengthen our hands in that direction. This does not appear to be an unreasonable amount of security to offer to the Powers who are called upon to agree to some sacrifice on the part of their subjects. It must be remembered, too, that this Commission is not a body entirely foreign to ourselves, for on it we have not only a member, but it is agreed, as far as France is concerned, that that member is to preside over the meetings. There is another subject which your Lordships will perceive that I have noticed in my despatch to M. Waddington, where I made an announcement which is hardly strictly connected with the matter in hand, and on which we received no requests for explanation on the part of the French Government. But we thought it a favourable moment for declaring our views on the subject to the Powers, and it was undoubtedly satisfactory to us to find that France was ready to endorse our opinions, which we also hope will not be unacceptable to others. It was the announcement that it was our intention, not now, and certainly not at the Conference, but either before or at the time of the evacuation, to propose the neutralization of Egypt on the basis of the principles which have been applied to Belgium, and also the adoption of that plan with regard to the Suez Canal which is contained in the Circular of 3rd of January, 1883. I do not think it necessary at this time to go into a discussion of the advantages of the neutralization of Egypt; and, with regard to the Suez Canal, I have only to say that, in the autumn of 1882, a very strong Committee was appointed to consider that question. There were Ministers, Heads of Departments, soldiers, sailors, and engineers on that Committee, and they were unanimously of opinion that the neutralization of the Suez Canal would be a detriment to the interests of this country, while the plan described in the Circular of January 3, 1883, would be of great use. This we recommended, and the Cabinet gave their sanction to it, thinking that it was sound in principle and advantageous to us without being detrimental to others;

and it was communicated to the Powers. No objection was made by any Power; and, at all events, a step has been gained by the present formal adhesion of the French to our plan. Your Lordships will also remark that if, as I trust will not be the case, for it would be a great disaster to all concerned—that if we do not arrive in Conference at a satisfactory settlement of the financial question, we shall entirely regain our liberty of action, and we must consider the position in which we shall be placed. My Lords, I can say with truth that this interchange of views has been conducted on both sides in a spirit of conciliation and moderation, and, I believe, at the same time with a due regard to the respective interests of the two countries. I hope it will be found that other Powers do not object to what we have done; and I ground this expectation very much on the fact that the main principle upon which this agreement is based is a cordial acknowledgment that the Powers of Europe have in different degree an interest in the welfare of Egypt. I am afraid it will not be well accepted by those in this country who conscientiously think that a country is not bound by its pledges in an equally binding manner as an individual is. It will not be pleasing to those who think that the country may take any temporary advantage in regard to them that it may think best for itself. It will not be pleasing to those who really wish for annexation under the disguise of a permanent Protectorate such as we exercise in India over some of the Indian Principalities, and who think such a plan both desirable and easy to carry out. I have been told that what Englishmen have done Englishmen can do, and I agree, within certain limits, to that proposition. I know that Englishmen in the interior of India, separated from Europe and from Europeans, and acting under a despotic Government by whom they are hardly controlled, and not being at all controlled by the Government at home, have, with the help of Native Ministers, very satisfactorily conducted the government of such countries. But I venture to think that the case of Egypt is absolutely dissimilar. Just consider the vicinity of Egypt to Europe, and the very large population of other Nationalities in Egypt, many of them far exceeding the English resi-

dents in number. Remember the international institutions that have been established—institutions financial, judicial, industrial, and administrative. Remember that all these populations are most active and zealous in representing what seems to them the principal interests of their particular Nationalities. I do not think it is altogether immaterial to remember that there are newspaper correspondents of almost every nation established there. Remembering these things, I feel that the difficulties of a permanent Protectorate would be great indeed; but I cannot hope that the course which we have pursued in these communications will be acceptable to those who wish for annexation more or less disguised. My Lords, I venture to think that all those who do agree with what has lately been said by an ex-Ambassador with great force as to the immense strength of England over all the world in the perfect confidence felt in that which she has said; who agree with that Conservative Government, who during the great Napoleonic War were in full possession of Egypt and did not keep it; and who agree with Lord Palmerston in his repudiation, and with Lord Beaconsfield in his still stronger repudiation, of the idea that the possession of Egypt could be an advantage to this country—I think that those who agree in those opinions, and who besides consider that it is not desirable for this country to give examples to be followed by and to justify others in a policy of encroachment and annexation, will think the course we have pursued has not been injurious to the interests, to the honour, or to the dignity of this country.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY; My Lords, we have met to consider a matter of such gravity, and dealing with instruments so complicated in their character, that I should not at a moment's notice venture to express any formal or advised opinion upon the proposals which the noble Earl has laid upon the Table. I will not conceal from your Lordships that at the first blush they do not reassure me. They seem to contain much that is perilous to the interests of this country, and full of menace to the future peace of the world. But before I undertake either to meet some of the arguments which the noble Earl has raised, or to examine the detailed proposals which he has submitted,

naturally I should wish to see them in print, and I do so the more because it is evident to me that the language in which the despatch is couched has been very carefully considered and polished again and again. All the difficult points appear to be covered by a studied ambiguity of language, which may be a convenient mode of evading present difficulties, but which will certainly not make the future more peaceful or more secure. There is the burning question of what is to be done supposing that at the end of three years we find the circumstances are not such as to permit of our evacuation. The language of the noble Earl's despatch seems to leave it in doubt by what machinery we are to submit—as I understand we are to submit—our wishes to the Powers, and leaves in doubt this question, Of how many of the Powers must we have the consent in order to justify us in remaining in Egypt? Again, there is that other burning question of the jurisdictions and functions of this new Multiple Control. My noble and learned Friend (Earl Cairns) said the other night—and it is a matter which anyone who has studied history knows—that he who has the power of the purse has power over the whole, and that our policy must be subordinated to financial considerations. But the language in which the Caisse is authorized or empowered to veto the particular articles of the Budget is again couched in language of studied ambiguity. Studied ambiguity means future controversy, and from that future controversy may spring consequences dangerous to the peace of the world. Again, the whole of this arrangement, so carefully elaborated, evades the main ground on which the whole of the negotiations were undertaken—it does not touch the financial portion, which was the question which led England to approach Foreign Powers. I do not understand on what ground, for the sake of what, for what considerations we have made these promises to France. We have got absolutely nothing in return. But they are made dependent on the future deliberations of the Powers of Europe, before which proposals as to finance, as to the advances which, we are told, are to be made by England, and as to the limitation to be put upon the interest guaranteed to the foreign bondholders—proposals of which the form and dimensions are at present

wholly unknown to us, and do not seem to have been clearly defined to the minds of the negotiators. It is on the reception that these proposals may meet with, not only from France, but from the other Powers of Europe, that will depend whether the whole of the labour of the last three weeks shall not be entirely thrown away, and whether these negotiations shall have any fruit at all. It does not seem to me, in spite of the toil through which the negotiators have gone, that we have approached, by any perceptible space, to a definite solution of the controversy and discussion which England herself, without, I must say, any very pressing necessity, has brought on. But I will not discuss the matter further now, and I will close with one question. I will ask the noble Earl whether there are any other engagements between England and France, especially whether there is any undertaking on the part of France to give us any other consideration than that shown in this statement for the concessions made by England?

EARL GRANVILLE was understood to say that there was no formal engagement between the two countries with respect to financial matters; but that Her Majesty's Government certainly expected a continuance of the same friendly disposition on the part of France.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Have any financial proposals with respect to Egypt, or the limitation of the interest of the Debt, been made by France?

EARL GRANVILLE: The French Government and ourselves have agreed that it would not be respectful to other Powers that we should discuss financial arrangements preliminary to communication with the Foreign Powers, and their entrance into the Conference.

EARL STANHOPE said, he had a Question on the Paper which had been answered by the noble Earl—namely, as to whether the Suez Canal was to be neutralized? As far as he could gather from the full but guarded explanation of the noble Earl, much more than this was to be conceded, and Egypt Proper was to be neutralized, and all that England had gained in return was the abolition of the *condominium*. He understood, however, that this was already dead and gone at the beginning of our occupation, and that the Dual Control was at an end

at the time. It was true that France did not openly assent to this; but surely silence in such a matter implied consent? There was another point on which they would be very glad to have some information, and that was as to the loan of £8,000,000, which it was understood on good authority was to be guaranteed by this country to Egypt. He had seen by this morning's French journals that Her Majesty's Government had made proposals to all the Foreign Powers upon the financial affairs of Egypt, and yet Parliament was kept in absolute ignorance of them, and was not, it appeared, to be enlightened upon them until Foreign Governments had been consulted. This was in direct opposition to the pledges given by Her Majesty's Government of giving full information to Parliament, and not merely presenting meagre despatches. As to the neutralization of the Suez Canal, after what had happened he had hoped that Her Majesty's Government would have allowed the question to remain open for further consideration. Here was the highway to India, which might be barred against us at any moment. Independently of so important an Imperial interest in that undertaking, we had very great financial considerations at stake. The £4,000,000 sterling expended in the purchase of the Canal shares now amounted to £10,000,000. As to the Conference, he had understood that the first meeting was to take place on Saturday next. Were the Government to sanction its assembling before Parliament and the country had had an opportunity of considering the Papers which had just been issued? He sincerely hoped that the Government would be able to contradict such a hasty proceeding taking place.

EARL CAIRNS: I think the noble Earl scarcely apprehended the nature of the Question put by the noble Marquess—so I gather from his answer. What we think it desirable to know is this. We have before us certain terms agreed upon between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France. The noble Earl referred also to several other matters, such as questions of finance. My noble Friend desires to know from the noble Earl whether there are any agreements between the Governments of England and France on this subject of finance? The noble Earl says

it would not be courteous to the other Powers to have a discussion of terms not stated or made known to them. I do not wish to enter into the question whether there should be any discussion or not, or whether, having made one arrangement with the cognizance of the other Powers, it would be discourteous to them to make another agreement; but what we do wish to know is this. Will the noble Earl inform us, as a matter of fact, whether there is any agreement, or any other understanding, formal or informal, with the Government of France as to the financial arrangements to which the Government have agreed?

EARL GRANVILLE: I thought I had made myself clear. There are certainly things about finance submitted to France, such as a change in regard to the Commission of the Caisse; but there is no formal agreement whatever with regard to finance.

EARL CAIRNS: Is there any informal agreement?

EARL GRANVILLE: There is no informal agreement.

EARL CAIRNS: Any engagement?

EARL GRANVILLE: There is no engagement. There are changes in the Law of Liquidation and in the Caisse. The changes in regard to the Caisse are clearly changes in the Law of Liquidation. But except what appears in the despatch which I have read there is no engagement with France on the subject.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Is there an understanding as to the lowering of interest?

EARL GRANVILLE: Noble Lords opposite are trying by a series of Questions to induce me to state what the financial scheme is which we are about to submit to the Conference. That I must firmly decline to do. The answer I have already given is the obvious answer to the Question?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE said, that he thought the noble Earl was acting very discourteously to the House. The question of finance was so intimately mixed up with the Law of Liquidation that a change in the one must necessarily affect the other. He understood that the Government were going to propose a loan of £8,000,000 in order that the interest might be reduced. I think in such a case the House

is perfectly justified in asking for assurances.

EARL GRANVILLE: It is, no doubt, a fact that there may be no indiscretion whatever in the Question, but there may be very great indiscretion in the answer.

THE EARL OF JERSEY said, it seemed to him that the noble Earl had succeeded in taking England into the Conference with one hand tied behind its back. The noble Earl told them in the beginning of his speech that it was a great point to gain promises from France. He could not help recollecting that the noble Earl had had some experience of the promises of Foreign Powers. There have been some Russian promises, for instance, which had not been fulfilled; and he did not know that there was any reason to think that the Egyptian promises of France would be kept any better. As far as he could gather, the English troops were to remain in Egypt to secure order in that country for three and a-half years, and at the end of that time Egypt was to be given over to all the harpies of Europe to get as much money out of it as they could. Yet this country was to be bound to abdicate her position. He protested very strongly against an agreement which gave us no security whatever, and which, in the long run, might prove disastrous to this country. The only consolation was that if Her Majesty's Government remained in Office and mismanaged the affairs of Egypt, as they had during the last two or three years, the Powers of Europe would be glad to see them remain there.

LORD INCHQUIN: Do the Government say that there has been no formal or informal agreement between this country and France on the question of finance?

EARL GRANVILLE: The Question has already been put twice by the noble Marquess, and once by the noble and learned Lord opposite, and has been answered.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: Will the noble Earl tell us whether the Englishman who is to preside over the Caisse is to have a casting vote? If he has not, I do not see what great advantage has been gained.

EARL GRANVILLE: We shall certainly propose that he shall have a casting vote, as we consider it as most important.

EARL STANHOPE asked whether the Conference would meet on Saturday?

EARL GRANVILLE: I am not perfectly certain; but I feel pretty sure that it will do so.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I understand that Her Majesty's Government have submitted the terms of their agreement with the French Government to various Powers of Europe, and that these terms will not be submitted to Parliament until they have received the replies of the Powers. I wish to ask whether any replies have been received from the Powers with regard to that agreement; and, if so, from what Powers?

EARL GRANVILLE: We have had some communications from Austria and Italy on the subject; but no final reply has been received.

FISHERIES (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 77.)

(*The Marquess of Waterford.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the subject was one of considerable importance to Ireland. At the time of the famine in 1822 a sum of £8,000 was invested in the Three-and-a-Half per Cents for the benefit of the Irish people. To that sum was added £5,000 sent from London, and subscriptions amounting to £2,000, making a total of £15,000. The money was invested for the purpose of encouraging coast fishery and the manufacture of linen and worsted for the peasantry. In time it was found that the manufacture of linen and worsted had to be abandoned, and the whole of the fund was then applied to the improvement of the fisheries of Ireland. The Trustees of the fund, believing that the Government could administer the money better than they were able to, came to the conclusion in 1879 to hand over the fund to the Board of Works. They proposed that the money should be administered in the same manner as the Reproductive Loan Fund, which had been doing much good in Ireland. That Reproductive Loan Fund, curiously enough, was the outcome of another Famine Relief Fund, and it applied to certain counties; but it did not apply to Waterford, Wexford, Wicklow, Dublin,

Louth, Down, Antrim, and Donegal. He, therefore, asked their Lordships to approve of the transfer of the fund of 1822 to the Board of Works, in order that it might be administered for the benefit of the counties he had named. The Government in 1879 could not see their way to take over the money; but they had now, he believed, agreed to do so, and it was for the purpose of transferring the sum from the Trustees to the Board of Works that he asked their Lordships to read the Bill a second time. The Trustees suggested that their Secretary, after the transfer had been made, should have the position of a first-class Civil Service clerk; but the Government had declined to give him that position. Under the Bill, however, ample provision would be made for the Secretary, as it was proposed to make him over a sum of £500. The expenses in connection with the administration of the fund had been very great. In 1877 the loans granted amounted to £6,367, and the expenses to £743; in 1878, loans, £927, and expenses, £913; in 1879, loans, £2,001, and expenses, £686; in 1880, loans, £2,643, expenses, £611; in 1881, loans, £2,224, and expenses, £748; and in 1882 the expenses reached the enormous sum of £917, while the loans were only £4,125. The expenses during the seven years amounted to 25 per cent of the loans made. Such a state of things showed the necessity for the transfer. He believed the fund would be administered by the Government at far less expense. Last year their Lordships agreed to pass a Bill for the improvement of harbours in Ireland, and this Bill proposed to benefit the fishermen by enabling them to get boats and tackle. The fund would be of immense advantage to Ireland, and their Lordships would be doing a great service to a most deserving class of men by reading the Bill a second time. He moved that the Bill be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Marquess of Waterford.*)

In reply to Lord HARLECH,

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD said, the Reproductive Loan Fund applied to certain counties, and the fund with which the Bill dealt applied to the counties which he had named. He did not propose to interfere with the Reproductive Loan Fund.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow*.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY (PARK RAILWAY AND PARLIAMENT STREET IMPROVEMENT) BILL.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON asked Her Majesty's Government, now that the Preamble of the Parks Bill had not been proved, what course they intended to take respecting the improvement of Parliament Street? He hoped the Government would inform the House whether they proposed to take any action in the matter, or whether they had decided to wait for some private Company to come forward and carry out a great Metropolitan improvement.

LORD SUDELEY: In reply to the noble Lord, I have to say that since the Preamble of the Parks Bill was thrown out, sufficient time has not elapsed to enable the Government to come to any decision as to what further steps should be taken in order to have the widening of Parliament Street carried out. It is perfectly clear that it is an improvement which must be made sooner or later; but while the Government are willing to afford every facility, and will take care that for the present none of their land on the Great George Street site is disposed of facing the street, they look upon it as purely of the nature of a Metropolitan improvement. Last autumn the First Commissioner of Works endeavoured to persuade the Metropolitan Board of Works to undertake the duty, and on behalf of the Government offered every facility for the sale of land on the Great George Street site, so that by setting back the street and obtaining new frontages the outlay would be recouped. The Metropolitan Board of Works did not then see their way to carry out the proposal; but it is possible they may now reconsider it. The noble Lord has made some very sarcastic remarks to the effect that the Office of Works were doing absolutely nothing. He must, I think, have forgotten the considerable improvements which have been already carried out, and the fact that the new War Office and new Admiralty are about to be erected. The nine competitors, whose plans were selected out of those of 129 competitors, have sent in their detailed

plans for final competition; and it is hoped that before very long a commencement will be made in the erection of these buildings. The noble Lord must remember that he was Chairman of a Committee on this subject some years ago, and that after sitting some time, so great were their difficulties that they were unable to make any definite recommendation, and very little was carried out for four or five years afterwards. As regards Westminster Hall, the First Commissioner has already obtained the plans from the architect he consulted; and he hopes to make a statement on the subject before the close of the Session.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—YEOMANRY RIOTS AT LICHFIELD.

OBSERVATIONS.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD, who had the following Notice on the Paper:—

"To ask the Under Secretary of State for the War Department for information respecting the court of inquiry held in Lichfield to inquire into certain proceedings connected with the yeomanry in that city; particularly as to the constitution of the court and the matters to which the inquiry extended,"

said, that after the announcement made in "another place" of the intention to hold a further inquiry into the matter, and being privately informed that a Commission to conduct that inquiry would meet on the following day, he thought it would be more courteous to all parties concerned to postpone the Question. He earnestly trusted the result of the inquiry would be such as to render his Question altogether unnecessary.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—NATIONALIST AND LOYALIST MEETINGS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD BRABOURNE rose to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether, in prohibiting the meetings in the North of Ireland of persons desiring to protest against the alleged disloyal sentiments of the so-called Nationalist Party, the Government desired it to be understood that such persons should rather meet at the same time and place as the Nationalists, move Amendments to their Resolutions, and test the real opinions of the people, or whether they simply

wished it to be made known that to hold Loyalist opinions was henceforth to be a disqualification for the exercise of the ordinary rights of citizenship in Ireland? The noble Lord said he understood from private as well as from public sources that the excitement and irritation among the loyal population of Ulster could hardly be exaggerated. They had been restrained from overt action by wise and prudent advice; and it was infinitely to their credit and honour that during the recent visit of the Lord Lieutenant to Belfast, although smarting under a sense of intolerable injustice and wrong, inflicted upon them by the Executive Government, they had not allowed their feelings to diminish by one jot or one tittle the respect they felt to be due to the Representative of their Sovereign. Men who could so control themselves deserved the consideration they would receive from this House, even though they had failed to obtain it from the Government. As we were rapidly approaching the period of certain celebrations, which annually assembled the men of Ulster, under conditions sufficiently exciting in themselves, it was desirable, if not imperatively necessary, that there should be some authoritative statement which might explain, and if possible justify, the action of the Government, and allay the excitement that action had produced. Let their Lordships consider the case as if they were historians dealing with the records of a past age. There was a Party in Ireland which called itself "Nationalist." Some persons might justify the title, whilst others would think that it could only be conferred upon the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*, and that no Party had done such damage to the nation which it assumed to represent. It was a Party which desired to deprive Ireland of her share in the glory and traditions of the Empire, and to tear her from friendly union with the sister countries of England and Scotland, and it ought to be designated the Party of isolation. The Leaders of this Party were the natural heirs and successors of the Land League, of which the Prime Minister had said that crime dogged its steps with fatal and painful precision, that its Leaders preached the doctrine of public plunder, and that the Party desired to march through rapine to the disintegration and dismemberment of

the Empire. Whether or no this Party was accurately described by the Prime Minister, it was beyond all doubt that at the meetings which it had held in Ireland, language had been held which bordered on sedition, England had been spoken of as an alien country, separation from England had been spoken of as the only panacea for every evil of Ireland, and doctrines were preached which would be tolerated in no other civilized country in the world. Nevertheless, unhappily for Ireland, in three out of the four of her Provinces this Party could with justice claim a majority; but in Ulster loyal principles had taken deep root. Men knew too well the advantages of the connection between the two countries to advocate a separation which could only be injurious to both, and the demagogue and sham patriot found his trade a failure. In vain was the Nationalist net spread in sight of the Ulster bird, although they adopted a different tone from that which they employed in Munster and Connaught, and talked, not of driving the Protestant garrison out, but of freeing the tenant from the yoke of the landlord. The loyalty of Ulster had not even been affected by the legislation of the Government; they, indeed, had forced through a Parliament imperfectly acquainted with its coming results a measure which dislocated the whole framework of society in Ireland, shook the foundations of property, robbed landlords of 25 per cent of the value of their estates, and encouraged every tenant to covet his neighbour's goods. In spite of all this, the landlords and tenants of Ulster remained united by the tie of loyalty in a common bond of union against disloyalty and crime. Ulster stuck in the throat of the so-called Nationalist Party; as long as it remained impregnable, it was impossible to boast that the whole of Ireland was on their side; therefore, it must be gained at all hazards; meetings must be held, with the concomitants of drums and banners, and other incentives to eloquence, so that it might appear to the world that in Ulster also the sympathy of the people was with the Party of isolation. In these circumstances, what were the Loyalists to do? They had, indeed, received advice from one, to whose authority every respect was due. The Prime Minister, speaking at Leeds, and allud-

ing to the evils following the Land League, had said—

“What would happen in this country if schemes of this kind were to go forth, and to become in any degree dangerous to the public peace? Why, what would happen would be this—that vast multitudes of loyal citizens would array themselves in support and in aid of the officers of the law. But no such thing is heard of, unhappily, in Ireland. I hope there will be a change in that respect. I am sure it is necessary.”

Well, the Loyalists of Ulster acted on that advice, and assembled in support of law and order. The Loyalists called counter-meetings; if both were forbidden the Nationalists would be checkmated; if both were allowed the Nationalist demonstration would not be accepted as the true voice of Ulster. The invasion of Ulster failed; but the Government, some of whose Members had an unhappy sympathy with rebellion, whether in South Africa or Ireland, could not permit the triumph of loyalty, and the meetings of the Loyalists were forbidden. He could not understand the policy of the Government. It would have been intelligible if they had stopped the meetings of both Parties, so as to prevent collisions; or if they had stopped meetings of persons who had previously indulged in language of a seditious character. But the Government permitted and protected the Nationalist meetings, while it stopped the counter-meetings of those who were united in defence of law and order, because they were likely to be inconvenient to the Party of separation and sedition. It was as if a police authority, because there were thieves about, was to shut up and handcuff all the policemen; or as if a shepherd, because he knew a wolf was about to enter the fold, was to chain up all his watch-dogs in their kennel. He could not conceive any course which was more likely to give greater encouragement to disloyalty, and greater discouragement to law and order. The reason he put this Question to the Government was because he thought it ought to be known what they really wished the Loyalists to do. In England there was a recognized manner of dealing with disputed questions. We called public meetings, resolutions and amendments were moved, the opinion of the meeting taken, and people went quietly home. But he (Lord Brabourne) had always understood that this method of

proceeding was unsuited to the warmer temperament of the Celtic population. If it were adopted, he was told that moral suasion might degenerate into physical conflict. But this might not be the opinion of the Government, or, being their opinion, they might think the time had come when the relative strength of Parties, moral or physical, had better be tried in open public meeting. It was impossible to know what the Government might think on the holding of public meetings, because their ideas were strange, and their ways were mysterious. But if this was their view of the case, it was only fair that the Loyalists should be told the reason why their separate counter-meetings were discouraged, and, moreover, that they should have the assurance that the military and police would not be called in to protect the preachers of public plunder. If the Loyalists of Ireland were not to meet because they were loyal in support of their principles, and that at a time when their principles were hourly called into question and menaced, then he thought the people of Ireland as well as the people of England would wish to know the reason why. During the last week he had often wondered what would be the answer he should receive. His noble Friend might meet him, as he had met him before, with the polite insinuation that he knew nothing about Ireland. He (Lord Brabourne) would retort by anticipation that it would be well for Ireland if his noble Friend had known less, or, at least, had legislated less, about her. His noble Friend had for years been the trusted adviser of Liberal Governments upon Irish matters. His supposed knowledge of Irish affairs, his high character and abilities, and those amiable qualities which had endeared him to so large a circle of friends, had all combined to give him great influence in directing legislation for Ireland. The courage of the Prime Minister had been supplemented, sustained, and supported by the knowledge of his noble Friend, and so it had come about that these two men, each with the best possible intentions, had brought legislative evils upon Ireland which it would take centuries to undo. Then his noble Friend might take refuge beneath Lord Spencer's mantle, and complain that he (Lord Brabourne) was attacking his adminis-

tration of Irish affairs. On the contrary, he gave the greatest credit to Lord Spencer's general conduct of affairs. He gave him so much credit that he did not believe that this particular act was of Lord Spencer's own conception and suggestion. But if men kept bad company they sometimes suffered for it, and the general excellence of Lord Spencer's administration must not deter them from the criticism of a particular error. Anyhow, he (Lord Brabourne) hoped his noble Friend would not attempt to answer him by eloquent platitudes upon the right of public meeting. The right of public meeting was, doubtless, a valuable right; but in what sense was it valuable if in any given district they only allowed people to assemble who were of one particular opinion? In that case, it was not so much a right which they were conferring or allowing in these people as it was a wrong to all the other people in the district, who might hold different views, who might be in a large majority, and whom they thus compelled to allow a false impression to go abroad as to the feelings of their locality. And how were they to prevent Loyalists from attending and overpowering the seditious meetings which they were so anxious to protect? Were the people of Ulster to go about labelled? Were Loyalists to be earmarked, so that the watchful myrmidons of the law might be sure that no one who was not an enemy of the law might attend the law-protected meetings at which the law was to be denounced? The thing would really be laughable if it were not so deplorably serious in its nature. He thought the time had come when the Government ought to speak out on this matter. He hoped they would not use any language indicating a distinction between the Catholic and the Protestant party. Catholics, *quod* Catholics, were as loyal as Protestants. There was nothing whatever of a religious difference in this matter. A great portion of Ireland was, unfortunately, divided into two camps, the Loyalists and those who were not loyal. The people of Ireland understood that very well, and the people of England were beginning to understand it too. He should be sorry if Her Majesty's Government were the last to appreciate that fact. They had arrived at a time when loyalty and loyal men ought to be supported; and if the Government did not take this view the

more openly they declared their opinion the better.

LORD DE ROS said, as a resident landlord in Ulster, he begged their Lordships' permission to say a few words on the subject now before the House. He thought it could hardly be denied that the Loyalists of Ulster had received great provocation and unjust treatment at the hands of Her Majesty's Government during the last three years. Meetings had been held in various parts of the Province, under the auspices of the Land League at first, and latterly presided over by persons calling themselves "Nationalists," which had propounded the doctrines of Repeal of the Union and abolition of the landlord class. These meetings were not taken very much notice of at first by the "persons described as Orangemen and Loyalists"—to use the words of the Lord Lieutenant's Proclamation—beyond certain remonstrances on behalf of some of the local magistrates in the districts where they were announced to be held. In January, 1881, some of the local magistrates at Downpatrick and its vicinity distinctly called the attention of the then Chief Secretary to some of the resolutions which were to be moved at a meeting to be held at that place, presided over by that eloquent, but unprincipled man, Michael Davitt, and which they considered of a revolutionary character. The only reply vouchsafed to their remonstrance was, that the Executive would take care that there should be no breach of the peace. No breach of the peace had been anticipated; but that which was feared did, to a certain extent, take place—namely, the people's minds were disturbed and poisoned by the doctrines enunciated at that meeting; and, in his opinion, a great change came over the tenantry in that part of the country from that date. The happy relationship which had hitherto existed between landlord and tenant assumed a different form, and a spirit of dissatisfaction had been introduced. Since that period several meetings in Ulster had been announced of a seditious character, and they were only prevented by counter-meetings organized by the Orangemen and Loyalists, when both meetings had been prohibited; in fact, the Orangemen and Loyalists had been the means of doing that which the Government ought to have done in the first instance. No-

body objected to meetings of a legitimate character being held; but these meetings distinctly advocated principles of rebellion and separation from British rule. The last meeting, held at Newry on Sunday, June 1, pretty clearly illustrated the nature of these meetings; and it was not only acknowledged, but encouraged by the action of Her Majesty's Government. He would briefly allude to some of the resolutions which were passed at that meeting—

“That here exercising one of the first rights of the people, freedom of public meetings and speech, we declare that we owe no thanks, and we give none, to the vacillating, unprincipled Whig Government, which, under the dictation of a pack of Orange landlords and their hired retainers, filched away our rights, and which has now at the eleventh hour, through the action of the men of Newry, been compelled in despair to abandon their unconstitutional conduct and strive to steer ‘an even keel.’ That self-government is our inalienable right as a nation; and, therefore, in accordance with that ancient and Constitutional right, we claim the privilege of managing Irish affairs by Irishmen on Irish soil, and that no concession short of this shall ever satisfy the demands of the Irish people. That the only hope for the country, as far as the English Parliament are concerned, lies in the active policy of the Irish Parliamentary Party. This policy we endorse, and to that Party we attribute any recent beneficial legislation; and we earnestly trust that at the next election, whether fought under the present or under an extended franchise, the leader of the Irish race, Mr. Parnell, will be supported by an earnest band of loyal, well-trained, and trusted Irishmen. That landlordism as an institution must be rooted out of this country, and that Ireland will not enjoy peace or prosperity until we have the land for the people.”

Now, he asked, was it to be expected that the loyal men of Ulster were to calmly sit still and take no action whatever, while such pernicious seeds were being sown broadcast throughout their loyal and prosperous Province? Surely it must be admitted that great forbearance had been shown by the loyal men of Newry and Belfast during the past three weeks in circumstances of very great excitement and provocation which deserved the greatest praise. Their Lordships could hardly conceive the amount of irritation and excitement which prevailed in the Northern Province when the letter to Lord Arthur Hill had been promulgated. The Loyalists naturally conceived that they were completely thrown over by the action of Her Majesty's Government, and it was only by reason of great exertions on the part of the more moderate Party that

the Lord Lieutenant was accorded a respectful reception in Belfast, because it was no easy task to persuade the people that Lord Spencer visited Belfast as the Representative of the Queen, and not in a political capacity. He ventured to hope that the loyal conduct of the Orangemen and Loyalists in Ulster would receive the support and command the sympathies of their brethren on this side of the Channel.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT pointed out that the Lord Lieutenant had not prohibited all meetings. He had prohibited the holding of a second and counter-meeting at the same place as the one previously summoned. The noble Lord had denounced the Land Act; but the Land Act was a distinct recognition of the tenant's property, which was never recognized by law before.

LORD CARLINGFORD (Lord PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he did not remember the particular circumstances regarding some of the meetings to which the noble Lord opposite (Lord de Ros) had referred; but the noble Lord appeared to be under an incorrect impression as to the powers of the Lord Lieutenant and the Irish Government under the Crimes Act. The Lord Lieutenant had not power to prohibit all public meetings. The noble Lord spoke as if he thought that the Lord Lieutenant had an absolute discretion in the matter. The Lord Lieutenant's power in this respect was very carefully limited, even by this Act, which gave such exceptional powers to the Irish Executive. The Lord Lieutenant's power was limited by these words—“To prohibit any meeting which he has reason to believe is dangerous to the public peace or public safety.” These powers had been cautiously but firmly used. The noble Lord on the Cross Benches (Lord Brabourne) had alluded to the Land Act and the condition of Ulster with regard to it. But he did not seem to have an inkling of the fact that the loyal men of Ulster were those whose minds had been most set upon obtaining the Land Act. The desire of the rest of the tenantry of Ireland for great reforms in their tenure, which he believed had urgently needed reform, was weakened and disguised by the agitation which fixed their minds on political and revolutionary objects. But the men of Ulster, who were attached to the Union,

had no revolutionary or political objects. Their whole minds had been set on getting a reform in the Land Laws. It might be well if the noble Lord grasped that fact. The noble Lord made no allusion to the Lord Lieutenant's letter in which he stated the policy that he intended to follow in respect to meetings and counter meetings. The noble Lord had apparently not read that letter, which was at the root of the whole matter. That letter was not written in connection with the last meeting at Newry. It was written in consequence of what had happened some time before, and the action taken at Newry was taken in defiance and in the teeth of that letter. A meeting was announced to be held, and immediately a counter-demonstration was summoned. The Lord Lieutenant prohibited both these meetings. But he thought it his duty to cause the letter of the Under Secretary to be written in order to give notice to all parties. He did not resolve to prohibit all meetings; but he arrived at the conclusion that when one Party had called a meeting for a certain day at a certain place it was absolutely impossible that, with any regard to the public peace and safety, a second meeting of the opposite Party could be permitted to be held at that place and hour. The Lord Lieutenant had not forgotten the Rosslea meeting and the statement of Lord Rossmore that it was with the greatest difficulty that he and other magistrates prevented their followers from attacking the other meeting. Nor did he forget what took place at Dromore, when such an attack was made, and when a riot took place which led to the death of an unfortunate young man. The Lord Lieutenant did not forget these things; and he was of opinion that these counter-demonstrations could not be tolerated. The only question, therefore, was whether all public meetings ought to be prohibited. In the mind of the Lord Lieutenant undoubtedly the presumption was always in favour of permitting the holding of public meetings if possible. If the Lord Lieutenant had come to the conclusion that any particular meeting was not to be interfered with, and parties were allowed to take means to bring together a great body of adverse persons to the same place and at the same hour, it was quite evident that the responsible

discretion of the Lord Lieutenant was at an end. All that the Lord Lieutenant laid down was that when he had given a decision he would not permit any counter-meeting, no matter what Party that meeting represented, to be held for the purpose of opposing the first meeting. That was the whole of what was contained in the letter written by direction of the Lord Lieutenant; and it was in distinct defiance of that announcement that the second or counter-meeting prohibited the other day was to have taken place. The noble Lord on the Cross Benches seemed to think that the Lord Lieutenant was going to deprive the loyal inhabitants of Ulster of the rights of citizenship. He did not know what the noble Lord's views of the loyalty of the Lord Lieutenant were; but if he wanted any light on the subject he would refer him to a speech just made in Belfast. He did not think his noble Friend would succeed in introducing the passions of Ulster into their Lordships' House. It appeared to him deplorable that loyal men should for a moment put themselves in so false a position as the Orangemen had taken up; and he was not without hope that they were already beginning to see that it was not a position that could be maintained as against the authority and judgment of the Lord Lieutenant. He thought they had shown pretty plainly, by their recent conduct at Belfast, that excitement had at first exaggerated their ideas upon this subject, and blinded them to the true nature of the Lord Lieutenant's action, and that they would soon come to recognize that Lord Spencer had no other object but that of impartially maintaining law and order in Ireland.

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN said, he must complain of the answer of the noble Lord. He thought the noble Lord had rather burked the main Question of the noble Lord on the Cross Benches. As far as he could understand the Question, it was whether, at a public meeting, the Loyalists of Ulster might meet and express their opinions?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL): At a counter-meeting. That is the whole point.

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN said, that not a word had been said by the noble Lord who introduced the subject about counter-meetings. If public meeting meant that one side only was to express

its opinion, then public meeting was a farce. He reminded their Lordships that the Land League which the Government had prohibited was now flourishing again under the name of the National League. Inroads were made into the Province of Ulster, and the Loyalists of Ulster had resolved to hold counter-meetings, which would cancel and nullify the detestable doctrines of the Land League, and they felt that their Province was still firm and enthusiastic in its allegiance to the Crown and Constitution. Not only had they been free from sedition, but from the crimes and outrages which had disgraced the rest of Ireland. Ulster was the bright spot of Ireland, and during the period that crime stalked throughout the land, Ulster was the only Province which had kept its hands unstained. But what had been the rewards they had received from the Government? The Nationalists had been protected, and the Loyalists had been forbidden to hold counter-meetings. Their meetings were held for Constitutional purposes; but the Nationalist meetings were held to subvert law and order, and to promote sedition and outrage. The situation was a standing insult to the people of Ulster. In order to prolong their precarious life, the present Government had not hesitated to hand over the Loyalists of Ulster to the same system of crime and outrage which now characterized, unfortunately, the other three Provinces of Ireland. They had in this matter adopted a very unwise and mischievous policy, and had thereby raised up feelings of bitterness and animosity in the North of Ireland which might be most dangerous to the safety of the country, and which would certainly remain for many long years, and which would require a Government with a far greater regard for justice and honesty to eradicate.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had heard the speech of the noble Duke (the Duke of Abercorn) with regret, not merely because of the matter of it, but on account of the position which he had formerly occupied in Ireland, and on account of the respect in which the noble Duke was justly and generally held, both for his public and private character, and for the moderate line which he had often taken on critical occasions. The noble Duke complained of the answer given by the Lord President to the question of the

noble Lord on the Cross Benches, To him, however, the answer that had been given was very intelligible. The question asked was whether the Government, in prohibiting the meetings in the North of Ireland of persons desiring to protest against the alleged disloyal sentiments of the so-called National Party, had certain views? The first answer to that was, that the Government had not prohibited such meetings. The Lord Lieutenant, in the plainest possible words, had distinctly said that their desire had been to permit public meetings to which there was no legal objection; and he had only exercised his power of stopping them when there were no other sufficient means of preserving law and order. That power was conferred upon him by the Act of 1882, which said that he might prohibit any meeting which he had reason to believe would be dangerous to the public peace or the public safety. The Lord Lieutenant also said that in certain circumstances law and order might be threatened by meetings, and that they must then be prohibited; and that such circumstances arose when a counter-demonstration by a Party opposed to those who had called a meeting which the Lord Lieutenant saw no ground for prohibiting was proposed to be held in the same place and on the same day. No one could say that such a mode of holding a counter-demonstration would not have a natural and almost inevitable tendency to a breach of law and order; and, therefore, he could not suppose that the noble Duke was of opinion that such a demonstration ought to be permitted. But the Lord Lieutenant was careful to explain that a counter-demonstration would not be interfered with, provided there were no objection to it on other grounds, if held at a time and place which would not bring hostile bodies into close proximity. If those who called themselves Loyalists, and who, according to his belief, did sincerely intend to be loyal, should hold a meeting to make public their objections to the principles of the so-called Nationalists, and if there should be nothing connected with the meeting indicative of a violation of law and order, the Lord Lieutenant would allow the meeting to be held, and would not allow a counter-demonstration by Nationalists to be held at the same place. Anything more just, fair, and

impartial it was impossible to imagine. What another part of the Question of the noble Lord seemed to ignore was, that the Loyalists could hold counter-demonstrations at any proper time and place; it seemed to suggest that the only alternative for them was, either to be silent altogether, or themselves to attend the meeting of their opponents and move resolutions at it. That part of the noble Lord's Question was said not to have been answered; but could anyone suppose it to be seriously intended? He should have thought it clear to everyone who knew anything either of such matters generally, or of Ireland in particular, that if people who were opposed in views did not wish to break the peace and one another's heads they would not go in great force to the same meeting. Public meetings could hardly be looked upon as calm, deliberative assemblies, governed by such rules as obtained in their Lordships' House. Could such a description be given of them it would be a matter for rejoicing. With respect to the prohibition of the meetings of those who were called Nationalists, the Lord Lieutenant, on whom the responsibility rested, had in each case to determine whether, having regard to the terms of the Act of 1882, they could, or could not, be safely held. First of all, was there anything unlawful announced as the purpose of the meeting? The noble Duke might possibly take on that subject a different view from the Lord Lieutenant. It was a very grave responsibility to define the precise limits of public discussion on political questions. The Lord Lieutenant had no kind of sympathy with the objects of the Party called Nationalists. He was sure he (the Lord Chancellor) had none, and he doubted whether there was any one of their Lordships who had. But, nevertheless, if no illegal purpose was declared, if the expression of opinions for which no lawyer would say that a man ought to be prosecuted was all the purpose which was announced, then he could not but think that the present Lord Lieutenant judged more correctly than the late Lord Lieutenant when he determined that in acting upon the law of 1882 he would take the legality or illegality of the meetings, not the political opinions likely to be expressed at them, as the test. Then there was the

very important question whether a meeting was likely to lead to a breach of the peace. The Lord Lieutenant thought that when he had sufficient powers to prevent the occurrence of any breach of the peace, either at the meeting itself, or as a consequence of it, it was, generally, his duty to rely on them. The law must be applied impartially to both Parties—not to meetings of Nationalists alone, but also to meetings of Orangemen, where there was any chance of possibility of their leading to disturbance. If the Lord Lieutenant thought that Loyalist meetings were not likely to lead to any breach of the peace he would not prohibit them; and on the same principle and for the same reason he ought not to prohibit other meetings not likely to lead to a breach of the peace. Taking into consideration the circumstances of Ireland, it was a question whether greater good or harm might be done by permitting the expression even of objectionable opinions within the limits of the law. If that were permitted to one Party it must be permitted to the other. Their Lordships might possibly think that a different rule should be applied to Ulster from that applicable to the rest of Ireland. But this he must say—that the responsibility rested with the Irish Government and with the Lord Lieutenant as its Head. The present Lord Lieutenant and his administration of Ireland for the last two years had received strong and just approval from their Lordships. The policy which was now questioned was Lord Spencer's policy, and no person could seriously believe that Lord Spencer suffered his own judgment to be overruled by others for political objects. Lord Spencer thought the course he had adopted necessary in the discharge of his duty for the preservation of law and order; and the rest of his conduct, which had been so generally approved by their Lordships, entitled him in this matter also to their confidence and their favourable judgment.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, that the noble and learned Lord strangely forgot what had been the results of the Nationalist meetings, which had deluged Ireland with crime, and induced Parliament to give extraordinary powers to the Government of which he was a Member. The Prime Minister

himself had clearly shown how crime and outrage followed in the footsteps of the meetings of these so called Nationalists. The people of Ulster held their meetings only when invaded by men not belonging to Ulster at all, and whose object was to excite the worst feelings. The Loyalists merely said—"You shall not reduce Ulster to the same condition as you have brought the rest of Ireland." It was easy to say that the policy in question was Lord Spencer's policy. The common belief was that it was adopted to catch votes. The Parnellite Party, by voting against the Government, reduced the Government majority to 26, and directly afterwards Lord Spencer was summoned to a Cabinet Council, where the common belief was that he tried to persuade Her Majesty's Government how injurious to Ireland those Nationalist meetings were, but that he was overruled, and that he went back to Ireland with a mandate from the Cabinet that he was to pursue a different policy.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am bound not to reveal Cabinet secrets; but I may say that there is not the least particle of foundation for that statement.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE observed that it was the common belief in Ireland. Of course, they must accept the declaration of the noble and learned Lord; but he certainly should have liked to have been present and heard the discussion on the subject.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he did not think that the subject had been ever mentioned in the Cabinet.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he could only express his surprise that such an important change of policy had not been taken cognizance of by the Cabinet Council, which he thought ought to bestow a little more attention on matters so serious. It was useless for the Government to hold out Lord Spencer as this, that, and the other. He did not think the noble Lord so immaculate a politician as was commonly supposed. He was a very amiable gentleman; but Irishmen could not forget that he was the Lord Lieutenant who gave his sanction to the first Land Act, and that he was a Member of the Cabinet when the second Land Act was passed, and that he did not support the noble Earl (Earl Cowper) and the late Chief Secretary, who went over to Ireland en-

tirely unprejudiced, and yet who were compelled to resign. The Government, in dealing with Ireland, thought too much of the votes they could gain there, and too little of the peace and prosperity of his unfortunate country.

EARL COWPER said, he thought that the conduct of the Orangemen of Belfast was worthy of the greatest applause. He could not agree with the noble Lord on the Cross Benches that they really had a very just grievance; but he knew that they thought they had. He knew also how independent they were. When he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland he paid a visit to Belfast, and was received with the utmost loyalty by the Orangemen; and he could bear testimony to the excellent manner in which they conducted themselves. He might take this opportunity to remark that during the time he represented Her Majesty in Ireland the conduct of the landlords of all classes was very creditable considering the unfortunate position in which they were placed. They all knew that the landlords did not approve of the Land Act as much as some of their Lordships did. It was found absolutely necessary to put a stop to the practice adopted by some landlords of endeavouring by indirect means to get rid of tenants who had a certain right to be on the soil. But many landlords felt injured by the Act, and besides this they were reduced almost to starvation by the general strike against rents, and it was only natural that they should find fault with the Government. He was bound to say that although they abused the Government they did not for some time agitate in their own interests. After a while they did come forward in a very creditable manner and organized meetings in support of law and order. There were many most hopeful meetings organized by landlords before he left Ireland. He did not find fault with them for enlisting the services of the Orangemen. The Orangemen were, of course, responsible in former times for a great deal that was objectionable; but in the present day their chief aim and object was to denounce outrages and to maintain law and order. The Nationalists were, under another form, the Land League, and their going to Ulster placed the Government in a difficult position. It was painful to have to chide our friends and protect our enemies; but he was of

opinion that no Executive would have been justified in allowing a body of Nationalists and a body of Orangemen to meet under such circumstances side by side, and he should himself have been inclined to stop both meetings; but the noble Lord (Lord Brabourne) had been well advised not to move a Vote of Censure on the Irish Executive. He certainly, for one, should have opposed such a Vote, on the ground that Lord Spencer must have had reasons for his conduct unknown to the public.

EARL CAIRNS remarked that up to a certain time Earl Spencer prohibited meetings on both sides when they were announced to be held simultaneously; and he wished very much that that policy had been continued, as it would have given satisfaction in Ireland. He was quite willing to believe that Earl Spencer was placed in a difficult position, and that he acted as he thought best for the country. What he understood by the right of public meeting in this country was the privilege of all who were interested in the subject of the meeting to attend and express their views; but did any sane man think that kind of public meeting could be held in Ireland? Could there be a meeting on a burning question with the free expression of different opinions? The object of a public meeting was not that those who agreed should congratulate each other on their agreement; but it was the expression of divergent views in order to determine those that were predominant. Nothing was more common in the conduct of a movement or agitation in this country than for one Party to challenge another to hold a public meeting, and to test its opinion by resolution or amendment; but it was admitted that such a method of testing public opinion in Ireland was out of the question; if it were adopted there would probably be a free fight at the outset as to who should be chairman, to be renewed on every proposition submitted. Therefore, it was idle to say that these proceedings were in defence of the right of public meeting; they were based on quite a different principle—that of protecting a certain number of individuals who were all agreed, and who did not want any discussion or opposition. As there could not be what we regarded as free and open public meetings, he regretted that the Lord

Lieutenant had not taken the course of prohibiting the meetings on both sides.

THE EARL OF ANNESLEY said, he regretted the tone in which the Lord Chancellor had spoken of the noble Duke near him (the Duke of Abercorn), whose position and services ought to have protected him from such an attack. He wished to ask the Government what the Loyalists were to do after the reproaches that were hurled at them by the Prime Minister? Were they to be told that it was not lawful for them to take the only step it was in their power to take—namely, to hold opposition meetings?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns) seemed to be under an extraordinary misconception as to the general character of public meetings on questions on which there existed any considerable excitement in the public mind; as a rule such meetings were demonstrations on the part of one Party or of the other, and disturbers of the meetings were forcibly ejected. From the argument of the noble and learned Earl it would almost follow that Nationalists could not hold a meeting without Orangemen being present, or Orangemen hold a meeting without Nationalists being present. He could understand a state of things in which it might be necessary to prohibit all meetings; but he entirely denied that you were prohibiting public meetings in the true sense of the word because you would not permit the simultaneous gathering at the same place of Parties who were violently opposed. The answer to the question, What were Orangemen to do? was that there was no prohibition of counter-demonstrations at other times and places, and in conditions not likely to lead to a breach of the peace. The notion was preposterous that because Orange meetings and Nationalist meetings could not be held together, at the same time and place, that, therefore, Orangemen were to be precluded from holding as many independent meetings as they wished.

LORD INCHIKUIN said, there was reason to be grateful to Lord Spencer for the course he had followed up to a certain point; but what he was doing now was to insist on men being heard whose utterances would not be tolerated in England. This was a repetition of the mistake formerly made in permitting too long the disloyal manifestations

of the Land League; and on that point he would say that Mr. Gladstone was entirely wrong in saying that there had been no counter-demonstration of Loyalists, for he himself presided over an influential meeting which protested against the illegal character of the Land League meetings. If the Government had stopped that agitation earlier they might have prevented some of the outrages and murders that followed. What the Lord Lieutenant now said to the disloyal agitators was—"No matter how strong may be the language you use, you must be heard." Lord Spencer had said that these men, no matter how disloyal their opinions might be, should be heard. For his own part, he protested against those meetings being held in any part of Ireland, especially when the opinions which were held by those persons forming the meeting were of such a disloyal character.

UNION OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to make better provision for the superannuation of the officers of poor law unions in Ireland—Was presented by The Lord President; read 1^a. (No. 146.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, till to-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 23rd June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBERS SWORN—Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Wellington John Fitz-Wygram, baronet, for Southampton County (Southern Division); Sir John Whittaker Ellis, baronet, for Surrey (Mid Division).

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1873 (Districts) [253]; Trustees of Settlements [255], *debate adjourned*; Licensing Act (1872) Amendment [248]; Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment * [231].

Committee—Royal Courts of Justice [139]—R.P.; Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) [124], *deferred*; County Courts (Ireland) [258].

Committee—Report—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) (*re-comm.*) [254].

Considered as amended—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11) * [213]; Representation of the People [249], *debate adjourned*.

Third Reading—Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2) * [229]; Tramways Provisional Orders * [180]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) * [194]; Customs and Inland Revenue * [206], and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE—EMPLOYMENT OF CRIMINALS AS WITNESSES FOR THE CROWN IN CRIMINAL TRIALS.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General, If there is any precedent in modern practice in England for the Crown employing as witness a person who had been first convicted of highway robbery, and, after undergoing punishment for this crime, being convicted secondly of conspiracy to murder, and subsequently sentenced to death for murder; and, whether, in view of the great temptation such persons have to escape punishment by false swearing, it is intended to make persons whose death sentence has been commuted incapable by Law of giving evidence, as is now the case before commutation?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, was unable to say whether such a combination of convictions had occurred in the case of any witness in England. They must judge on each occasion as it arose whether such evidence should be accepted or not, but no change in the existing law was contemplated.

MR. HEALY said, he should draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Government had availed of such a witness in Ireland—[*Cries of "Order!"*]
—in order to convict another man.

MR. SPEAKER: I did not understand the hon. Gentleman to be putting a Question.

MR. HEALY: No, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Then the hon. Gentleman would not be in Order.

LIGHTHOUSES—COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—BULL ROCK LIGHTHOUSE.

MR. GRAY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, some two years and a-half ago, the lighthouse on the Calf Rock was washed away, and has not since been replaced; whether he can say when the new lighthouse on the Bull Rock, in the same neighbourhood, will be complete, and what is the cause of the slow progress of the work; and,

whether it is a fact that there is not a single audible fog-signal on the coast from the mouth of the Shannon to Queenstown?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The lighthouse on the Calf Rock was destroyed by storm in November, 1881. The Commissioners of Irish Lights inform me that, owing to the very exposed position of the Bull Rock, where a first-class light is to be erected in place of that formerly on the Calf Rock, the works can only be proceeded with with safety during the summer months. They do not expect that the light will be exhibited before the autumn of 1886. The necessary preparations for a work of this magnitude takes time; but no opportunity has been or will be lost in pushing on the work. Meantime there is a temporary light on Dursey Head. It is not a fact that there is not a single audible fog signal on the coast between the mouth of the Shannon and Queenstown. There are two—one at the Fastnet lighthouse, and another on board the Daunt Rock light vessel.

MR. GRAY: What class fog signals are they?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I believe they are the ordinary syren pattern.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—COUNTIES OF MEATH AND DUBLIN (MESSRS. N. AND J. MARKLY).

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is he aware that among the appointments of Catholics to the magistracy made recently in the county of Meath, there is a rated occupier holding eighty acres of land in the petty sessions district of Julianstown, Duleek; is he aware of the brother of this gentleman who lives in the petty sessions district of Balbriggan having been appointed a magistrate for the county of Dublin, and is he in possession of the facts that he is a registered dairyman holding less than twelve acres of land; do these gentlemen possess ability and other necessary qualifications suited for the magistracy, so as to out-weigh all considerations of want of property; and, is he aware that such appointments have given rise to extreme dissatisfaction?

MR. TREVELYAN: A Question in this form is liable to mislead. The rated occupier of 80 acres of land, or the registered proprietor of a dairy, may be

a man of large fortune and possessing the very best qualifications for the magistracy. The gentlemen apparently referred to in the Question are Mr. Nicholas Markly and Mr. John Markly. The former has been put in the Commission of the Peace for the county of Meath, and the latter for the county of Dublin. Both appointments were made on the recommendation of the respective Lord Lieutenants of the counties without any communication being made to them by the Lord Chancellor. Mr. Nicholas Markly's landed property in the county of Meath is close on £200 a-year. Mr. John Markly's landed property in the county of Dublin is £300 a-year. They are both Roman Catholics, and well calculated to make efficient magistrates. I am not aware that their appointments have given rise to extreme dissatisfaction. On the contrary, I believe them to be popular.

BOARD OF TRADE (MARINE DEPARTMENT)—THE MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

MR. CHARLES PALMER asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is prepared to recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the constitution and administration of the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, and the manner in which inquiries into wrecks and casualties are conducted; also into the causes of the yearly increase of Foreign seamen in our Mercantile Marine; and also into the allegations of over insurance and unseaworthiness, and into the application of the Employers' Liability Act and the Limited Liability Act to shipping.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I must refer my hon. Friend to the statement made by me in the debate on the second reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill, when I said that, in my opinion, it was desirable that a Royal Commission should inquire into the various subjects which are still matter of controversy in respect to merchant shipping. Any such inquiry should certainly include investigations into the present merchant shipping law, the practice of the trade with regard to insurance and other matters, and the administration of the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, as well as the manner in which wreck inquiries are now conducted.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881
(THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS).

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state how many of the lay Sub-Commissioners under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," were land agents at or immediately prior to the date of their appointment; and, also, if he can state how many such Sub-Commissioners have transferred their agencies to members of their own families; and, if, in the proposed reduction of the number of Sub-Commissioners, account will be taken of those who have filled such offices, in order that they may no longer be retained in their present capacity?

MR. TREVELYAN: Some, I cannot say how many, of the Sub-Commissioners were land agents; but they ceased to act in such capacity on being appointed. What arrangements they may have made for the conduct of their business is not within the knowledge of the Government, nor do they think that any public purpose would be served by making an inquiry. As regards re-appointments, the discretion must absolutely remain with the Lord Lieutenant.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—CIVIL SERVANTS
IN PRIVATE UNDERTAKINGS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If Her Majesty's Government has now settled rules regarding the acceptance of paid employments in connection with private undertakings by the salaried servants of the State?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that Her Majesty's Government, after full and careful consideration, have arrived at the conclusion not to issue any rules on this subject beyond those laid down in the Treasury Minute of the 27th of March, 1849, and in the letter from the Treasury to the Home Office of the 6th of April, 1875. These Papers have been laid before Parliament.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he can state the result of the Circular, issued by the Secretary of State last year, to inquire whether there are any cases in which stipendiary magistrates and other salaried officers in the Colonies

have engaged in private occupations at the same time; whether any further general rules have been or will be issued on the subject; whether the rule against engaging in trade or commercial undertakings applies or will be applied to the holding and working estates or plantations; and, whether the magistrate in Grenada, who was so situated, has given up either his magistracy or his plantation?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I regret that, owing to an oversight, the Circular referred to did not issue last year as was intended. The two Questions, whether it will be necessary to make any further general rules, and whether the ownership of estates will be considered as coming within Rule 76 of the Colonial Regulations, must wait the answer to the Circular. But my hon. Friend must be fully aware of the difficulty of laying down any absolute hard-and-fast rule in the West Indies, and that provision must be made for exceptional instances, if it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State that the officer's efficiency and impartiality in the discharge of his duties will not be impaired. The magistrate in Grenada referred to has been required to give up his distillery, but not his plantation.

MERCANTILE MARINE—HOSPITALS
AT BILBOA.

DR. CAMERON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has received a memorial from masters of British ships trading to Bilboa pointing out the wretched nature of the hospital accommodation there available for sick and injured British seamen, and urging the establishment of a cottage hospital under British management; and, whether he will cause the British Consul at Bilboa to be consulted as to the feasibility of organizing such an institution?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Some representations have been received in favour of the establishment of a cottage hospital at Bilboa under British management. The British Consul, who has been Consul at Bilboa for 25 years, has been consulted, and states that no complaints from patients have reached him, and that he has frequently visited the hospital which already exists with medical officers of Her Majesty's Navy, who have expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with the management of the

hospital and the treatment of the patients. I am happy to say that the number of British sailors requiring hospital accommodation at Bilboa is very small.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY— SUB-CONSTABLE CARROLL.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to an unusual claim for malicious injury and loss, brought by Sub-Constable Carroll at the Baronial Sessions, Ballyvaughan, county Clare, on the 16th May last; if this Sub-Constable claimed £395 compensation for money in gold and notes, his private property, which he alleged to have been maliciously destroyed by fire in the house of a man named Fitzpatrick, whom he was protecting; if Carroll's wife admitted on oath that she never saw the money in her husband's possession; if the various entries in Carroll's cash book were all made at the same time, although the dates extended over many years, and if these entries conflicted with the evidence of an ex-sub-inspector, who was produced to prove the amount of money in Carroll's possession at a certain date; if it is a fact that the cesspayers who voted for the presentment are persons who are not affected by the taxation it may involve; and, if it is usual for sub-constables of police on protection duty in Ireland to have in their possession so large a sum of money as £395; and, if so, and in view of the foregoing, it is proposed by the Irish Government to provide a suitable means of investment for the superfluous earnings of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, in order to guard against the possibility of loss such as that alleged to have taken place by Carroll?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sub-constable Carroll made the claim stated, and the Presentment Sessions having heard the evidence, passed it—the circumstance of the entries in the constable's book having been re-copied at one time, and the apparent discrepancy with an ex-sub-inspector's evidence having been explained to their satisfaction. The case is, however, still *sub judice*, as the Grand Jury have yet to pass the presentment, and it will be for them to fix the district upon which it should be levied. I am informed that it is not an unusual thing

for a constable to be possessed of so much money; but certainly this man acted in a peculiar manner in keeping so large a sum at a protection post.

MR. HEALY asked if it were not unusual for sub-constables in Ireland to have as much as £400 in loose cash; why the right hon. Gentleman brought in a Bill last year to raise their pay; and, further, if it were not a fact that when Walsh, who was a witness in a certain case at Cork Winter Assizes, was found with a deposit receipt for £50, it led to his dismissal, because the Government said he must have got it from the Land League?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he was informed that £100 of the money came to Carroll from his wife, and £100 from his father.

MR. HEALY: There was £200 more.

MR. TREVELYAN: No doubt. Happily he was a man of saving habits. I wish there were more like him.

MR. KENNY asked if it were the fact that Carroll's wife admitted that she never saw the money in her husband's possession?

MR. TREVELYAN: I decline to answer any Questions until after the Grand Jury have settled the matter.

ROUMANIA—DISABILITIES OF JEWS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that an edict has recently been issued in Roumania prohibiting hawking, and that most of the hawkers are Jews, who are in consequence deprived of the means of supporting themselves and their families, and reduced to utter destitution; whether the Roumanian Government refused to receive a petition from the Jews protesting against this edict on the ground that they were considered as aliens, and for the same reason debarred them from seeking redress in the Courts of Law, afforded to all other Roumanian subjects; whether the independence of Roumania was not, by Article 43 of the Treaty of Berlin, recognized, subject to the conditions set forth in Article 44 of the said Treaty, viz.:—

“In Roumania the difference of religious creeds and confessions shall not be alleged against any person as a ground for exclusion or incapacity in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil and political rights, admission to public

employments, functions, and honours, or the exercise of the various professions and industries in any locality whatsoever. . . . The subjects and citizens of all the Powers, traders or others, shall be treated in Roumania without distinction of creed on a footing of perfect equality;”

and, whether this action of the Roumanian Government is not a distinct violation of the condition precedent under which the independence of Roumania was recognised by the Great Powers, and by which the Jews in Roumania were to be placed on a footing of absolute equality with Christians and persons of other denominations; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government, on behalf of Great Britain, as one of the signatories of the Treaty of Berlin, will either alone, or in concert with the other signatory Powers, make representations to the Government of Roumania on the subject?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Attention has already been called to this matter by the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon), and Her Majesty's Minister at Bucharest has been instructed to forward a Report upon the subject. Until the facts of the case are fully known, it would not be advisable to express any opinion with regard to the action of the Roumanian Government.

PROTECTION OF INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY—THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CONVENTION.

MR. B. SAMUELSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is true that the Ratifications of the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property have been exchanged; and, if so, when it is intended to issue the Order in Council required by the Patents Act of 1883, in order that the Convention may take effect as between this Country and the other States which are parties to the Convention?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The ratifications of the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property were exchanged on the 6th instant. A draft Order in Council has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Patents Act, 1883, and the Order will be issued at as early a date as possible, so that the Convention may come into operation on July 7.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE LAWS (METROPOLIS) BILL.

MR. HICKS asked the honourable Member for Evesham, Whether he could inform the House why the Hackney Carriage Laws (Metropolis) Bill, which was introduced on February 7th, has not yet been printed?

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND, in reply, said, that at the request of the Amalgamated Cab Drivers' Association of London he had agreed to introduce a Bill to obviate four of the grievances of which the men had just reason to complain. When that Bill was brought to him, he, however, found that it was of such a nature that it would alter the whole Cab Law of London. He therefore intimated that it was impossible for him to carry through such a measure, and had re-mitted it to the Association for alteration on the lines pointed out. He had not yet received it back, and, consequently, it had not been printed.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—THE BOERS.

MR. GUY DAWNAY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any official confirmation of the intelligence published in the daily papers as to the part taken by the Boers in the late successful attack by the Usutus on the Chief Usibepu; whether, in that case, any action will be taken to prevent a repetition in Zululand on the part of marauding Boers of those tactics which led to the atrocities in Bechuanaland last year; and, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to take any steps to promote the re-establishment of peace and order in that part of Zululand outside the Reserved Territory, which, since the restoration of the late Chief Cetywayo has been devastated by Civil War?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The latest telegram on the subject from Sir Henry Bulwer, dated June 14, says—

“In the attack upon Usibepu the Usutu party fled away; but a flanking party of Boers, about 600 strong, inflicted heavy loss, and completely defeated Usibepu.”

Her Majesty's Government do not hold themselves responsible for the internal affairs of Zululand; but Sir Henry Bulwer telegraphs, on the 20th of this

month, that he has sent someone officially to the Boers' camp, in the hope of averting serious trouble which threatens as the result of their action. In a later telegram he expresses hope of success. The Government are also considering whether, concurrently with the Government of the South African Republic or otherwise, they can with advantage take any steps to promote peace and order beyond the Reserve Territory.

EGYPT (INTERNAL AFFAIRS)—OFFICIAL LANGUAGE.

MR. FINCH - HATTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that the Sanitary Inspector of Lower Egypt, who is an Englishman, has within the last few weeks been ordered to send in all his reports in French, instead of, as heretofore, in English; and, if so, for what reason; and, why the present time has been selected by Her Majesty's Government for making the change?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government are not aware that any order of the kind has been issued, and it is not a matter in which they are interested.

VENEZUELA—THE COMMERCIAL TREATY.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the proposed new arrangement with Venezuela involves a new Treaty; and, if so, whether that Treaty will be submitted for consideration by Parliament before being finally concluded?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: A proposal has been made to the Venezuelan Government with a view to settling certain points in dispute which have arisen out of the terms of the existing Commercial Treaty. The questions involved are matters of detail, and it is not intended to submit the arrangement for previous consideration to Parliament.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—WICKLOW COUNTY—APPOINTMENT OF MR. MARTIN LANGTON.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, With reference to the assurance given by the Government that

"the Lord Chancellor would not be slow to exercise his inherent powers" in appointing Catholics to the Commission of the Peace, under certain conditions, when the Lord Lieutenant of a county unreasonably declined to recommend; whether, in the case of Mr. Martin Langton, of Bray, county Wicklow, all the conditions were fully complied with, and a requisition, numerously signed by the most influential Catholics in the district, submitted to the Lord Chancellor more than two months ago; and, whether he can state what is the cause of the delay in making the appointment?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Lord Chancellor has declined to place Mr. Martin Langton in the Commission of the Peace, and he is of opinion that the Lord Lieutenant of the county, the Earl of Meath, has not unreasonably declined to recommend him. The Earl of Meath has recently recommended to the Commission of the Peace two Roman Catholic gentlemen and one Protestant, all of whom reside in Bray or its immediate vicinity, and the Lord Chancellor has appointed these three gentlemen.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR inquired whether, as a matter of fact, these three gentlemen had not been appointed since his Question appeared on the Paper, and whether the recommendations of Mr. Langton were not supported as strongly as was possible by Deputy Lieutenants, several Catholic magistrates, and professional gentlemen, and a number of the most respectable tradespeople of Bray? He also asked the reason why Mr. Langton would not be appointed, and whether of the three gentlemen referred to by the Chief Secretary, one was not the ex-butler of Sir John Kingston James, another was only qualified by his mother having property at a distance from Bray; and whether the third was not a Director of an institution in Merrion Square, of which the Earl of Meath was Governor?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he could answer some of the hon. Member's Questions, but he had better give Notice of them.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Can the right hon. Gentleman state now the reason why Mr. Langton will not be appointed?

MR. TREVELYAN: No, Sir; that I will not state at all.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—OPERATIONS IN THE HOME MARKET.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been drawn to the comments in the Indian press lately as to the injustice to India of conducting its chief finance operations in London; whether his attention has been drawn to a letter in *The Bullionist* of 9th February last; whether it is a fact that, as stated in this letter, the Indian business has got into the hands of certain "sets" and "rings" in London; and, whether Government will furnish a list of those from whom it has purchased Indian stores, and to whom it has sold "Indian paper," during the past five years?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I have not noticed in the Indian Press any accounts of the alleged injustice of the Indian Government conducting its chief financial operations in London, but my attention has been drawn to a letter in *The Bullionist* of the 9th February, in which it is stated that the Indian business has got into the hands of certain "rings" or "sets" in London. If I may be allowed to state to the House how Council drafts are sold, I think the hon. Member will see that the statement is totally void of foundation. Since 1876 it has been the practice of the India Office to advertise for sale, weekly, by public tender to the highest bidder, a certain amount of bills upon India. In April, 1883, it was found that the convenience of remitters would be better suited, and a higher average rate of exchange obtained, by selling bills or telegraphic transfers whenever there was a demand for them; and since then any person or firm wishing to make a remittance to India of Rs.10,000, or more, may tender at the weekly sale, or may apply any day at the Bank of England and obtain bills—that is, orders on the Indian Treasuries for rupees, at the rate fixed by the India Office. The number of applications at the weekly sale varies from eight or 10 to 18 or 20, and comprises eight banks and about 40 private firms, but no advantage would arise from publishing their names. The hon. Member also asks for a list of those from whom stores have been purchased during the last five years. The list would give no information to the House, and would be very

voluminous—not less than 1,020 persons or firms having received contracts during the past year.

HOUSE AND LAND VALUATIONS (IRELAND)—THE COUNTY VALUATOR FOR WESTMEATH.

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that, at the recent visit of the revising valuator to the county of Westmeath, he made several changes in the valuation of houses and lands without conferring with the occupier or announcing his presence, and in some cases without visiting at all; what remedy is open to persons who consider themselves aggrieved by the action of the revisor; and, what means is taken to let the public know the rules upon which he proceeds in his re-valuation, and the class of improvements he will take into consideration?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, that this matter had already been the subject of inquiry. The officer stated positively that he altered no valuation without previous notice to the occupying tenant. With regard to the latter part of the Question, he referred the hon. Gentleman to the 8th and 9th sections of the Act of 1860.

MR. DEASY asked if the hon. Gentleman was aware that the usual practice in Ireland was for the rate collectors to make these alterations of valuation altogether on their own responsibility; and, if so, would he take steps to prevent that being done in future?

MR. COURTNEY said, that he was not aware of it.

METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT— WEATHER PREDICTIONS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Postmaster General, If he would take steps to publish at the country post offices, during the coming hay and corn harvests, such selections from the weather predictions of the Meteorological Department as may be of use to the farmers of the districts?

MR. FAWCETT: In reply to a similar Question two years ago I expressed my regret that, after very carefully looking into the matter, I did not see my way to accede to the proposal, because it appeared that if the Government supplied telegrams gratuitously to those inte-

rested in agriculture, it would be impossible to refuse similar applications from those engaged in other trades. I further stated that I believed that there would be little difficulty in securing the object desired, because the Meteorological Office supplies weather forecasts gratuitously to anyone who is willing to pay the expense of telegraphing, which very rarely exceeds 1s. I pointed out that if the farmers in any district jointly subscribed, the expense to each would be very inconsiderable. The forecasts might be exhibited at the post-office, and in the case of those farmers who resided within the area of free delivery the message could be delivered at the small extra cost of 3d. for each additional copy.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MR. MARTIN HUBAN, A NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHER.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if Mr. Martin Huban occupied for sixteen years the position of school-master; if any complaint was made against him by the patron or manager of his school during that time; if a series of complaints was made against him by the inspector of his district during the land agitation, and if Mr. Huban was imprisoned without trial about the same period; and, as Mr. Huban was not brought to trial, and as his demand for an investigation by the Commissioners of Education was refused, if the time had not now arrived at which Mr. Huban might be reinstated in his former position, and the gratuity usually awarded after sixteen years' service given to him?

MR. TREVELYAN: A complaint was made in 1880 by the manager that Martin Huban had compromised him by his suspicious associations and conduct, in consequence of which he (the manager) had threatened him with dismissal. Huban's career as a National School teacher was a very unsatisfactory one. Long before the Land League agitation, and his imprisonment as a "suspect," complaints of neglect and irregularity had been made against him. On 10 different occasions, and on the Reports of three successive Inspectors, between the years 1868 and 1881, such complaints were under the consideration of the

Commissioners of National Education; and on two occasions Huban was fined for so serious an offence as falsifying his school records. He was more than once threatened with dismissal, and finally he was dismissed in October, 1881, for gross inefficiency, and the school was struck off the rolls as worthless. This was several months before his arrest as a "suspect," which, therefore, had nothing to do with the matter. The Commissioners could not consent to reinstate this man in their service.

MR. HARRINGTON asked whether the Chief Secretary was aware of the date of Huban's arrest as a "suspect?"

MR. TREVELYAN said, that he had not got the date with him; but he had no doubt that the Education Commissioners were right in informing him that the delinquencies were previous to his taking an active part in agitation, at all events to his being punished for taking an active part in agitation.

MR. HARRINGTON: I know something about this matter. Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiries whether the closing of the school was not due to non-attendance of pupils rather than to any inefficiency of Huban? I saw this man in gaol while a "suspect," and, therefore, take an interest in him. ["Order!"]

[No reply.]

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE FOUNTAINE SALE—THE RELIQUARY OF ST. LACHTEEN.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Reliquary of St. Lachteen has been bought for the Nation at the Fountaine sale; and, if so, considering the deep interest taken in this Irish work of the twelfth century by all classes in Ireland, it is to be deposited in the Royal Irish Academy, where works of a similar character purchased by the Nation are at present preserved?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend I have to say that as soon as I saw that the reliquary of St. Lachteen was to be included in the sale of the Fountaine collection, I conferred with my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council with the view of securing it, if possible, for the nation, and depositing it in one of the Irish collec-

tions. I am happy to say that we succeeded in purchasing it at a reasonable price, and we are now considering in which of the Irish collections it had better be placed.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. KEOGH, SESSIONAL CROWN SOLICITOR FOR MEATH.

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. SHIEL) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that at last Quarter Sessions held at Trim, county Meath, the cases for hearing (or some of them) were postponed owing to non-attendance of Sessional Crown Prosecutor, Mr. George Keogh, and if, when he subsequently attended, the Chairman severely rebuked him, Mr. Keogh explained, by stating he was unavoidably delayed by unusual train arrangements; whether, when questioned by the Chairman as to his reason for not being at Trim over night, he pleaded pressure of business and a wish to save expense; is it a fact that a case in which Mr. Keogh was interested was also postponed; will the Government sanction such a miscarriage of justice, and permit such hardship to all interested; what is the amount of Mr. Keogh's salary, and what the amount meant to cover expenses; do the Government consider Mr. Keogh can properly and efficiently discharge public duty as Sessional Crown Prosecutor, holding, as he does, at the same time, a multitude of official positions, amongst which may be enumerated Solicitor to Dublin and Wicklow Railway Company, Solicitor to Bray Commissioners (Town), Solicitor to Cemeteries Committee (Glasnevin), with very constant attendance in London, and also private practice; what is the nature and quality of his staff to transact this crowd of work; and, if the Government will appoint a Solicitor as Meath Sessional Crown Prosecutor who will be better able to discharge the duties belonging to such office?

MR. TREVELYAN: I understand that some inconvenience was caused at the recent Trim Sessions by the late arrival of Mr. Keogh the Sessional Crown Solicitor, who, as had been his practice for some years, travelled from Dublin by the morning train. The Judge informed him that, notwithstanding

any previous practice, he would expect him to make arrangements which would secure his earlier attendance in future; and this Mr. Keogh undertook to do. He did not plead pressure of business or personal expense as a reason for not being in Trim overnight; but he did refer to the additional public expense which would be involved in having the witnesses there overnight. No cases were postponed in consequence of Mr. Keogh's non-attendance, but in one case the Grand Jury ignored the bill in consequence of the non-attendance of witnesses. With regard to the suggestion that a case was postponed in which Mr. Keogh was interested, the facts are that the case was one in which he was neither plaintiff nor defendant, but in consequence of his being the landlord of a farm to which it related the Judge at a previous Session had ordered that he should be made a party to it. The plaintiff had neglected to do so, and in consequence the case was adjourned. No blame attaches to Mr. Keogh as regards it. Mr. Keogh's salary as Sessional Solicitor is £175 per annum, and he has no allowance for expenses. He is a solicitor in extensive general practice, and it is no part of the duty of the Government to inquire as to his private business, or the staff he employs to carry it on. The present complaint against him resolves itself into this, that he should have gone to Trim on the evening before the Sessions, and the Attorney General does not think that this calls for his removal from office.

NAVY—THE CHANNEL SQUADRON.

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that, during the present stay of the Channel Fleet in Bantry Bay, no leave has been given to the men; and, if so, what was the cause of the leave being refused?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: In consequence of reported cases of scarlatina in the neighbourhood of Castletown Bere, the Vice Admiral commanding the Channel Squadron was informed that it would be desirable to restrict the leave of the ships' companies at that place. The cases are now said to be very few, and it will probably soon be possible to give the usual privilege of leave without incurring risk.

POOR LAW (SCOTLAND)—INSPECTORS OF POOR.

MR. M'LAGAN asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is competent for an Inspector of Poor in Scotland to hold a licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I cannot say that it is in law incompetent for an Inspector of Poor to hold a licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors; but it is plainly in the highest degree inexpedient that he should do so. Although the Board of Supervision cannot dismiss an Inspector on the ground of his holding a licence, they discourage the practice as far as they have power to do so. The cases in which licences are held by Inspectors are very few—I believe only four in Scotland—in two cases by innkeepers and in two cases by licensed grocers.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR PERCY, A RESIDENT MAGISTRATE.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Irish Executive would reconsider the case of Major Percy, late Resident Magistrate in Ireland, who was retired in July 1882, and who is advised that he is entitled to a larger pension under the 7th section of the 22nd Victoria, c. 26, than that awarded to him by the Treasury, as it seems that under the Act quoted above two-thirds of salary can be granted as a retiring allowance on abolition of office?

MR. TREVELYAN: This appears to be a Question rather for the Treasury, who award pensions, than for the Irish Government. I doubt, however, if there would be any use in approaching their Lordships on the subject. Major Percy received the pension he was entitled to under the Act of Parliament and the Treasury Rules made thereunder. Having served 18 years, he was allowed in the computation of his pension 10 additional years for professional qualification and seven for abolition of office—making 35 years in all.

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—CONTRACTS.

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If his attention has been called to statements that large contracts for ironwork for Indian Railways have been entered

into by the India Office with Foreign firms; and, whether he can inform the House as to the amount of these contracts, the reasons why they have been entered into, and the proportion they bear to contracts for Railway ironwork placed in this Country with home manufacturers?

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If, with reference to the statement that no work except two contracts for axle-boxes, value about £5,600, had been given to Foreign makers, he had been made aware that in 1883 there had been at least one contract for 249,000 wrought-steel transverse sleepers, value about £70,000; if he is aware that last May another contract was given for 100,000 more of these steel sleepers, value about £22,000; whether, in estimating comparative costs of Home and Foreign manufacture, allowance is made for difference in quality, extra cost of inspectors and engineers visiting works, &c.; and, if, on the completion of either of these contracts, he will lay upon the Table a Paper showing the accurate cost as compared with what it would have been if the lowest offer of a British manufacturer had been accepted?

MR. J. K. CROSS: My attention has been drawn to this subject, and I am glad of an opportunity of stating the facts. Since I stated to the House that orders for axle-boxes had been placed abroad, 100,000 steel sleepers have been contracted for at £7 12s. per ton, the lowest British tender being £8 12s. 6d. This contract was made on the 26th of May last. The India Office made no foreign contract for steel sleepers in 1883, and the contract for 249,000 referred to by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) is imaginary. The only foreign purchase in that year was 37 tons of Swedish iron. I learn, however, that the Directors of the Southern Mahratta Company bought 99,600 steel sleepers from a foreign firm. The contracts for railway work entered into by the India Office since June, 1877, amount to £6,591,385, of which £53,833 has been placed with foreign firms; and in these contracts due consideration has been given to the extra cost incurred by our Inspectors in visiting foreign works. The quality of the work is equal to English work, and the specifications are the same. I shall be quite willing, on the

completion of the contract for sleepers, to lay upon the Table a Paper showing the saving to the Government of India on this contract as compared with the lowest English tender. I may say that the traditions of the India Office are strongly against placing contracts abroad; still, on some occasions, even the India Office must depart from tradition. I may also inform the House that steel sleepers are somewhat novel in England, and that several of our greatest English manufacturers have declined to make them or tender for them. At present German prices are considerably below English. As, however, these sleepers may, in the future, be very generally used by the Indian Government and by the Indian Railway Companies, I hope that our great English firms will not allow foreigners to distance them in fair and open competition.

MR. ANDERSON asked whether it was not the fact that the contract in 1883, which the hon. Gentleman said was purely imaginary, was advertised for by the India Office, and, if not given out by them, that a considerable portion of it was given out by their engineer, Mr. Rendel, on behalf of the South Mahratta Railway?

MR. J. K. CROSS said, the contract of 249,000 steel sleepers was certainly advertised for; but they were changed from steel to cast iron, and the contract was executed by an English firm.

PCOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELY DISPENSARY, CO. FERMANAGH—USE OF BUILDING FOR PARTY PURPOSES.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is with the concurrence of the Local Government Board for Ireland that the Ely Dispensary, in the town of Derrygonnilly, county Fermanagh, is used as the head-quarters of the Orange Flute Band, where its uniform and musical instruments are deposited; do the members of Derrygonnilly Orange Lodge use this Dispensary as a place of meeting; are the Orange flags stored there; and, are these flags, and party emblems, hung out from its windows on Orange anniversaries?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that the Orange Lodge have for the last 30 years used as head-quarters a room in the building occupied as a dispensary, and that this has been done by special

permission or agreement with the landlord of the premises. The dispensary part frequented by the public has never been put to any of the purposes mentioned. The Orange Lodge has not, I am informed, met there during the last two years, nor does the band practice there; but the instruments are stored in the room referred to, and flags have been hung out on the occasion of anniversaries. The matter is not one in which the Local Government Board could interfere authoritatively; but I have asked them to submit it to the Guardians at their next meeting with a view of ascertaining fully their views on the subject. The Guardians have not met since this Question was on the Paper.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If, having regard to the great importance of the Medical Act Amendment Bill, as it may affect medical education in this country, he will name an early day for proceeding with the Second Reading?

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Representation of the People Bill stood as first Order of the Day to-night to be considered as amended. If that was not concluded in the present Sitting, it would be resumed at 2 o'clock to-morrow; and, in the event of its being disposed of, the House would be asked to take the residue of the debate of the Irish Sunday Closing Bill, and the Medical Act Amendment Bill would be put as the next Order of the Day.

DR. LYONS asked whether the Prime Minister was aware that the Irish Medical Body entertained very serious objection to the Medical Act Amendment Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am in hopes that the greater part of that objection has been disposed of in a manner satisfactory to the parties concerned. [Dr. Lyons: No, no.] I am not an authority on the subject, and, unfortunately, the Vice President of the Council is not at present in the House.

EGYPT — MISSION OF ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT—THE PAPERS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Papers relative to Admiral Hewett's

mission to Abyssinia will be laid upon the Table of the House; and, whether it is a fact that, as a consequence of this mission, the Gallas, a savage tribe known to be thirsting for vengeance on the neighbouring tribes in the Soudan, are to be sent into that country ostensibly to relieve the Egyptian garrisons?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had referred to the Admiralty upon this subject, and he must ask the hon. Gentleman to be good enough to wait a little for authentic information, as the Admiralty was not yet in possession of the despatch or despatches upon which alone they could entirely rely.

THE SUEZ CANAL—THE INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING COMMITTEE.

MR. MAGNIAC asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the names of a number of gentlemen have been published as members of the International Consulting Committee of the Suez Canal, comprising those of Major General Sir Andrew Clarke, K.C.M.G. Inspector General of Fortifications and Director of Works, and Captain Chitty of the Royal Navy; whether these officers have been officially placed upon that Commission by the Government, or whether they have obtained permission to place themselves upon it; and, whether, if not acting officially, it is desirable, in the interests of the Country, that an officer occupying the distinguished and confidential position of Sir Andrew Clarke, should be so situated?

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe the case stands thus. Seven members of the Committee of the Suez Canal have been appointed. Three of these are official gentlemen, and four are gentlemen connected with the shipping interest. The four connected with the shipping interest are Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Laing, and Mr. M'Killan. The official gentlemen are the two named by my hon. Friend—namely, Sir Andrew Clarke and Captain Chitty, and a third, Sir John Coode. These have been appointed, or, at least, presented for appointment, by the Government after every pains had been taken by my right hon. Friend near me (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) to refer to what were considered the best authorities, so as to secure the very best choice of persons, those

authorities being partly official and partly non-official. Captain Chitty was appointed after consultation with the India Office, Sir John Coode after consultation with the Board of Trade, and Sir Andrew Clarke after consultation with the Colonial Office and the Representatives of the Australian Colonies. As my hon. Friend points to the case of Sir Andrew Clarke in a manner really to raise a question as to the propriety of these appointments, I ought to say that they have been very carefully considered. Sir Andrew Clarke has not only been Governor of the Straits Settlements, and a member of the Viceroy's Council in India, but he was nominated by the Admiralty in 1869 as one of the persons commissioned to report on the Suez Canal, and that Report has been before Parliament. He has since carefully studied the question of the enlargement of the Canal, and his presence on the Committee as an English member will be of special value.

MR. MAGNIAC: Have these gentlemen any commission from the Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have no power to give a commission; the appointment is by the Company.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Is this a standing Consulting Committee, or merely a Committee to advise as to the enlargement?

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe it is not a standing Consulting Committee; but it has been chosen as most likely to give the best advice concerning the enlargement or duplication of the Canal.

EGYPT—THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

MR. GLADSTONE: I rise, Sir, to present to Parliament Papers which, on the one hand, are of great importance, but which, on the other hand, are not only incomplete, but contingent for their operation entirely upon what has already happened and may yet happen. My duty is to lay them on the Table in the usual course, and I have no doubt it would be convenient that I should make a very short statement which should be explanatory and not controversial, and which, I hope, having been made, will afford an opportunity to any Gentleman in the House who may think it necessary to put any Questions which may arise upon it, or, if he think fit, to make

any observations on the subject of that statement. At the same time, I would respectfully say that, although I shall endeavour to give the best summary view that I can of the essential contents of these Papers to the House, what I have to say on the subject is of secondary importance with regard to the authentic text of the documents which are now to be laid on the Table, and which well deserve the close attention, whether in a friendly or merely critical sense, of the House. The presentation of these Papers is altogether, as you will observe, an exceptional act. As the House is very well aware, the usual and necessary practice of an Executive Government is to make known transactions of this kind with foreign countries when they are completed, and then to refer to Parliament any matter requiring the authority of Parliament, and, of course, to leave to Parliament the power and the opportunity of passing judgment on the conduct of the Executive Government. In this instance, as I have stated, this proceeding, important as it is, is only a partial proceeding; but, undoubtedly, it is most important, because it embodies the views of the Governments of two great States in regard to the manner in which the complicated questions connected with Egypt ought to be disposed of, and it touches principles far more important than any interests directly involved in the question. Therefore, I do not for a moment disguise or attenuate the importance of the Paper. But the Paper is subject to this condition—that it can take no effect except in connection with financial arrangements yet to be made; and after those financial arrangements shall have received the sanction of the Powers of Europe, or, I perhaps ought rather to say, shall have been deliberated upon and adjusted by the authority of the Powers of Europe, it will then remain for Parliament to pass its judgment upon the entire transaction. Sir, we have proceeded in this very exceptional manner, and have done what has very rarely been done—I am not sure that I can quote a single instance analogous to it—in deference at what I may call, without offence, the impatience of Parliament. I use the term impatience in no disrespectful sense; it was an impatience at which we could not wonder, and of which we could not complain. We had felt for some time that the

position could not be satisfactory in which we were compelled to meet not only inquiries, but charges and assaults, by negative replies. It has not been owing to any indecision on the part of Her Majesty's Government that we have been unable, down to the present time during this Session, which has now advanced so far, to give any further developed explanation of our policy in Egypt, but have been able to do little more than to refer to the statements—which were made in abundance at a much earlier stage of these transactions—which laid down that our policy was to withdraw from Egypt at the earliest possible moment, but to use our best endeavours, before withdrawing, to attain certain objects which we deemed to be essential for the welfare of that country. It was a state of facts, and not, as I have said, any want of decision on our part, which made it impossible on our part to add to those general explanations. There was a feeling that the time had arrived when either we ought to move forward, or that we ought to take measures in the direction of withdrawal from Egypt. Moving forward was precluded by the principle on which we had acted all along; and by moving forward I mean the adoption of intentions and measures which would contemplate either the permanent extension of our position in Egypt, or some great and strong measure in the direction of permanent retention. Move backward we could not, because if we had spoken in a definite manner, or had attempted to make a definite arrangement, with a view to our own withdrawal from Egypt, the question would necessarily have arisen in the mind of every Member of the House, and in the country generally, what was to follow our withdrawal? It would have been said—"However wise you may be, or whether you are wise or not, in seeking to put an end to your own sole action in Egypt, what security can you give us that your sole action is not to be followed by the sole action of some other Power?" We did not think that we could expect of Parliament or of the country that they would rest satisfied with the state of things which our ceasing to occupy the territory of Egypt with a military force should leave behind, a state of absolute uncertainty of what was to follow, and the possibility that sole action might be revived in an-

other form. It is for that reason, as I have shown, that it remained until a comparatively recent period impracticable for us to give any development of previous declarations in the direction in which our convictions and policy had lain; whereas, of course, it was impossible for us to give any such development in a direction opposed to those convictions and to that policy. Sir, under those circumstances, a great change has been brought about, and we have been relieved from what we felt to be a great difficulty by the arrival of the moment when it became necessary and possible to deal with the subject of Egyptian finance. I need not say that in a country like Egypt it is not so easy nor so rapid a process to attain a clear and adequate knowledge of its financial position in a given time as is the case in a country like this, or like France, or any other country with a highly organized system of finance and account. And, moreover, the special and main causes which have brought about a crisis in Egyptian finance, are causes of which we have only at a comparatively recent time come to anything like the possession of full knowledge. The main causes, as the House is aware, are the claims for the payment of indemnities in connection with the incendiaryism in Alexandria, and the development of large deficiencies—to some considerable extent unknown until quite recently—brought on Egypt by its attempt to hold and govern the Soudan. However, the time has arrived when—and, as the House is aware, several weeks have now elapsed since—Her Majesty's Government found it to be their duty to invite the Powers of Europe to meet for Conference on the subject of Egyptian finance. The interval since that they have employed in making a thorough investigation of the case, and in preparing the plans which it will be their duty to place before the Conference. But in sending out these invitations to the Powers of Europe we received from the neighbouring and friendly Government of France expressions of a desire that previous to their entering the Conference—although it was not made an absolute condition in terms—there should be preliminary explanations between the two countries with respect to our general position in Egypt. It is probable that our resort to the Powers of Europe for a settlement

of Egyptian finance must, in any case, have brought up the subject of our own position generally in that country. But if that position were to be brought up by one Power in particular, undoubtedly France was the Power most entitled in every sense to take the lead and to act, if I may so say, on the part of the rest. In giving that as an opinion I do not intend to enter into any argument; but I may, perhaps, say as much as this—that no person can form an adequate or a safe opinion with respect to the relations between France and Egypt who commences his study of the subject with the troubles that began to arise in the latter country two or three years ago. You must go back to the time about the beginning of the century, to the time of the Great Napoleon. You must go back to the time especially, and most of all, perhaps, of the year 1840, and to the efforts and sacrifices which were made by France at that time on account of Egypt; and you must also take into view the history of the formation of the Suez Canal, in order to understand, not what you are to allow to France in Egypt, but in order to understand the view which France may naturally and may fairly be entitled to take, and be led to take, of her own position in reference to that country. Well, Sir, this being so, the French Government invited from us explanations which we were not less ready and less desirous to render than she was to ask. We hailed the application which we received from the Government of France. That application has removed out of our way the barriers which formerly stood between us, and has enabled us to frame, and is now placing us in a condition to lay before the House, that of which you have the first and very important instalment to-day—that is, a plan of policy for Egypt—I am speaking of Egypt Proper and not of the Soudan—which I hope as to the Egyptian Question and our position in Egypt may, in some tolerable sense, be called a complete plan—a plan which is complete considered as a matter of action, and which will have this additional advantage, that it will not depend upon the mere judgment of the Executive Government, but absolutely must have, if it is to go forward, the distinct ratification and assent of Parliament. The French Government, as you will find in these Papers, made it their object, in the first

instance, to remove, or to extinguish, two prejudices, as I think they are called, two erroneous suppositions, which lay in the way of a thorough conformity of opinion and views between the two countries with regard to Egypt. One of these suppositions related to the *Condominium* or the Dual Control. It had been understood that after that Dual Control ceased to be *de facto* the French Government was inclined to contend that it still existed *de jure*. That matter, important as it was, never, I think, became the subject of detailed correspondence between the two countries, and it is not at all necessary to examine now—and I am not sure that if we did attempt to examine we should have the power to bring our examination to a sure conclusion—how far that was or was not the case. At any rate, the impression prevailed in this country that France had made a claim for the revival of the Dual Control. That was one of the difficulties that obstructed us. The indication of France, which encouraged us to open our views, as the French Government opened its own views, included the unqualified assurance of the entire and final abandonment of the Dual Control. As far as that point is concerned I do not think the most jealous eye will find in these Papers anything to which objection can be taken. The other prejudicial opinion which the French Government sought to dispel was that which related to the possible occupation of Egypt by French troops in the event of our retiring from that country, and upon this point, which is, perhaps, of even greater importance in the view of Parliament and of the nation, the assurances of the French Government are not less unequivocal. In fact, the phrase used by M. Waddington, in addressing Lord Granville, is “that France is ready to come under the most formal engagement upon that subject.” Therefore, Sir, we were, by this voluntary tender on the part of the French Government, entirely set at liberty to determine our own plan of action, because I need not say that the assurances of the French Government, that in the event of our leaving Egypt she will not enter that country except by our consent, we considered as putting it in our power absolutely to extinguish and bring to an end all idea of the solitary action of any particular Power

in Egypt. Well, Sir, that being so, to the French Government, on our part, we offered that we should be able to bring within the scope of a definite term and without any reserve, except those which prudence required, the now indefinite matter of the prolongation of our stay in Egypt, and what we offered was, that until that definite term arrived, we should, of course, retain the sole discretion to remain, or, if we think fit, to come away. [*A laugh.*] I am not so alive as the hon. Member to the comic side of the question, and I hope he will restrain himself, as the matter is one of extreme gravity, and because my desire is to convey clear impressions to the House. What we have offered is that we should retain sole discretion in our power until a certain term arrives—that is to say, that we shall be under no engagement to anybody to remain in Egypt should it be the desire of the Government and of the Parliament of this country to quit Egypt, that that term should be the 1st of January, 1888, and that, at that time, we should come under this engagement and no other—that we should agree not to remain in military occupation of Egypt beyond that term in case the Powers of Europe should declare that the state of the country was then such as to allow of our departure without peril to its peace and order. Well, Sir, these are the considerations which are expressed in the word “*synallagmatique*,” as used by M. Waddington. These are the different considerations which may be said to have been exchanged between the two Governments, the offer of France and the offer of the Government of this country being such as I have described.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the right hon. Gentleman read the words again?

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman will understand that in general I am using my own words; but here I quote. So far, I think, I am correct in saying this—that the condition which would make it obligatory on us to withdraw will be the declaration of the Powers that the state of Egypt will allow of our departure “without risk to peace and order in the country.” But, Sir, although what I have thus far stated disposes of a very important part of the question, clearly it does not dispose of the whole. There remains the

question as to what modifications require to be introduced into these international arrangements to which Egypt is subjected; and I will describe as clearly as I can that which relates to the machinery now established of the Commission for the management of the Egyptian Debt that is generally called by the name of the Caisse. As I have stated, the *Condominium* which involved a general control over Egyptian finance is at an end. It is agreed between the two Powers that there shall, hereafter, be no general control over Egyptian finance, and the Budgets of Egypt will hereafter not be framed by the Commissioners of the Caisse. We have sought, and I believe France has sought not less than ourselves, in these arrangements to give every fair and reasonable scope that can safely be given for the development of that degree of independence which Egypt, notwithstanding her peculiar circumstances, may fairly claim, and which, as we hope, may prove to be for her future strength and happiness. But although there is to be no general control over Egyptian finance, and although the Budgets will not be framed by the Commissioners of the Caisse, yet there are to be, if this arrangement goes forward, defined and limited extensions of powers to the Caisse which we believe to be necessary alike for the welfare of Egypt, for the important financial interests of England that are now involved in the question, and likewise for the interests of the creditors of Egypt, whose fair claims we cannot put out of view. Sir, for these purposes, as I have said, the Caisse will receive a limited extension of its powers in order to prevent the recurrence of financial disasters and embarrassments so serious as those which have now arrived, and which, I need not say, unless an effectual remedy be applied to them, would not be financial only, but extremely menacing to the whole condition of the country. Those powers are described with accuracy and care in the despatches which I now lay upon the Table; and I will only say of them that they aim at two objects, and two objects alone—first of all, to make sure that the Commissioners of the Caisse shall be provided with sufficient information as to the financial proceedings of the Government of Egypt, and shall have the power of offering any useful suggestion in regard

to it; secondly, that they shall have what we hope will be an effective power of preventing excesses beyond the limits of the Budget with a reserve in cases of actual peril to peace and order, and that, of course, must be allowed to stand, as we think, upon a special footing. Beyond this I have only now further to say that the House is aware that the Commission of the Caisse is composed of four members, and that the President of that Commission is to be an Englishman. Now, Sir, even what I have now said, although it indicates generally a sketch of what will be found much more fully given in the despatches as to the future financial powers to be possessed and exercised in Egypt, yet it does not embrace the entire future condition of the country. We have endeavoured to look into the future as far as we can, and to consider how critical a point Egypt offers with respect to its political position, from geographical circumstances, from its connection with the great route of the world, from its military and political weakness, and from a combination of causes well known generally to the House. The two Governments, the ~~of~~ of England and France, desirous to avert those dangers for the future which have been found so formidable in the past, have agreed that we shall prepare and present a plan for the neutralization of Egyptian territory. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) put to me the other day a Question in regard to the neutralization of the Suez Canal. That, also, according to the views, not of this Government only, but of the two Governments, will be embraced in the proposals to be made; and in respect to the character of the neutralization of Egypt, Gentlemen will find in the Papers that reference is made to the general principles which were applied to the territory of Belgium; and for the Suez Canal reference is made to the despatch of the 3rd of January, 1883, in which the British Government declared its views upon this subject. I ought, however, to say, Sir, that this is a matter not for immediate settlement. Our opinion is that, first of all, it is obvious that there is quite enough to do in the present condition of Egypt and the Egyptian Question, and in the other matters which are to be opened; and, further, that the natural period for the

operation of the plan of the neutralization of Egypt would arrive when the term of the British military occupation of Egypt is drawing near to a close. Our engagement, therefore, is to prepare and propose this plan during the term of our military occupation, and before it expires. I will not attempt to read these despatches to the House, because, although they are only in the form of a Blue Book of a few pages, they are certainly of great importance. Almost every word requires to be carefully weighed, and I am by no means sure that the listening to a single perusal, while it would be a tedious process, would be so effectual as a perusal of them by Members, when they can turn from one point to another, and return to any matter which appears to throw light on the other parts. I have only to say further this, that, as I have already signified—and I wish that should it remain distinctly impressed on the minds of Members—this agreement, which is of the greatest importance, I think, on account of the parties who desire to make it, and on account of the principles on which it rests, is entirely contingent, in the first instance, upon what is to be done in Conference; and if, for the sake of argument, and for the sake of argument only, I suppose that the Conference arrives at no result, this agreement will entirely fall to the ground. Next, what is to be done in Conference will again be contingent on the approval of Parliament. The whole will depend upon that approval. A day is appointed for the first meeting of the Conference. It is to be Saturday next, and in order to save as much time as we can the figures of the plan which Her Majesty's Government will submit will be forwarded a few days before to the Powers severally, so that they may arrive in Conference with some degree of preparation for examining them. I need not say that that is but a short notice; but the truth is, that the framing of a plan of this kind, with all the assistance we could obtain from the great ability of Sir Evelyn Baring and the excellent indigenous assistance from Egypt, has been a work of great labour and difficulty, and it is only but recently that my right hon. Friend, to whose official labours this has made an enormous addition, has been in a position to bring it before the Cabinet in order to receive

that sanction without which it could not go on. Now Sir, the only other engagement I have to mention to the House is this. As we can lay before the House nothing that is complete until the Conference has decided, our duty will be a double one in this respect. First of all, subject to the deference which the Powers of Europe are entitled to expect at our hands, it will be our duty to put forward and expedite to the best of our ability the proceedings of the Conference and lend it every aid in our power. Secondly, to give the House a pledge that when the Conference has arrived at its decision, not a day that we can help shall be lost in submitting it to Parliament, because we feel that this, at any rate, is no question of matters where it might be thought that discussion was at this or that moment unnecessarily raised. It is a question of arrangement which involves principles of the deepest moment, in my opinion, to the welfare and honour of this country, and, of course, to the welfare of Egypt. But these principles reach further yet. We do not shrink, we shall not shrink, from discussion with regard to them. We feel that the issues which will be raised are issues of the broadest character—that it will be the positive duty of Parliament to give a distinct and definite judgment upon them. That judgment we invite—that judgment, if I may say so, we challenge; that judgment we will do everything in our power to accelerate; for we believe that if our plans are accepted they will be favourable to the peace of Europe, to International Law, and to the civilization of mankind. We are the first to say that if they do not meet the judgment of Parliament, those who have framed these plans, and those who mean to adhere to them ought not for one moment longer to continue to be the Government of this country.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I am very sensible of the difficulties which lie in the way of any discussion of the proposals which have been made by the Government at the present stage of our information. At the same time, I feel that it is necessary, in order to guard the position of Members of this House, that a few words should be said as to the view we take of what has been said. It is perfectly true, as the right hon. Gentleman observed, that the course

which he has taken in laying this statement before us is one of an unusual character; and we have, no doubt, to acknowledge the readiness and the desire of the Government to take the House into its confidence so far as it was able to do so; but, on the other hand, I must point out to the House that the fact of the Government thus calling us into council, as it were, and giving the House the opportunity of expressing its opinion on these proceedings, is to lay upon us a certain amount of responsibility if we allow the proceedings of the Government to go on without expressing an opinion of our own with regard to their nature. Sir, I may at once say that, even upon the sketch which the Prime Minister has given us, there appears to me to be very grave objections. I will not enter into discussion of the details of these proposals; but with regard to what we have been informed as to the limitation of the period of our occupation of Egypt, I am bound to say that that raises questions of a serious character deserving and requiring the judgment of the House as early as possible, even though we have not the complete plans of the Government before us. With regard to the financial proposals, we have not, of course, the means, without having the Papers in our hands, of discussing them, nor is it desirable that we should do so.

MR. GLADSTONE: The proposals are not complete, and the Papers do not refer to that.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Well, then, we are even less prepared to discuss them. But I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, when he speaks of a statement which has been prepared, and is to be forwarded to the Conference this very week, whether that statement is the same as one which was laid before the House some month or two ago, in which there was a summary of the financial position of Egypt, showing the large deficiency, and what was necessary to bring about an equilibrium?

MR. GLADSTONE: That statement, Sir, was a statement of the financial condition of Egypt. In fact, it was like the account part of a Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget, which shows the figures, and does not enter into the mode of providing an equilibrium. I am not aware that it has undergone any

variation, certainly not any material variation.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Then we are to understand that the statement to be laid before the Conference goes beyond the mere account part—[Mr. GLADSTONE assented]—and contains proposals, at all events, for the consideration of the Conference with regard to the equilibrium? That proposal is not to be placed before us. Yet we are told that, whatever may come out of that arrangement, it will be submitted to Parliament before it obtains the final approval and sanction of the country; that is true, but it is not, as I understand, intended to give any power to Parliament of expressing any opinion upon these financial proposals until they have been submitted to the Conference. If that is so, I am bound to say it would be desirable and right that the House should insist upon having some further information on proposals which may seriously affect this country. I will not, at the present time, enter into any discussion of the general questions raised. I have indicated two points which I think are of a character very grave and deserving the consideration of the House as early as possible—namely, the question of fixing the terms for closing the occupation of the country, and the question of the financial proposals. I shall take an early opportunity, as soon as we have these Papers before us, and are able to do so, of calling for an expression of the opinion of Parliament. I conclude that when the right hon. Gentleman says that the Conference is to meet on Saturday, we can hardly suppose that it will be more than a formal meeting, or that they will proceed to discuss matters of this importance while Parliament is still considering the proposals laid before it. A time will, no doubt, be allowed us as early as possible for the discussion of the questions such as will enable Parliament to express its opinion before the Conference comes to a decision.

MR. GLADSTONE: For fear of being misunderstood, I may be allowed to say, with regard to the closing sentence of the right hon. Gentleman, that what we think will be by far the best course for Parliament and for Egypt is that the proceedings of the Conference, which are connected with the most urgent state of things in Egypt at this

moment, should be pressed forward with the utmost possible expedition, and that is the course we shall take.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL : I should like, Sir, to claim the indulgence of the House while I take some part in this preliminary canter over the course before the great gallop takes place, of which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has given Notice. There are some points in the Prime Minister's statement which ought not to be left without immediate comment. The right hon. Gentleman stated in one part of his speech, in answer to a slight laugh which came from this side of the House, that he was not alive to the comic side of these proceedings. Well, Sir, perhaps if I may be permitted to find fault with so great a man as the Prime Minister, that, I should say, is his great defect. He is rarely sufficiently alive to the comic side of any question. For my own part, Sir, I must confess that while I listened to the right hon. Gentleman's statement, I did not not know whether to laugh or to cry; because anything more shamefully ludicrous, or anything more ludicrously shameful, I do not think any Prime Minister ever proposed to any House of Commons. I did not know whether to laugh at the folly of the Government, or to cry over the dishonour of my country. Well, Sir, the Prime Minister stated that it was not owing to any indecision of the Government that he had been unable to give these explanations to the House earlier. Before I came down to the House this afternoon I had the curiosity to turn to a former speech of the Prime Minister, from which I will make a small quotation, in order to dispose of the Prime Minister's defence against the charge of indecision. On the 9th of November, the Prime Minister, addressing the Lord Mayor and his guests, used these words—

“ We have reached another stage in the progress of our work in Egypt. It is the progress of our work, and that alone, that determined the continuance of our armed force in Egypt. We are about to withdraw. The order has been given to withdraw the British force, and that withdrawal will include the evacuation of Cairo. I think that the country will feel that this is a subject for congratulation; it will lighten the burden imposed upon the Egyptian people; it will offer a new testimony to the world that we have been in earnest in the declaration we have repeatedly made; and, finally, I may say that that withdrawal from a large portion of the

country of the display of British force will leave, as we trust, a free and open field and the power of a fair experiment to the Government of Egypt in the new career which we trust is opening to them.”

That was the announcement of the Prime Minister on the 9th of November; but on the 23rd of June the Prime Minister comes down to this House and expresses his readiness to occupy Egypt for three years, and to enter into pecuniary liabilities with regard to the Egyptian Debt which must inevitably prolong still further the occupation of that country. In the face of a change of policy so unusual as that, in so short a space of time, the right hon. Gentleman gravely informs the House that the Government has manifested no indecision. The Prime Minister stated that he was in this position at the present moment, that he must either move forward or move backward, and he said that he could not move forward, and that he could not move backward. Why, that is just the position the Government have been in since they fought the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. They have declined to move forward or backward for any length of time consecutively. It has been a continual see-saw of backward and forward which has brought that unfortunate country into its present condition. “ But now,” says the Prime Minister, “ fortunately for Egypt, we have arrived at the moment when it is necessary and possible to deal with the question of Egyptian finance.” They have been two years in the country—two years undisputed masters of the country—and they say—“ We have fortunately arrived at a moment when we are in a position to deal with Egyptian finance.” Why, Sir, fortunate for the country? Why, Her Majesty's Government themselves have created that moment. And what are their peculiar reasons for dealing with Egyptian finance at this time, or for bringing it before Europe? In the first place, there was the bombardment of Alexandria; and then there was the campaign in the Soudan. But the bombardment of Alexandria, and the burden it would cast upon the Egyptian finances, were in the knowledge of Her Majesty's Government at the time the battle of Tel-el-Kebir was fought. The first thing that must have been present to their mind was the burden which would be thrown on the finances of Egypt. The very same thing

must have been the case in regard to the campaign in the Soudan. That commenced the moment you occupied Cairo; and the finances of Egypt, which are to be brought before Europe in consequence of those two events, have not yet been dealt with during the two years you have been in the country, nor have any steps been taken by you with reference to dealing with her liabilities; yet the Prime Minister calls Heaven to witness that this is a fortunate moment. Then the right hon. Gentleman says that the Conference has been summoned, and that all the Powers gladly assented to attend it, including France; but he also stated—and this is a most remarkable thing—that France intimated to Her Majesty's Government that she would like to have a preliminary interchange of views, without, however, making that a condition. So that the concession made to France seems to have been one of an extremely gratuitous character. The right hon. Gentleman told us that France, of all the countries in the world, was the one most entitled to take the lead in expressing an opinion on Egyptian affairs. And why? Because of what she did in the time of the First Napoleon. The right hon. Gentleman went back for a reason to that piratical enterprize—an enterprize, too, that was baffled by this country—and he asserted that that was the great and peculiar reason which gives France an absolute title to dictate the conditions for the Conference. [Mr. GLADSTONE signified dissent.] Sir, the right hon. Gentleman denies it; but, undoubtedly, one of the reasons why the right hon. Gentleman said France was entitled to take the lead was on account of the piratical enterprize of Napoleon I. ["No!"] He certainly said that we must go back, if we wished to understand the question, to the time of the Great Napoleon, and he also stated that we must recollect the efforts which France made in the year 1840. I always thought that the check Mehemet Ali received, and the arrangement of affairs at that time, were as much the work of Lord Palmerston as of France.

MR. GLADSTONE: The French were on the other side.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I am not inclined to admit, nor do I think any reader of history will admit for a moment, that what took place in

1840 gives France the smallest title to interfere, beyond any other Power, in the affairs of Egypt. But what is our position in that country? We have a title because the Prime Minister and his Colleagues have interfered in Egypt; they have been interfering there for two years, and their action has been the source of immense anxiety to Parliament and the country. They have made great military efforts to maintain their position there. Many English lives have been sacrificed, and £5,000,000 of English money spent in a great military expedition. Then they remained in Egypt during the time of the cholera, and more lives were sacrificed. They sent a great military expedition to Suakin, sacrificed more lives, and spent £250,000 more money. Surely all that made England the Power most entitled to take the lead in settling the future of Egypt; and are we who have made these efforts—which, no doubt, the follies of Her Majesty's Government made necessary—to assent to the Prime Minister's assertion that France is entitled to take the lead in settling the future of that country? [Mr. GLADSTONE again intimated dissent.] I maintain that that was the gist of the right hon. Gentleman's statement. ["No."] And if France is not entitled to the position which the Prime Minister, for the purpose of argument, assigned to her, why were all these concessions made to her? France was ready, the Government say, to come to the Conference without these concessions; but they went out of their way to make these concessions to her. "France desired a preliminary explanation," the Prime Minister said; but that was not an absolute condition. [*Ministerial cries of "No!"*] Well, I can only put a plain English meaning upon the words. The Prime Minister has engaged to clear out of Egypt in three years' time; and, again, he has placed by far the more important part of its finances—namely, the revenues derived from the railways, from the Port of Alexandria, from the Customs, the Post Office, and the Telegraphs—in the hands of this new Board of Audit. These are the concessions made to France; and what has the Prime Minister got in return? He tells us that France has at last agreed to recognize the disappearance, the death, or the defunct character of the Dual Control. Curiously enough,

Lord Randolph Churchill

to show the House the value of that splendid concession, I have, by the favour of a friend, received during the last few minutes a telegram from Paris of what the French Prime Minister said in the French Chamber on this very subject of the Dual Control. M. Ferry said it was absolutely impossible to resuscitate the *condominium*. Yet this beautiful arrangement, which M. Ferry declares with great candour cannot be restored, the right hon. Gentleman holds up before us as a most important concession. I laughed when I heard the right hon. Gentleman's statement, and certainly it was enough to make anyone laugh. France, said the Prime Minister, considered that the Dual Control was in existence *de jure*; but that statement is directly traversed by the statement of M. Ferry, that it is impossible to resuscitate the Control. But I want to know, if that is such a great concession, who killed the Dual Control? France herself, and no other Power—France herself, who led you on in your Egyptian expedition; and the moment it became a question of employing ships and firing guns, scuttled away and left you in the lurch. It was France. No wonder M. Ferry had not got what I may call the brazenness to look upon the Dual Control as other than defunct. Then the Prime Minister says France has now made a promise of enormous value, and he told us that to get that promise was one of the difficulties that obstructed our progress. It was a promise, with the greatest amiability, not to send French troops to Egypt. How long the promise is to last the right hon. Gentleman did not say; but I suppose it is to last as long as the British occupation. Or is it to last after the British occupation has ceased? The right hon. Gentleman says—"I rely for the value of this pledge on a phrase of M. Waddington's." How many different Governments have held Office in France in a short space of time, and how many of them have considered themselves bound by the phrases of their Predecessors? Yet the Prime Minister thinks it enough to assure the House of Commons that he has a declaration not to send French troops to Egypt contained in a phrase of M. Waddington, a man who is here to-day, and who may be gone to-morrow. That, the right hon. Gentleman seems to think, is

enough to hold up to this House as a sufficient counterpoise for the concessions which Her Majesty's Government have made to France. I do not value that assurance of the French Government one pin. I recollect how the Kroumirs were invented, and I know what the assurances of the French Government were about Tunis and about Madagascar and Tonquin. The assurance of the French Government not to send troops to Egypt is, to my mind, absolutely valueless—not worth a penny. This occupation by Great Britain is to last three years; therefore, we may take three years into our purview. Will any hon. Gentleman or right hon. Gentleman opposite state to the House that it is a certainty, or even a probability, that the Republic will be in existence in three years? The Prime Minister says that he has engaged with France that our occupation shall terminate on the 1st of January, 1888. ["No!"] Yes; unless by the unanimous wish of Europe—[*Cries of "Order!"*]—and their opinion that the departure of British troops would endanger peace and order in that country. But, Sir, it appears to me that if you were to consult the Powers now, it is perfectly certain that it would be the wish of the Powers—and, more than that, the unanimous wish of Europe—that you should depart; and, more than that, it would be the unanimous feeling of Europe that your departure would not endanger the cause of peace and order, because during the three years for which Egypt has been in our possession there has been neither peace nor order. The Prime Minister did not give us any idea of how he was going to occupy those three years in Egypt. It is quite true that he has told us that the neutralization of Egypt is proposed; but on that point he did not give us sufficient information. He might as well have told us whether the neutralization of Egypt was a step which would be acceded to by the Government of Turkey.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think I said we had undertaken to propose it to the Powers and the Porte. ["No!"] Then it was my omission.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: A very nice work to undertake in three years—to propose to the Porte the neutralization of Egypt! But I doubt very much whether Russia or Austria are at all sensible of the benefit that would

accrue to them from the neutralization of Egypt; and I imagine that during the three years during which the attention of the Prime Minister will be given to the carrying out of this extraordinary project the condition of Egypt will be allowed to remain very much as it is now. Then what guarantee have we, if the House agrees to the limit of occupation by British troops, that at the end of the time a strong and stable Government will be established in Egypt, and when are they going to begin that work? I observe from the report of M. Ferry's speech in the French Chamber, that the Prime Minister was the first to speak of the neutralization of Egypt; therefore, this brilliant idea to be accomplished in three years emanated from the right hon. Gentleman. But, Sir, is a work which may occupy a lifetime to be undertaken by a Government which will, probably, only have a short period of time to live? Then M. Ferry also went on to say that, with respect to the Egyptian Question, it was with this Government that France had the best chance of settling the question. I quite agree with M. Ferry; I think he appears to be a man of remarkable intelligence. We have seen statements in the French Press that it is of the highest importance that France should conceal as much as possible of the terms she asked. Now, I consider that the Prime Minister occupies the same position to the French Government as Charles II. occupied to Louis XIV. He is the political pensioner of France, and he is kept in Office by the French Government. ["Oh!"] I am only stating what M. Ferry says. He says that it is with the Prime Minister that France has the best chance of settling this question. How? In accordance with French interests. And now the Prime Minister states that this is a matter which deeply affects the welfare and honour of this country. Everyone will agree with me that if this arrangement or convention which the Prime Minister has sketched to the House to-night is accepted by the House, the welfare, the interests, and the honour of this country need very little longer occupy our attention. The Prime Minister states that it was the positive duty of Parliament to give a distinct decision and judgment upon this communication; but I would invite Parliament, before it gives a distinct judgment, to ask for a little more informa-

tion. If the Prime Minister, with the limited information he has given us, asks to be allowed to meet the Powers of Europe in Conference without having given us any further information as to the nature of their financial proposals, then I am certain that if the House of Commons is not absolutely lost to every spark of independence, that is a position which the Prime Minister cannot be allowed to occupy. I shall be curious to see what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), who has a fear of these things, has to say on this subject, for we cannot, to use an expression now well known, give a blank cheque to the Government. We know a little bit too much of Her Majesty's Government. We know what they have done as to the Soudan and as to Gordon, and we now know what enormous concessions they have made to get France to come to the Conference; and I wish to know what concessions they are going to make in conference to France to get her to agree to their proposals? We have heard rumours of a loan of £8,000,000, and I imagine that the Prime Minister will be obliged to give a little more detailed information to the House on this point. The Prime Minister now refuses to communicate anything. Is it fair to make a partial confidence? Is it fair to place the House in such a position, and at the same time to keep back an essential part of the information that is required? How do we know what the Prime Minister is going to propose, or what sum it is he proposes should be advanced—whether £8,000,000, or £20,000,000, or £30,000,000? On that point we have no information. What will be our position if the Prime Minister is allowed to remain in the position he occupies now—having made incomplete and partial confidence to the House, and having obtained the practical concurrence of the House? What will be our position when he comes down and brandishes an Agreement in the face of the House of Commons? I do not suppose for a moment that the Prime Minister will be allowed to remain in that position. The most foolish, and credulous, and silly person can hardly be taken in by such transparent tactics. He says—"We now challenge the decision of the House." I suppose some arrangement will be made by which—to use a classic

phrase which, after its use by the Leader of the Opposition in this House, has become Parliamentary—some “bonnet” of the Government will get up and propose a Vote of Confidence in them. The Prime Minister appeals to his followers, and says that Government have no right to retain Office without this being distinctly expressed. I appeal to some one of those who cheer so loudly to give Notice of a Vote of Confidence. The Prime Minister has appealed to those 300 or more who sit behind him, and says that, without their confidence, he cannot retain Office. I shall be anxious to see, after the events of this afternoon, the result of this appeal.

MR. GLADSTONE: I desire to make a personal explanation. The noble Lord has stated that I said that France was entitled to take the lead in negotiations as to the affairs of Egypt. I never said so: What I said was that France was entitled to take the lead among the other Powers. The noble Lord has stated that I have asked for a Vote of Confidence without giving the smallest idea what the Government are going to do. I have done nothing of the kind; but I distinctly said that at the proper time the whole of our proceedings will come under the judgment of Parliament. It would be quite vain to go through all the other representations of the noble Lord.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: This is not a personal explanation. The right hon. Gentleman is making another speech.

MR. GLADSTONE: I will endeavour to shorten my explanation by saying that I disclaim every word of them. I did not say any one of the things which the noble Lord attributes to me.

MR. GOSCHEN: The expression which has just fallen from my right hon. Friend, with regard to the Vote of Confidence, relieves me from the question I was going to put to him, because I did not understand the Prime Minister to say that he intended to challenge a Vote of Confidence before the Conference, and for this reason—we have not got the materials before us now to be able to come to a conclusion; we have not yet seen the Papers and the declaration made in the French Chambers; and, therefore, discussion at the present moment would be entirely premature. I rise mainly in consequence of an ob-

servation which, I understood, fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, which seemed to me to contemplate action on the part of the House before the Conference meets. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to suggest that probably it will be his duty to give Notice of some such Motion on an early day, and to express a hope that the meeting of the Conference might only be of a formal character, so that Parliament might take some action before that date. Well, in that case I should like to know what would be the position of Parliament? We understand—the Prime Minister has assured us—that we are to retain the fullest possible liberty of action when the Conference has met; that no argument to the contrary will be used; but that the House of Commons will retain its entire freedom of action. That being so, I put it to the House whether it would not be placing itself in the most disadvantageous position by debating these questions before the Conference meets, and by binding itself without knowing what action is to be taken by the other Powers. I will put a case. Supposing the Leader of the Opposition were to introduce a Motion censuring that part of the Agreement which relates to the evacuation of Egypt by the troops of this country, and supposing he was beaten on that, what would be the position of this country? We should have committed ourselves by a majority to that principle without knowing whether the Conference would be satisfied with the arrangement. All the other Powers of Europe might remain unpledged through their Representatives, while this House would have committed itself to a principle. I feel the same with regard to the Multiple Control. Here, too, we can retain our liberty; and since the Government do not ask for a Vote of Confidence, why should we deliberately attempt to fetter our own liberty by coming to any premature conclusion on the subject? It is not for me to suggest any consideration to hon. Members opposite; but, from their own point of view, they may have an infinitely stronger case after the Conference has met than they can have now, when they must be acting in ignorance of the views of the Powers of Europe with reference to these matters. As we can have the Conference, and, nevertheless, maintain our freedom of

action, it appears to me that it is not while the Representatives of foreign countries are meeting in Conference that it would be desirable to have heated speeches in this House in regard to the action of Her Majesty's Government, which may be perfectly in place in the debate which is really to decide the question after the Conference has taken place, but which surely would be deplorable before we go into Conference. I venture, with all submission, to make these observations, feeling that my suggestion does not in any way lessen any fair opportunity hon. Members opposite may have of censuring Her Majesty's Government, or prevent any action they may wish the House to take.

MR. BOURKE: I quite concur in the remark of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that the House is not in a position at present to discuss the question brought before House by the Prime Minister. I shall, therefore, abstain from criticizing the speech of the right hon. Gentleman with respect to the alterations he is about to propose in the Caisse, and I will refrain from inquiring whether they will not be the best means of keeping open in Egypt those jealousies and rivalries which the various Powers find it to their interest to keep open. I cannot agree as to the value of the concessions made by France. The concession with respect to the Dual Control amounts to nothing, because all Europe knows that the Dual Control has been dead for many years; and it was killed not only by the French Government, but by Her Majesty's Government, and we all know that the despatches written on the subject in name of the Khedive were, in fact, prompted by Her Majesty's Government. With respect to the financial arrangements we are to submit to the Conference, we are entirely in the dark; the proposals will be submitted, and we shall have no means of criticizing them. I will not inquire whether this is not a breach of the agreement entered into with Parliament, that the question for discussion at the Conference should be limited to finance. Nothing could be more distinct than the declaration to Parliament with respect to that, though now we find the whole of that plain engagement thrown to the winds, for the Conference is to have a far wider scope than that of financial considerations, and

the whole question of Egyptian affairs is to be decided. But the fact of the matter is, I wish to record my protest against the course the Government have taken in invoking this Conference at all. After their miserable failure with respect to the Conference on the affairs of Egypt which took place in Constantinople a year and a half ago, I should have thought they would have allowed a long time to elapse before calling a second. In order that England should be at all powerful with respect to Egypt it is absolutely necessary that she should restore order in Egypt, and it is absurd to suppose that any alteration in the Law of Liquidation will put you out of your difficulties in that country. The Law of Liquidation, after all, must be said to be one of the only prosperous institutions in Egypt, and now Her Majesty's Government intend to tamper with that. The weakness of our position arises from the fact that we went to Egypt in defiance of the public law of Europe; we have shown the impossibility of our governing the country; and, therefore, it is not to be supposed that the Powers of Europe will give us their confidence. Under these circumstances, I protest in the strongest way against going into this Conference at all, and I believe we shall come out of it with less power than we take in.

MR. GLADSTONE: I wish to correct one of the statements made by the right hon. Member. He alluded to what I had described as the concessions made by France. I never spoke of concessions made by France.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Before this question closes there is one point which it would be well to clear up. We were all told some time ago, when these negotiations were going on, that Parliament would have ample opportunities of pronouncing its judgment upon them before the Conference. [MR. GLADSTONE dissented.] It is no use for the Prime Minister to shake his head; there is not a shadow of a doubt about it; the Prime Minister stated that over and over again. The Prime Minister, in fact, if we are to believe that the Conference meets on Saturday, has been making a fool of the House of Commons. He made this statement with the greatest gravity—"Say what you think of it; on Saturday we are going into the Conference before you can fairly and fully discuss the subject."

But there is another question on which we are entitled to have some information from the Government, even before this preliminary Conference; and that is, if we are to be told anything, we must be told something about the whole plan. We are told that certain statements in the public Press have no foundation in fact. There is one matter which is stirring the minds of the people all over the country very materially; and that is, whether we are to be called upon for a loan, or gift, or guarantee for £6,000,000, £8,000,000, or £10,000,000 in order to carry out this arrangement? Now, the Prime Minister has said not one word on that matter; but he may depend upon this—that if it turns out, in the long run, that this £6,000,000 or £8,000,000 has been under the consideration of the Government, and had their consent, that they knew all about it when this statement of to-day was made, then all I can say is, it will be so much the worse for the Government. They may depend upon it the country will not submit to that treatment. I do not want to enter into the details of this question; but I think the country will, at all events, come to the conclusion that there have been negotiations with France, and that France has had the best of it. ["Hear, hear!" and "No!"] I think that is the feeling of the country. I do not desire to debate the point. We will see who is right, and who is wrong. All we know now is that France has been induced to come to the Conference, about which, at the present moment, we know nothing. France has made what I may call sham concessions, though that is hardly the word; at all events, concessions was the word used by the Prime Minister. ["No!"] Perhaps it fell from him inadvertently; but I took it down at the time myself. However, I will not quarrel about the particular expression used. As for England, we have given away a vast deal of that position which we obtained for ourselves and for the benefit of Egypt. The question I wish to ask the Premier is, whether any arrangement has been proposed, or is about to be proposed, which would involve this country in the payment of a loan of money, or in giving security for the payment of money, in any form or shape?

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, he did not wish to continue the discussion. They

had not sufficient material before them to justify such a course. But, in compliance with the Prime Minister's intimation that he would be willing to answer any questions addressed to him, he would like to have an understanding on two points. First, would he explain the position of the new Caisse? At present, he believed that body consisted of four members—an Austrian, an Italian, a Frenchman, and an Englishman. It was to consist in future of the same number; but an Englishman was to be President. What he wanted to know was, whether the President would have a casting vote? [MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.] The other question was this. The Prime Minister had said that the English troops were to leave Egypt at the beginning of 1888, provided Europe was unanimous in desiring that that should be done. ["No, no!"] Well, that was what he understood the Prime Minister to say, and it was better to have the point cleared up. He thought the statement was to this effect—that if, at the end of 1887, order had been established, a stable Government had been formed, and the country was in a condition to permit of the English troops being removed, then they had to be removed if Europe unanimously desired that they should be. Now, what he wished to know was—If one Power or two Powers objected to their being removed, would that be a justification for their remaining?

MR. RAIKES said, that nothing had been said with reference to the interests of Egypt; and he should like to know whether the proposals that had been made between England and France were to be submitted in any shape or form to any of those representative or Constitutional Assemblies which had been devised by Lord Dufferin for the government of Egypt?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Prime Minister has urged the extreme inconvenience of the House discussing the proposals until they have received the sanction of the Conference; but I do not think the right hon. Gentleman appreciates the difficulty which will arise from that course. The Government have laid on the Table the concessions made to France; but we have no power to discuss them now if we wished to do so and give our verdict. If we allow them to lie on the Table until after the Conference has considered them,

and come to a conclusion, of course the Powers of Europe will assume that we assented to the proposition. That is the only possible conclusion they can draw—that we had these proposals before us for weeks, and had not criticized them or voted upon them. I think it will, therefore, be seen that if our observations are to be of any value they ought to be made as soon as possible. I do not mean that we ought to discuss them to-night. Anyone who has listened to the Prime Minister's statements must have been struck by two omissions. We have heard a great deal about what the right hon. Gentleman describes as the just susceptibilities of France, and also about international law, international justice, and the rights of Europe; but I heard nothing of the rights of the people of this country who have made all the sacrifices of blood and treasure. Nor have we heard anything of the rights of the Egyptian people who are going to be sacrificed in the name of international law and justice. The truth seems to be that the Government have put it in the power of Europe to turn us out of Egypt in three years. But does anyone suppose that in three years the task of the Government will be more than begun? It is our duty not to hand over our liberty of action, either to France or to international control, before we have accomplished the task which we have taken upon ourselves. The Government have from the first moment absolutely ignored the difficulties of the question they had undertaken to solve. In three years you can make no material progress in establishing a suitable and a permanent Government in Egypt; and I say we should be deliberately ignoring duties we have undertaken if we left it in the power of France or of Europe to say—"It is now time for you to leave the country."

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I am surprised at the admonition the Prime Minister gave hon. Members that it would not be wise to discuss the question now. If that is so, why was any statement made by the Prime Minister at all? I remember just before the House rose for the Whitsuntide Recess I excited the ire of the right hon. Gentleman by asking for some assurance that the Government would not commit the country to any particular line of policy without the House being duly in-

formed of it. My impression was that he did give that pledge; but how has that pledge been carried out? The Prime Minister now comes down with only half a statement—a statement with the important question of finance left out altogether—and we are told we are not to discuss it, because by so doing we should prejudice the Conference. That is precisely what we want to do—to prejudice the Conference—[*Radical cheers.*]—hon. Members should wait for the conclusion of the sentence—if the course to be pursued is one which is to be dictated to us by France. It is now evident that the country has to submit to the will of France. That is the fact, however it may be attempted to disguise it. We are now asked to submit to the demands of France, and then we may discuss the scheme. The right hon. Gentleman took an objection to the statement of the noble Lord that France was to have the lead over the other Powers in reference to this matter.

MR. GLADSTONE: In speaking on that question I said nothing about the Conference. I referred simply to the preliminary demands for explanations.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: The statement of the right hon. Gentleman strengthens my case, because it shows that the statement had really nothing to do with the Conference, and the whole statement of to-day shows how completely France has taken the lead. I have heard many surprising statements made from the Ministerial Bench; but I have never heard any statement which has more surprised the House and will more surprise the country than that of the Prime Minister to-day, the effect of that statement being that in three years England is to leave Egypt unless the Powers should think fit to let her remain, having expended an enormous amount of blood and treasure in that country for reasons best known to the Government. I want to know on what grounds the Prime Minister is prepared to give up the advantages we have gained, and to abandon the road to India which we have by means of the Suez Canal, which forms part of our occupation of Egypt, and to allow that road to India to be occupied by any other of the European Powers. The neutralization of the Suez Canal would be fraught with immense danger, for it would mean that, instead of this

country having command of Egypt as a means of getting to India, we should, whenever it became necessary for us to use the Canal, be at the beck and call of the Great Powers. I, for one, strongly object to this plan. I am anxious to maintain good relations with France; but I desire England to preserve a dignified and proper attitude, and I have no wish to see France playing Sir Lucius O'Trigger to the Bob Acres of the Prime Minister. The country is placing itself in a position of humiliation. [*Radical cries of "No!"*] Hon. Members say "No!" because it suits them to make patriotic considerations subservient to Party ones. That has been shown by recent Divisions. But there is, after all, a stronger tribunal than this House. We are certainly nominally the Representatives of the people; but the honour of this country is dearer to the people themselves than it seems to be to many of those who are returned to represent them.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought it was exceedingly unlikely, after what had fallen from the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), that they should hear of any Vote of Censure. He was surprised at the somewhat scanty statement of the Prime Minister. He did not understand from it what the Conference was going to do in matters of finance. They had heard nothing about that £8,000,000 which he had always understood to form part of the scheme. They must, however, accept things as they were. They had had an ample statement of the political intentions of the Prime Minister, and he was not surprised that those intentions had been received with dissatisfaction by hon. Gentlemen opposite; for the Government had always said that they did not intend to remain in Egypt, and they were now doing their best to give effect to their intentions. The House had practically to choose between the Government and Gentlemen opposite; and they might judge what the policy of Gentlemen opposite would be by the remarks of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). He presumed the noble Lord spoke with authority, for he was rapturously cheered by the Opposition. That policy would practically be a war with France. The noble Lord said he would decline absolutely to believe any statement made by

the French Ambassador or by the French Government.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I said that particular statement.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Of course, if any other statement were put forward it would be "that particular statement;" if they said to a man—"I decline to believe you"—

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I said—"I set no value on their promises."

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, when a man declined to set any value on a statement, he did not believe it. Then the noble Lord went on to say that the French Government could not bind the people of France to anything for more than three years, than which nothing more insulting could be said by a prominent Member of that House. There was nothing more stable in a Monarchy than in a Republic; and therefore it would be equally insulting for anyone in France to apply a similar observation to the Government of this country. The House had distinctly to decide between the policy which had been stated by the Government and the policy enunciated by the noble Lord, which would place this country in antagonism with France, if it did not lead to war. His (Mr. Labouchere's) own view was that totally irrespective of Party they ought to stand by the Government in the present state of circumstances.

MR. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT: I should like to ask the Government whether we are to understand that the consent of England alone is necessary for the evacuation of Egypt in 1888, or whether the consent of the other five Powers will be necessary; and I would also like to know whether the Sultan of Turkey or the Porte have been consulted in regard to this remarkable proposal? Furthermore, I should like to know whether there is any arrangement, formal or informal, by which Her Majesty's Government have engaged to lend a sum of money necessary to meet the financial difficulties which have arisen? I wish also to put on record my protest against the statement of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that the policy of the Conservative Party would tend to a war with France. I would remind him that the late Government, while maintaining the influence and honour of the country, was on

far better terms with France throughout its tenure of power than the present Government has been.

MR. LAING asked if it would not be possible to put Parliament in a better position for dealing with this question by giving earlier information as to the financial part of it. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that they could not form a judgment on the case while half of it, and perhaps the most important half, was kept from their knowledge. He thought the matter would present itself to the country, not as a Party question, but as making the best of a bad job. While he felt as strongly as ever against the policy which had led them into this predicament, he also felt that they might have no alternative. They were in the position of a garrison whose commander had allowed the enemy to occupy a height overlooking them, and who then had to call the garrison together to consider terms of capitulation. If he could gauge the opinion of the country, he should say that what it would most strongly object to would be that England should be for three years or longer in the position of a bailiff to collect taxes for the bondholders. That, no doubt, would be the tendency of the Ministerial control, disguise it as they liked, to make this instrument the instrument of squeezing taxes out of the unfortunate Egyptian tenantry. If this country was to advance £8,000,000, and incur the burden of maintaining tranquillity in Egypt for three years to come, the House ought to know the financial conditions under which we assumed this responsibility. Were they such as to hold out a hope for the regeneration of Egypt, or were they such as to make us a mere catspaw to draw the chestnuts out of the fire in the interests of the bondholders? He did not see why the financial proposals that had been matured in the minds of the Government, and which were to be submitted to the Conference, should not be communicated to the House at once. Otherwise the House was placed in a most unfair position. Either they should be obliged to discuss any Vote of Censure that might be brought forward, not knowing whether, if they knew the whole case, they might not be disposed to accept it as the best of a bad job; or, on the other hand, if they did not pass any Vote of Censure,

they should be assumed to have accepted the responsibility, and would be precluded from passing a decision upon the proposals of the Government until they had become a *fait accompli*. He did not suppose that the Prime Minister had any wish to indulge in any sharp practice with the House; but he must say the course adopted would have very much that appearance. The Conference was to meet on Saturday next, and these proposals were to be hurried through and decided upon before the Members of that House had an opportunity of knowing anything about the financial part of them. The point he wished to put to the Prime Minister was this—were there any insuperable objections to his explaining the nature of these financial proposals? If those proposals were laid before us we might pronounce an opinion upon them; we might say that we ought not to accept them at all, or else that we might accept them to a certain extent, in order to escape from this unfortunate scrape which we have got into. Why cannot the Government lay their financial proposals before us? They must know what those proposals are. It could not be construed as an insult to the other Powers if Parliament were to be taken into the confidence of the Government on this point. They could then either pass a Vote of Censure on the whole proposal, which would be much more complimentary to the other Powers than to deal with only half the question; or, on the other hand, they could, by expressing their approval, show to the Powers that if they chose to accept those proposals, the British Parliament was prepared to ratify them.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish to support the Question which the hon. Member opposite has put to Her Majesty's Government. I fail to understand why it is that the Government always choose to divide every important question into two parts, in the same way that they have divided the Franchise Bill from the Redistribution Bill. Now they tell us that one-half of this question belongs to the House of Commons, and that the other half of it is altogether outside their jurisdiction. In the course of his Mid Lothian speeches the Prime Minister asserted very strongly the right of the Crown to make Treaties without consulting Parliament;

and perhaps the Crown would have a perfect right to go into this Conference without having first obtained the sanction of this House. No financial proposals, however, that could bind this country could be entered into without the consent of this House; and yet the Government pretend that they can bind this country by the other shameful and foolish proposals which they have made to the French Government without the consent of this House. I should wish to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have received any answer from the other Powers in reference to the questions to be submitted to the Conference; and whether it is true that Russia, Austria, and Germany have declined to give any opinion upon them until the Parliament of this country has discussed them? I am assured, upon the highest authority, that such is the case. [*Ironical cheers.*] I see that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary is smiling; but why does he not answer the question instead of smiling? Perhaps, however, he may be in ignorance on the subject, because the policy of Her Majesty's Government is not to let their left hand know what their right hand does. There is, moreover, the further question with regard to the limit of the period of our occupation of Egypt. It was understood that we were to have an identical statement made in this House to-night with that which was made in the French Chamber to-day; but with regard to the validity of the objection of one single Power to our remaining in Egypt after the expiration of the three years, M. Ferry's statement, as it has reached us, is in direct contradiction to that of the Prime Minister. I saw a Gentleman on the Treasury Bench a short time ago who was very much aghast at the observation which was made by an hon. Member near me to the effect that implicit confidence could not always be placed upon the statement of French Ministers. If, however, we look into the past, and compare the protestations of French Ministers with the actions of the French Government in Algeria, we shall see that it is not unwise to accept such assurances with caution. The right hon. Gentleman now relies upon a mere phrase of an Ambassador, which has not even been reduced to writing, and of the bearing of which it is, therefore, impossible to

judge. I ask the right hon. Gentleman this question—Who is to decide, at the end of the three years, whether the occupation by England of Egypt shall be prolonged? Is that question to be determined by the unanimous opinion of Europe, or merely by a majority of the Powers?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I do not understand the Prime Minister to state that he does not ask for the opinion of the House with regard to the agreement between France and England. I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he will wait until he can put before the House and the country the whole of the proposals to be submitted to the Conference, and that he will then ask the House to give a decided opinion upon the matter as a whole. I quite agree with the right hon. Member for Ripon that we should be at present under a great disadvantage in discussing that agreement. We have been told, in the strongest possible terms, that if the Conference does not arrive at any result, the agreement will be so much waste paper. I should, however, like it to be thoroughly understood by the House and by the Government that, in postponing any expression of opinion, we are not to be supposed to be in favour of the agreement. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL dissented.] The noble Lord shakes his head; but if I am to understand that the Government who made those proposals said that no such opinion will be taken for granted, I shall pay much more attention to that than I do to the noble Lord's gestures, because the Government will be unable afterwards to say—they will be precluded from the possibility of saying—that by the fact that the discussion has been postponed the House of Commons has really practically sanctioned the agreement. There is another reason why I think that my right hon. Friend's suggestion deserves much consideration from hon. Gentlemen opposite. Undoubtedly, it would not be a very dignified position for the Representatives of the Great Powers and the House of Commons to be debating at the same time a matter which might not come to any result. I suppose we should be perfectly in the right in assuming that the Government will be perfectly candid with the Great Powers, and will say to them—"This is our proposal; but we have thought it right to tell the

House of Commons what has been our negotiation with France; you are aware of it; you have seen it in the public papers; and the final consent of England to any proposal must depend upon the action of the House of Commons or of Parliament when the matter is brought before them." And I also understood this, which I think is of some importance, that the course which the Government are taking to-day, and the expression which my right hon. Friend has made, will preclude the Government from being able to state any argument to the effect—"Practically you must assent, because this is the declaration of the Powers of Europe." [MR. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] With this clear understanding, I hope that all parties will be content that the discussion of these proposals shall be postponed. I also think that it would be desirable for the Government to state whether it is intended, if the Conference does not arrive at a result, that there shall be any international or general Treaty between this country and France entered into with or without the assent of the other Powers.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: It has been suggested that it will be inconvenient to discuss the subject now, and that the House ought to postpone the consideration of the Papers and of the Prime Minister's declarations until the House is in a position to express its opinion on the result of the Conference. I admit that there is a certain amount of inconvenience in the discussion to which we are invited by the course taken by Her Majesty's Government; but whose fault is that? It is because the Government have been pleased to intercept and interrupt the Business of the country for the purpose of making a statement to which they attach so much importance. Unless the Government propose to ascertain the opinion of the House upon these Papers and declarations, I am at a loss to conceive what object they have in view. The right hon. Gentleman has said that some deference should be shown to the Great Powers of Europe which are about to enter into Conference on Saturday next; and the right hon. Gentleman appears to be under the impression that the Great Powers might deem themselves slighted if the House of Commons were to be discussing the questions raised by these Papers which have been presented

to-night by Her Majesty's Government. It seems to me, however, that if we are to consider the feelings of the Great Powers who have been invited to Conference, they are equally likely to take offence by the course suggested by Her Majesty's Government and by the two right hon. Gentlemen opposite. They might say—"We are called into Conference in London, and when all the Powers of Europe have arrived at a conclusion, then, and not till then, are we to know whether the opinion of the House of Commons will enable Her Majesty's Government to ratify the decision." While admitting, therefore, that the course taken by Her Majesty's Government is an extremely inconvenient one, I do not see how the House of Commons can avoid facing that inconvenience. I noticed that the right hon. Gentleman, in the course of the speech of my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), declined to admit that he had made use of the word "concession" as applied to the agreement which England has entered into with France. If my memory is right the word was distinctly used; but as the right hon. Gentleman has withdrawn it, I do not press the matter further. It is significant, however, that the French Prime Minister undoubtedly made use of that word in the Chamber about the same time that the right hon. Gentleman was supposed to have made use of it. In the report which has come to us we read that—"M. Ferry then proceeded to explain the concessions of England." Undoubtedly England has made great and very serious concessions to France. I admit that until we have the Papers before us it would be indecorous to express any definite opinion upon those concessions; but that they are great and serious, I have no more doubt than M. Ferry had when he was addressing the French Chamber. That the demand made by the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) and also on this side of the House is a perfectly reasonable one I am prepared strenuously to contend. The Prime Minister himself, answering a Question put to him by my hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) on the 28th of May, stated that the whole of the conclusions which resulted from the communications with France should be presented to Parliament before the Conference met. What

did the right hon. Gentleman mean when he spoke of the whole conclusions that should result from the communications with France? I do not ask what the ingenious mind of the right hon. Gentleman might mean. But I ask what the right hon. Gentleman thought the House understood when they heard those words? Is it possible to understand anything short of this, that the whole scheme, including the financial proposals, would be submitted to the House of Commons before the Conference met? I regret the mode in which this communication has been made to the House; but as it has been so made, I do not see how we can avoid expressing an opinion upon it. If I am compelled in one sentence to express my view of the declarations which we have heard from the right hon. Gentleman, especially with reference to the proposed evacuation at the end of three and a-half years, I should say that the Government were addressing to the people of England that line of Virgil—

"Sic vos non vobis vellera fertis oves."

For the people of England would stand very much in the position of people who had been fleeced for five years and a-half, fleeced in their blood, fleeced in their treasure; and at the end of that period they will be at the beck and call of the Powers of Europe, whether they are to remain in that country on which they have sacrificed that blood and that treasure, or whether they shall be still permitted to seek the consummation of that great work which was undertaken by Her Majesty's Government, as now appears without any due consideration of its magnitude and importance, but to which the people of England have shown that they attach the greatest value, and for the accomplishment of which they have shown that they are prepared to shrink from no sacrifices whatever. There are one or two other questions which I desire, in conclusion, to put to the right hon. Gentleman. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will explain more clearly under what terms the Powers are, after 3½ years' occupation of Egypt by England, to say to her either "stay in," or "go out." I wish also to know whether that is to be done by one, two, or three Powers, or, if the Powers are equally divided, who is to decide whether England is to remain in Egypt, or to evacuate the country? I ask the Prime Minis-

ter whether he will state distinctly to the House what is the conclusion at which he wishes the House to arrive on that subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I have no right to address the House and enter into argument upon this question, to which I only refer for the purpose of saying that I hope it will be understood that it is on account of the want of a right to speak that I refrain from noticing any of the arguments which have been made by the noble Lord, or others, in imputation against Her Majesty's Government. But it is commonly the practice of the House to allow answers to be made to Questions addressed to Her Majesty's Government, and I will give the best answers I can to the great number of Questions which have been put, curiously mixed up with reason and with invective. First of all, I will give an answer to the noble Lord who has just sat down, and who has asked for the terms which are to govern the proceedings of England at the close of the period of three and a-half years. The best thing I can do is to draw the noble Lord's attention to a paragraph in a despatch of Lord Granville. It says—

"There is some difficulty in stating a fixed date for such withdrawal, inasmuch as any period so stated may prove in the event too long or too short. But Her Majesty's Government, in order to remove any doubt of their policy in this matter, and in view of the declaration made by France, are willing that the withdrawal of the troops shall take place at the beginning of the year 1888, provided that the Powers are then of opinion that such withdrawal can take place without risk to peace and order."—(Egypt, No. 23 [1884], p. 14.)

Those are the exact terms which have been used. Then the noble Lord asked whether it means one Power, or two Powers, or three Powers. Well, Sir, my answer to that is, that the phrase, "reference to the Powers of Europe," is one perfectly known to diplomatic practice and history. The European questions have been decided under shelter of that phrase for half a century and more; and nothing could be more invidious than to presume a division of the Powers into separate lobbies or separate parties in such matters. We think it our duty to take the phrase which is known to diplomacy, and we are perfectly confident in its operation. That, I think, is as much of a reply as it is

possible for me to give, except that I may go one point further. I heard some persons say—"Would the dissent of England be of itself sufficient to neutralize the voice of the Powers?" I must say that I think that if we thought of entering into negotiations so solemn and so important with France, and of undertaking to submit ourselves on certain conditions at certain times to the voice of Europe, having in our own minds the intention all the while to neutralize the action of the Powers of Europe by our own resistance when that time arrives, then I do think there would have been occasion to talk about the honour of this country. I cannot answer for the Government of that day when it arrives; but if the present Government are in Office, I have no hesitation in saying that they certainly would not plead the adverse opinion of England in the circumstances of the arrangement into which they have entered with France. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) asked whether any Treaty was intended. Perhaps I may be permitted to say that my right hon. Friend stated with precise and absolute accuracy the case between the Government and the House of Commons. I do not think there was one word which I would wish to alter or modify. With regard to a formal Treaty, I can only say this—that I am not aware that it will be necessary. My right hon. Friend knows that international compacts have been made in substance without a Treaty. I can conceive the Correspondence between France and England being perfect as an international compact, provided the conditions of its operation are retained. I mean that its not being in the form of a Treaty will not in the least influence the action of either Government. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) asked whether the President was to have a casting vote. My answer is this. It was not competent for England and France to determine that question, as he knows that the Law of Liquidation places the care of the Egyptian Debt under the control of a body in which four Powers are represented. These four Powers, at any rate, according to the larger and juster view, are entitled to have a vote on the question. But, in point of fact, we intend to propose that the English President of the Commis-

sion of the Caisse should have a casting vote; and I may say, so far as we are able to form a judgment, we think the reasons for the arrangements are so practicable and clear that no serious difficulty would arise on the part of the Powers. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) asked whether the consent of England will be necessary in 1888. That Question I have answered. The hon. Gentleman also asked whether the Sultan has been consulted. The Sultan has been consulted by communications of our intentions and views, and the proceedings of the Turkish Government have been marked by as much despatch as, perhaps, could be expected. It is to be remembered that the distance from Constantinople is greater for the transmission of despatches as compared with most other countries in Europe. If that be the measure of the Question, I have no doubt whatever that on the part of the Powers of Europe there is every disposition to pay regard to those rights which the Sultan enjoys. My hon. Friend the Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) asked whether we can give the financial information at once. He says that Parliament cannot form an opinion without it. I do not think Parliament can form an opinion without it. That is my opinion. I have pointed to the time when the information can be given to Parliament, and I have in the most explicit terms said that until that time arrives Parliament would legally, morally, and in every other sense remain in absolute possession of its freedom. I cannot use any stronger words, and then my hon. Friend himself will see how impossible it is for us to do what he has suggested, to lay before the House at this moment the proposals which we intend to lay before the Powers. It is strictly in the nature of an answer to this reference of the financial proposals to the Powers, if I venture to think he is a little mistaken as to the nature of this reference of the financial proposals to the Powers. He appeared to think it was only a communication to them. If it was only a communication to them, and that was the sum and substance of our proposals, then I see no reason why we should decline to make known the financial proposals to Parliament. It is nothing of the kind; but an invitation to them to enter into counsel with us in a matter in which we take the

initiative, and in which every one of them has just as good a right to be heard, to express an opinion, to procure, if they can, a modification of the proposals, as we have ourselves. Was it possible, in these circumstances, to bring out the proposals as of cast iron or steel and submit them to Parliament before going to the Powers? If we did so, supposing the Powers suggested something we believed to be an improvement and a change which ought to be made, what is to happen? The Conference may be absolutely deprived of all liberty, because we knew that the House of Commons had approved something different from it. It is quite plain that you cannot work the financial proposals in the Conference and in the House, and the whole meaning of this demand for the communication of the financial proposals is to put one of the greatest and one of the most responsible functions of the Executive Government into the hands of Parliament. Certainly the House is within its rights when it declines to be committed by what the Executive Government may do without its previous cognizance. But we have fully admitted that, and we have given the most solemn assurances that the liberty of the House will be preserved. I may add, among other reasons, that of the financial crisis in Egypt which we have lost no time in dealing with, and in which we have used our best powers. The financial crisis is of such a character that the casting of the subject abroad by bringing it into this House with prolonged debates, involving complicated points, which would extend from Monday to Thursday and from Thursday to Monday, would be accompanied by the most serious results in Egypt itself. The hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) asked whether Russia, Austria, and Germany have declined to give any opinion on this subject. No; they have not. They have not had time to deal with this subject. I am not prepared to say—I am not at all sure that it is necessary that they should give an opinion; but they have not declined to give any opinion on the subject.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked whether the loan was to be £6,000,000 or £8,000,000?

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman asks me to enter upon the

subject of the financial proposals. I have just given reasons against that.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Is there any truth in the statement that there will be a loan from this country?

MR. GLADSTONE: If that were so, would not that be a financial proposal? Is it possible to answer such a question after what I have just said, that the Conference has a right to a perfectly free discussion of the whole of these proposals? We have a right to the use of our discretion, and we have a right to endeavour to make the best arrangements we can, even though they should involve modifications of our own proposals. It is just like a statement of a Budget. What would be our position if we could obtain a cast-iron agreement and say to the Powers—"Your function is reduced to 'Aye' or 'No.' You have no discretion except to take it in the lump or refuse it in a lump." We are not going to insult the Powers of Europe by being parties to any such agreement. Some Gentleman asked me whether these proposals were to be submitted to the Representative Assemblies in Egypt. I am not aware that anything has been devised or will be proposed by Her Majesty's Government which, according to the written institutions of Egypt, would require to be so submitted. I think I have replied to the different points which have been put to me, and I will not press myself further upon the time of the House by any attempt to argue the matters which have been suggested in debate. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving that the Papers do lie upon the Table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 249.]

(Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.)

CONSIDERATION. [FIRST NIGHT.]

Bill, as amended, *considered*.

MR. ANDERSON, in rising to move, in page 2, after Clause 6, to insert the following clause:—

(Constituency to have claim on services of Member elected, and if absent for three months without leave may be summoned to attend, and on failure for one month more, new writ may be issued.)

[First Night.]

"After any election shall have taken place under this Act, the electing constituency shall have a recognized right to claim the services in Parliament of the representative so elected; and in case of his non-attendance for three consecutive months of any Session, may petition the House setting forth the facts, and praying for redress on the ground that such absence is prejudicial to the interests of the constituency. On such petition being read from the Table, the House will appoint a committee not exceeding ten Members to inquire into the facts; and if they report to the House that such Member has been absent from the service of the House for three consecutive calendar months, without the leave of the House, and without any apparent sanction from the constituency, and that the petition has been signed by at least fifty duly qualified electors of the constituency, Mr. Speaker will thereupon send notice to the absent Member, by registered letter to his last known address, requiring him to appear in his place forthwith; and should such notice not be complied with before the expiry of one calendar month, should the House then be sitting, or on its re-assembling should the Member still be absent, Mr. Speaker will report to the House; whereupon on Motion duly made and carried, a new writ may be issued."

said, the Amendment was one which the Chairman ruled could not be put in Committee as irrelevant to the subject-matter of the Bill. Although he did not think the decision a right one, he had not questioned it, but had thought it right to put it on the Paper again. Sometimes, under the present condition of the law, a constituency was robbed of the services of its Representative by his failure to attend Parliament. In his own constituency they suffered from a misfortune of that sort which everyone deplored, and for which nobody could in the faintest degree be to blame. The constituency of Glasgow had been reduced for the last three years to exactly the same position as it held previous to the Reform Bill of 1868—that of having only two Members to represent it. A constituency of 68,000 electors had now only two Representatives in Parliament, the same as in an Irish county or in many quite small English boroughs; and as there appeared to be no remedy for the existing condition of things, he had attempted to suggest one by giving every constituency certain claims on the men it elected. He might mention the case of an Irish Member, who was connected with the Australian Legislature, who refused to give up his connection with the Colonial Legislature, but, at the same time, would not take any steps to vacate his seat as a Member of the British House of Commons; and so the

matter went on until a General Election. Then, at the present time, one of the Members for Mayo had been absent for some years. By the present state of the law there was nothing to prevent any Member of that House going to the utmost ends of the earth, and remaining there as long as he pleased for his own pleasure, and thus entirely neglecting his constituency. The constituency had no redress except by calling upon the Member to accept the Chiltern Hundreds, and he could refuse to do that. In old times the call of the House would have remedied this evil; but that practically was now obsolete, and there now was practically no remedy, and, believing there ought to be one, he moved this new clause.

New Clause (Constituency to have claim on services of Member elected, and if absent for three months without leave, may be summoned to attend, and on failure for one month more, new writ may be issued,)—(*Mr. Anderson*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, they all deplored the circumstances which deprived Glasgow of one of its Members; but he could give no encouragement to the clause of the hon. Gentleman. This Bill was one of enfranchisement, and they could not under it remedy all the evils which might exist. Under the clause, if a Member were ill for three months he would lose his seat. He asked his hon. Friend not to press his Motion, which in itself was not one the House could accept, while it was not relevant to the subject of the Bill.

Question put, and *negatived*.

MR. TOMLINSON rose to move the following clause:—

(Qualification by payment of Income Tax.)

"Every man who has resided within a county or a borough for a period of twelve months, but has not by reason of such residence a qualification to be registered as a voter in such county or borough may be registered as a voter, and may vote upon proving that he has, in the year for which he claims to be so registered, paid or had deducted from the income of any real or personal property accruing to him during such year income or property tax to the amount of not less than ten shillings."

Mr. Anderson

That clause, he maintained, would enfranchise a class of capable citizens who had a fixed residence, but not of a kind that now gave them a vote; and he held that, having regard to the due representation of property, and to the principle that taxation and representation should go together, that class was well entitled to be included in a measure which proposed widely to extend the suffrage. He begged, therefore, to move the clause.

New Clause (Qualification by payment of Income Tax,)—(*Mr. Tomlinson*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. WARTON, in supporting the clause, maintained that by far the greater part of those who paid 1*d.* of Income Tax were more respectable than those who inhabited mud cabins in the wilds of Connemara at £1 a-year. He could not see why a young man who had means should be prevented from having a vote because he lived in his father's house. If the Government were sincere, which he very much doubted, in their search for capable citizens, they must in all conscience and honesty accept the clause.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that this question had already been discussed somewhat fully in Committee. The chief objection to this clause was that it would lead to the creation of fagot votes. Assuming the Income Tax to be at the same rate as now, anyone receiving a dividend warrant for £40 a-year would pay 10*s.* Income Tax. All that would then have to be done would be for anyone who wished to make votes to put a sufficient amount of stock in the hands of someone else for a year only, and, whether they were householders or not, they would have the right to vote. Government had already made concessions in the way of the property vote; but this was something different, as the vote was not to depend upon the possession of any real property.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 24; Noes 108: Majority 84.—(*Div. List*, No. 127.)

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD, in moving the insertion of a clause to provide—

"That no disqualification or penalty with respect to voting shall hereafter attach to any member of the Constabulary Force of the United Kingdom,"

paid a high tribute to the services which the police constables, a most deserving body of capable citizens, rendered to the public, and asked Parliament to remove the disability under which they now suffered.

New Clause (Removal of disqualification of constables,)—(*Mr. Coleridge Kennard*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) thought there were grave objections to the proposal, among the strongest of which were that the proposal of the hon. Member would make guardians of the peace at political meetings and at election times in the polling booths political partizans; and that policemen would probably be appointed on account of the political views they were known to possess, both of them very objectionable circumstances in regard to men who ought to be above suspicion.

MR. WARTON said, it was a pleasure to him to be able to agree with the Attorney General.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he rose to move the following new clause:—

(Disqualification of Criminals.)

"Any person who shall have been convicted and sentenced for felony or for indictable misdemeanour in any court of justice in the United Kingdom shall be incapacitated from voting in the election of a Member or Members to serve in any future Parliament, or from being elected to serve in any future Parliament, for a period not exceeding five years, at the discretion of the Judge adjudicating on the case."

He hoped the House would be more disposed than it was when the Bill was in Committee to accept the principle of the clause, which was less drastic than that he proposed in Committee. He offered not to move the clause on receiving an assurance that the next which stood on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) would be proposed and pressed to a Division.

[*First Night.*]

MR. MORGAN LLOYD, in moving the following clause:—

(Disqualification of persons convicted of felony or other crime, and sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment with hard labour.)

"No person convicted of felony or any other crime, and sentenced to penal servitude or to be imprisoned with hard labour, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, or to vote at any election for twelve calendar months next after the expiration of his sentence,"

urged that the House had manifested a strong feeling against imposing a disqualification for pauperism which did not attach to crime; and he therefore hoped the Government would meet the views which had been generally expressed by accepting this Amendment. So long as the principle of the clause was adopted he was not particular as to the form; and if the Attorney General wished to alter the wording of it he would have no objection. He contended that the criminal class should be excluded from the Register of voters as the pauper class was now excluded; and as a test whether a man belonged to that class or not deprivation for one year would not be unreasonable. If he remained for one year after the expiration of his sentence without being again convicted it might be not unreasonably presumed to have ceased to belong to the criminal class.

New Clause (Disqualification of persons convicted of felony or other crime, and sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment with hard labour,).—(*Mr. Morgan Lloyd*.)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was glad that the noble Lord (Viscount Folkestone) had not moved his clause, because it gave a discretion to the Judge, and the House did not like the idea of a Judge having the discretion to pass a political sentence. That objection did not apply to this clause, which proposed a definite exclusion for a certain time. The question was discussed in Committee, and he stated some objections of both principle and detail. Under this clause a person convicted of assault would lose his vote, and the House would not wish such a consequence to follow. If the

House accepted this clause, the conviction must be by a jury on indictment, and the sentence must be penal servitude or imprisonment with hard labour. Many Members of the House expressed opinions different from those he advanced on behalf the Government; but, although they had a majority, he thought this was a matter in which they ought not to hold out with extreme pertinacity. Practically, he would point out that a man who was in prison for three months lost his vote because he lost that continuous occupation which was the qualification; he did not occupy his house continuously for the preceding 12 months. However, with the Amendment he had suggested, the Government were not disposed to object to the clause.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he must protest against this additional punishment being imposed upon a person who had undergone his legal sentence. Such a proposal was altogether foreign to the spirit of the Constitution, and he saw no justification for it, except the petty desire of some specialist to have his name associated in some way with the Bill, and who had no other road open to his ambition but to propose a fad of this description. It seemed to him a miserable and an unworthy proposal, contrary to the spirit of the Bill as well as to the spirit of the Constitution. It could not be argued that this exception provided any safeguard in sections, or had any important bearing upon the exercise of the franchise, except, indeed, the hon. Member who proposed it was prepared to say that the criminal classes largely abounded among his countrymen. It was true, indeed, that the convicted criminals represented only a small percentage of actual criminals. Those who were found out were punished sufficiently without a disability of this character, and it was unfair to give the exercise of the vote to criminals who had not been found out, and deprive those who had expiated their offences of the vote.

MR. HOPWOOD expressed his regret that the Government encouraged the imposition of this new disability. He was surprised the Government had given way.

MR. MACFARLANE thought that it would be shameful to say that the man who had accepted casual relief should be disfranchised, and yet that the

ruffian who had beaten his wife to a jelly should be allowed to go to the poll directly he got out of gaol.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether such men men as hon. Members on the Irish Benches who had been imprisoned were to be considered disqualified? He objected to the proposal, because it was so easy in Ireland to procure convictions.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he did not wish to see the restriction on the exercise of the franchise relaxed in the case of paupers; but persons convicted of crime might belong to a class which specially required representation in that House. Prisoners sometimes suffered injustice, and, therefore, might often stand very much in need of representation. He hoped some hon. Member would divide against the clause, and he would give him his support. The Attorney General's position was inconsistent with his position a few days ago. Of course, the main objection to the clause was that it proposed an addition to the sentence of the law.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he warmly supported the clause. Hon. Members, he said, spoke as though imprisonment with hard labour was an accident which might at any time overtake a well-meaning person. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, who had suffered imprisonment, were there to speak for themselves as well-meaning persons, and he did not dispute their claim to the title. Their cases, however, were not such cases at all as were being discussed, for they were not sentenced under an indictment or convicted by a jury. How many of the 15,000 criminals who were convicted on indictment in this country in the course of a year were innocent persons, who had done things which the crooked law construed into offences? Such a representation was a gross caricature. He could not understand how his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur Arnold) could justify the disfranchisement of a pauper, and oppose the exclusion of a criminal. Sympathy for a pauper he could understand; but to include in the Register of voters men just released from imprisonment for disgraceful offences was an insult to every honest person on the Register. It was said a man would be taunted for the absence of his name from the Register; but a man who had

been convicted of a gross offence might be, and probably deserved to be, reproached throughout his life for the offence for which he had undergone hard labour. If this clause were rejected, it would be something like a public scandal.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he thought the pauper would be punished by the proposal, inasmuch as he would be put on an equality with the criminal. This disqualification for the enjoyment of civil rights was in the nature of an additional punishment for the crime committed; but it should be left with the Judge to administer such punishment as he deemed right.

MR. WARTON said, there was no use in an Attorney General if he could not change his convictions on every question which might be brought before the House. This excused the Attorney General for having changed his front in respect to the proposal before the House. He, however, regretted the change, and could not help blushing for his profession. Last Friday the Prime Minister made a speech in which he recognized the principle of English law that when a man had undergone his punishment he was a free man. The Division that occurred last week on this subject was the most genuine that had taken place during the whole progress of the Bill, for the Prime Minister had graciously given his poor, blind, deluded followers gracious permission to vote as they liked. When a man had undergone his sentence he had expiated his offence, and should not be under any disqualification.

MR. CROPPER said, he heartily thanked the Attorney General for assenting to the clause. It was only fair that if they punished a man for pauperism, they should punish him for crime. He did not think that any man who had spent some time in prison would feel being struck off the Register very much.

MR. GORST regretted the Attorney General had given encouragement to the clause. This was nothing more nor less than a proposed Amendment of the Criminal Law. When a sentence had been expiated, the criminal became a free man again, and this was a proposal to impose one uniform and unvarying additional punishment upon every case in which a man was convicted. He

thought it extraordinary that a provision of that sort should find its way into a Franchise Bill. If a new provision of this kind was to be introduced into the Criminal Law, it would require great consideration and very careful definition, and he entreated the Government not to encourage the clause or endeavour to force it on the House.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the Attorney General had given a most extraordinary reason for changing his opinion on this subject. He had, in fact, said that he had changed his own opinion because there was a difference of opinion upon this clause. He would like to know whether there had not been a difference of opinion upon every other Amendment proposed? No doubt in foreign countries a man was sometimes deprived of his civil rights; but that was not the law in England, and as soon as he came out of prison he was purged of his offence. Then, again, how was it to be discovered whether a man had been in prison or not? The present Bill was an enfranchising Bill, and not a disfranchising Bill, whereas the proposed clause was disfranchising, and he trusted the House would reject it by a Division.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH said, he was very glad Her Majesty's Government had seen their way to accept the principle of the clause. It did seem to him very unfair that a person should be disqualified because he had received a minimum amount of poor relief, while another person who had been sentenced to a term of imprisonment for a serious offence against the law of his country might be put upon the Register. He thought this clause tended to remedy a great defect in the existing law.

COLONEL NOLAN thought the clause should be opposed not only upon Irish and Liberal, but also upon Conservative, principles. He had always voted with the Government throughout the Bill, whether they were right or wrong, on the particular question before the House; but the Government had changed front, and they could not expect their supporters to change front with them. He moved that the debate be adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—*(Colonel Nolan.)*

Mr. Gorst

MR. GLADSTONE wished to make an appeal to the hon. and gallant Member to withdraw his Motion, which was hardly consistent with his usual attitude of supporting the Bill. No doubt the clause constituted a departure, as far as it went, from the general rule upon which the Bill had been worked through Committee; but they had taken this course in deference to what they conceived to be the general wish on both sides of the House. The fact was, as had been already stated, that this was not a Party matter, and the Government did not desire any Member to vote against his convictions, as he was sorry to hear the hon. and gallant Member for County Galway had been good enough to do; but the Government simply desired that everyone should vote according to his convictions. After so full a discussion of the clause, he hoped the House would now be allowed to go to a Division.

MR. GREGORY said, he desired to have some explanation before a Division was taken.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 114; Noes 81: Majority 33.—(Div. List, No. 128.)

Amendment proposed to the said Clause, after the word "convicted," to insert the words "on indictment."—*(Mr. Attorney General.)*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. WARTON said, that Her Majesty's Judges tried cases by juries more than half of which were trivial and trumpery. There was no magic in the words "by indictment," and he must protest against such legislation.

MR. GORST said, it was extremely difficult for the House, without Notice of the Amendment on the Paper, to deal with questions of this sort which the Government had thought fit to put before them. He did not know whether the Attorney General intended to confine the clause to persons sentenced to penal servitude, and, therefore, to move the omission of the words "or to be imprisoned with hard labour."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that he wished to mitigate the severity of the clause as it stood; but it would be necessary to re-

tain the words "with hard labour." It would be difficult to exclude a man sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour.

MR. SCLATER - BOOTH said, he should oppose the Amendment.

MR. HEALY said, that the hon. Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) had proposed a clause which would lead to an inconceivable number of Amendments, and had given grave ground of objection to Irish Members. The Attorney General proposed to insert the words "by indictment." If that Amendment were carried the man Magrath, who had been convicted by a jury and sentenced by Judge Lawson on Saturday last to 12 months' imprisonment, without hard labour, for conspiracy to murder, would be entitled to be registered as a voter. Magrath was convicted of the same offence as the other men; but because the Judge, in his mercy—because he must attribute mercy even to Judge Lawson—did not sentence Magrath to hard labour because he was 70 years of age, Magrath would be allowed to be a voter. What greater absurdity could they have? A man of 69 years of age, who was a little more robust, would be prevented from voting because he had served a term of penal servitude. The proposal was, therefore, to refuse a vote to the man in good health, and to allow the person who was in a state of debility to exercise the franchise. Such was the absurd position to which they had been brought by accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Beaumaris.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Lord Advocate whether the words proposed to be inserted would apply to Scotland? If so, they would require another series of Amendments to make this clause applicable to the Scottish law.

MR. HARRINGTON ridiculed the notion that a person who had been sentenced to penal servitude for a seditious libel should be deprived of a vote. He would urge upon the Government the fact that this Amendment raised a very serious question in regard to the difference between persons sentenced to hard labour and those who were not. A Judge might sentence a man for a grave offence to imprisonment, without adding hard labour to it; whereas for a much less grave offence a sentence of four months' imprisonment was occasionally given which did not carry hard

labour along with it; and, because hard labour was imposed in the one case, the man would not be entitled to exercise a vote; whereas, when released from imprisonment under the graver offence, he would be fully qualified to exercise the suffrage.

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Harrington) that the Question before the House is the insertion of the words "on indictment." The hon. Member, at the present moment, is not dealing with that Question.

MR. HARRINGTON said, the expression "on indictment" necessarily involved a sentence of hard labour, or no hard labour; and he was solely looking at the question from that point of view; not whether a prisoner was tried on indictment or not, but whether, being tried on indictment, he was sentenced to hard labour or not. He had no wish to detain the House; but he would appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General as to whether the question of hard labour or no hard labour was one which caused so serious a distinction between crimes as would justify them in depriving one man of the vote and retaining it for the other; and, under these circumstances, he hoped the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) would withdraw the clause altogether.

MR. CAUSTON said, he should vote for the Amendment proposed by his hon. and learned Friend; but when it was softened down to an extreme point, and the Question put that the clause be added to the Bill, he should feel it his duty to vote against it. He was of opinion that when a man had served the term of imprisonment to which he had been sentenced, and had been discharged, he should be considered a free citizen and should have a vote.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he would call attention to the fact that the clause only affected those who had been in prison for a short time, and did not touch cases where a man had committed a heinous offence, and had been sentenced to penal servitude. He quite agreed that a man who had only committed a trifling offence should not be subjected to the additional penalty of losing his vote. An hon. Member, who spoke just now, alluded to the fact that there were 15,000 criminals; and the hon. and learned Member for Chatham

(Mr. Gorst) commented upon the case of those who had suffered penal servitude. But, as he (Mr. Grantham) had pointed out, the case did not touch those who had suffered penal servitude, and was absolutely useless in that case; because no one who had suffered penal servitude could place himself in a position to be registered until, at any rate, he had been released for 12 months. The clause only affected the case of those who had been sentenced to slight terms of imprisonment, and who might otherwise have brought themselves within the terms of the Act. Therefore they were adding a far greater sentence upon those who had undergone a short term of imprisonment; whereas those greater criminals, who had been imprisoned for a series of years, were not affected in the slightest degree.

MR. GIBSON expressed a hope that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would answer the question which had been put by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), and would say whether the Amendment would sufficiently harmonize with the existing requirements of the Scotch law?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he thought the Amendment which had been proposed would adapt the clause to Scotland; because the word "indictment" was the word now used in Scotland for the graver crimes.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 198; Noes 35: Majority 163.—(Div. List, No. 129.)

COLONEL NOLAN, in moving at the end of the last Amendment, after the word "indictment," to insert the words "before a jury," said, it was quite possible for a man to be tried by court martial, and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour; and if the clause were passed in its present shape, unless some such words as those he proposed were introduced, the Clerks of Unions in Ireland would have to write to every garrison town contributory to the Union, and probably even to England, in order to ascertain whether any particular voter had ever been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour by court martial. He pointed that out as one of the effects which the clause would have. He believed that a man tried by court martial was indicted. He did not profess to have any considerable

knowledge of legal terms; but, if he were correct in his view of the matter, he would ask the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) and the hon. and learned Attorney General to take into consideration the expense which would be thrown upon Poor Law Unions, in carrying out the law, if it became necessary to obtain certificates from all the garrison towns. He wanted to prevent that by limiting the operation of the clause to the case of persons who had been indicted before a jury. That would confine the clause to the cases which occurred in the ordinary course of procedure, and would not affect cases which were brought before a court martial. He thought the hon. and learned Attorney General might be induced to accept this Amendment.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the last Amendment, after the word "indictment," to insert the words "by a jury."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) was labouring under a misapprehension, because, as a matter of fact, no person was indicted before a court martial; and, therefore, the case was not likely to occur of the Clerk of a Union writing to the military authorities in a garrison town, in order to find out whether a man claiming the right to vote had been convicted and sentenced by a court martial. He had not, however, the slightest objection to the insertion of the words proposed by his hon. and gallant Friend; but he would suggest that his hon. and gallant Friend should substitute the words "by a jury," instead of the words "before a jury."

COLONEL NOLAN said, he was prepared to accept the suggestion of the hon. and learned Attorney General.

Amendment amended, and again proposed.

MR. HEALY said, he thought it would be far better to put an Amendment to this effect as a Proviso at the end of the clause, which would obviate some of the objections he entertained to it in its present shape. He would suggest that a Proviso should be added at the end

Mr. Grantham

stating—"Whereas this clause does not apply, &c., to certain specific cases." There was, however, one point upon which he desired information. He had not yet heard from the hon. and learned Attorney General how he proposed to find out whether a man had been convicted or not, and under what head would the expense be borne? If it became necessary for the Clerk of a Union to write to the Judges, or to the Clerk of the Crown in every county or borough in Ireland, in order to find whether a man had been convicted or not, how was it proposed that the expense which would be incurred should be borne? He thought he was entitled to have some explanation from the Government upon that point; and there ought also to be some explanation as to how the Register was to be prepared. Was it to be prepared by inquiry, directed to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, or by information received from some authority in England, in answer to an application to know whether a particular individual had been convicted or not? He certainly thought that the clause should not apply to convictions under the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there would be no duty cast by the clause upon the Clerk of the Union, or upon any Overseer, to make any such inquiry. The objection must come in the ordinary way. No one was called upon to make any inquiry; but the objection was made by a person serving the voter with a notice of objection. He believed the course pursued was, that a notice was served upon the voter, and it then became the duty of the Overseer to obtain any information he could.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the hon. and learned Gentleman (the Attorney General) would be aware that, under the Summary Jurisdiction Act, it was a very common practice to ask an accused person whether he preferred to be tried summarily by the magistrates or by a jury. It would, therefore, be possible, if this Amendment were accepted, for the man himself to select whether he would resign his vote or not.

MR. HARRINGTON said, that, as the clause stood, the application to strike off the name of the voter must be made to the officer presiding at the polling booth. He considered that that

was giving a power to the officer presiding at an election which would work very great mischief; because it provided that persons convicted of felony, or any other crime, and sentenced for the same to penal servitude or imprisonment with hard labour. Such persons were not entitled to be registered as voters, or to vote at any election, for 12 months after the expiration of a sentence.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was not for him to describe the duty of the officer in charge of the polling booth; but he believed that all the Returning Officer did was to ask the man claiming to vote—"Are you the person whose name appears upon the Register?"—and he was not able to exercise any other power.

MR. WARTON said, he was in favour of the Amendment, because there was a disposition in some quarters to do away with juries altogether.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, in trying to make the clause acceptable to the House, had put words into it—"convicted by jury"—which would have a very curious effect. In many cases which occurred at Sessions and Assizes, a prisoner, against whom a case was clear, and who was most probably an habitual criminal, pleaded guilty; and, if those words were inserted, persons pleading guilty would still be entitled to enjoy the vote, notwithstanding the fact that they were persons in regard to whose guilt there could be no doubt at all. They would be entitled the moment they came out of prison to vote; whereas a person who had been convicted by a jury for a less serious offence, and who might have been convicted by mistake, would be deprived of the vote.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH trusted that the hon. and learned Attorney General would give some answer to the remarks of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke). It was perfectly absurd, as his hon. and learned Friend had put it, that they should punish a person who had been convicted by mistake, and allow undoubted criminals to escape scot free. He hoped the hon. and learned Attorney General would be content with the words, "on indictment."

[First Night.]

Question put.

The House *divided*: Ayes 149; Noes 111: Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 130.)

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, the clause now ran—"No person convicted on indictment by a jury of felony or any other crime." He would now move a further Amendment to provide that it should be—"No person convicted on indictment, by a jury, or pleading guilty."

Amendment proposed, at the end of the last Amendment, to insert the words "or pleading guilty."—(Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the words proposed to be inserted might affect a person who pleaded guilty to having committed a crime before the magistrates. It would be better to discuss the effect of such an Amendment later on.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had accepted the words "on an indictment by a jury" on the spur of the moment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the present Amendment would have a very different effect; because it might affect the case of a man who pleaded guilty before the magistrates.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he thought the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had very little weight, because the clause went on to say—"And sentenced for the same to penal servitude."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): "Or to be imprisoned with hard labour."

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he thought it would be convenient for the House to have before them the exact form of the Amendment which the hon. and learned Attorney General proposed to substitute for that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach).

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out that before another Amendment can be proposed, it will be necessary to withdraw the Amendment now before the House.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that, with the leave of the House, he would withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he would now propose an Amendment after the word "crime."

COLONEL NOLAN rose to Order, and remarked that he had an Amendment which came before that.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) has an Amendment on the Paper to leave out the words, "or any other crime."

COLONEL NOLAN said, that was so; and he would be precluded from making that proposal if the Amendment of the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) were assented to.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that he also proposed to move an Amendment which would come before that of the right hon. Baronet—namely, to insert the words, "not being a political offence."

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is, "That the words "or any other crimes" stand part of the Clause."

COLONEL NOLAN, in moving a further Amendment to leave out the words "or any other crime," said, he thought the Amendment would require a little explanation. He was of opinion that, if these words were retained, they might entail considerable expense in order to ascertain whether a voter had been convicted of a crime or not. A great amount of trouble would be involved, and they would be, in point of fact, introducing another very great complication into Parliamentary Elections. He quite agreed with the object of the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd); but it was opening out quite a new field, which had never yet been touched by the English law, and it would considerably increase the field of investigation, and add to the difficulty by imposing upon the election authorities the duty of finding out whether a man had been convicted of felony or any other crime. In some cases a man might have been convicted of some petty offence and sentenced to eight days' imprisonment, and it would be necessary to make inquiry even into convictions of that nature. The omission of the words "or any other crime" would diminish

the difficulty, and render the clause less objectionable to a large section of the House. He would, therefore, propose that those words be struck out of the Clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words, "or any other crime."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. WARTON said, he had intended to move the same Amendment, and his reason was this. He was astonished to find a lawyer of such eminence as the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) making use of such a loose expression as "any other crime." The law divided crimes into felonies and misdemeanours, and if the object of the clause was to punish misdemeanants in this way he should strongly object to it. For his own part, he would limit this obnoxious clause in every possible way. Although he did not disguise the fact that some misdemeanours were worse than certain felonies, yet, as a whole, felonies were graver crimes than misdemeanours. Therefore, he heartily supported the Amendment to omit the words "or any other crime." He protested against the introduction by a lawyer of objectionable phrases into an Act of Parliament.

MR. GORST said, he thought he was correct in asserting that the word "crime" was unknown to the law. In the Criminal Law, as it now stood, the word used was either "felony" or "misdemeanour;" and he would suggest the substitution of the words, "punishable as felony or punishable as misdemeanours." He thought it would be objectionable to strike out the words altogether, because perjury was not a felony, but a misdemeanour, and a man ought to be punished for perjury just as much as for larceny, and crimes of that class.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the difficulty he had in striking out the words "any other crime," was that the word "felony" was not known in the Scotch law; but the word "crime" was known in the Scotch law, and was sufficiently known in the English law to include misdemeanour; and the fact that penal servitude and hard labour were involved

would be a sufficient indication that the crime in contemplation was a grave one.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he must confess that he was somewhat surprised at the statement of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, because his observations went directly to show that he proposed to introduce a word which was to mean one thing in England, and another in Scotland. There was no wonder that Courts of Law experienced such difficulty in construing Acts of Parliament, when the head of his Profession in the House of Commons suggested that they should keep in words which he could not deny had no legal interpretation, and which would be construed differently in England and in the Sister Kingdom of Scotland. He should, therefore, vote for the Amendment.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) regretted that his hon. and learned Friend (Sir Hardinge Giffard) gave the Judges so little credit for being able to interpret an Act of Parliament. As the clause stood, it must be either a felony or not a felony; but, at any rate, it must be a crime punishable by penal servitude or hard labour. He did not conceive there would be the slightest difficulty in making use of an English word that was commonly used and well known to both countries.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD: Yes; but in a different sense.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) denied that the word was used in a different sense in each country. It meant a criminal offence, and that was the construction the Government put upon the word here, and that was how it would be construed by the Judges. He had not the slightest notion that any real difficulty or ambiguity would arise in regard to the interpretation of the clause with these words in it. On the contrary, he thought they were perfectly intelligible words.

MR. HOPWOOD said, it was quite evident that as they went on with the clause they got deeper and deeper into difficulty. He would therefore, in a friendly spirit, suggest to the Government that they should be content with the discussion which had taken place upon the clause, and not press it further.

[First Night.]

He had voted against the Amendment proposed on a former occasion; but he should now vote in favour of the present one, with the intention of by-and-bye voting against the entire clause in the hope that the House might so get out of the difficulty in which they were involved. He trusted the Government would say frankly that they had made a mistake, and that they meant ultimately to divide against the clause. He hoped that course would meet with the acquiescence of the House. They might pass with little or no discussion all the Amendments which were upon the Paper in reference to the clause, and then, when the Question was proposed that the clause be added to the Bill, he thought they would be able, by a considerable majority, to get rid of it altogether.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was very reluctant to interpose between the eminent lawyers who had been engaged in discussing the question, and in endeavouring to explain how the word "crime" had a different meaning in Scotland and in England. In England, they were told, "crime" meant either a felony or a misdemeanour; but in Scotland the word "crime" meant an offence which was graver than a misdemeanour. In other words, the word "crime" in England included misdemeanour, whereas in Scotland it excluded it. He submitted that, if a different meaning were attached to the same words in the two countries, it was not desirable to insert them in an Act of Parliament. He did not, however, propose to discuss that point, but simply to support the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood). It had given him several qualms of conscience to discuss the clause at all, and he doubted the propriety of persevering in a course which could only retard the progress of the Bill, and imperil its future fate. He therefore thought the Prime Minister would afford considerable relief to the ardent supporters of the measure, who desired to see it brought to a successful end, if he would get up and say that the Government were of opinion that, putting on the one side the advantages of arriving at a speedy termination of the Bill, and on the other the small advantage to be gained by passing the clause of the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd), they

would prefer giving up the clause, and making progress with the Bill.

MR. HENEAGE supported the appeal which had been made to the Government by the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood). He was of opinion that the further they went on with the discussion of the clause the greater their difficulties became. He was quite determined to vote against this Amendment. Not only had they lost two hours in discussing the clause, but if they continued moving Amendment after Amendment, the result would inevitably be that the clause would be left in such a shape that it would have to be struck out in the end.

MR. WADDY said, he had gone into the Lobby in support of the proposal when it was first moved, and he had voted conscientiously; but he rose now to support the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood). He did so, because he cared a great deal more for the Bill than he did for this clause.

MR. WARTON rose to Order. He wished to know from the Speaker whether it was competent for the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Waddy) to discuss the whole Bill upon an Amendment for the omission of one or two words?

MR. SPEAKER: The Question immediately before the House is the omission of the words "or any other crime."

MR. WADDY said, he was going to speak to the Amendment. What he was going to propose was that those words, and even something beyond, should be omitted.

MR. WARTON said, the hon. and learned Member could not do that.

MR. WADDY said, he was not in the habit of troubling the House at any great length, or very frequently; and the only observation he would make on the subject of this clause was, that if it were a question of opinion involving any point of principle, and was supported by the Government, nothing would induce him to agree to the adoption of the suggestion of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood); but he thought that this was the only compromise that could be arrived at, if they were sincere in their desire to make progress in the Bill.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he hoped that the Government would not succumb to the attack made upon them,

from so many quarters in this matter. He trusted that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would stand by the words of the clause. They were words that were perfectly intelligible, and they described, with substantial and sufficient accuracy, the matter to which the clause was intended to apply in this country; and it was impossible to supply any substitute for them that would be equally well understood. The adoption of this Amendment, and the striking out of these words, would reduce the clause to such a condition that it would be perfectly inoperative, and would have to be got rid of altogether. He thought it would be unfair to the House to take the course which was suggested by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood). There was a strong feeling on the part of the House in favour of the clause, and in consequence of certain communications which had passed, the hon. and learned Attorney General had signified his acceptance of the proposal to the House last night. The clause, as it was accepted, contained the very words which it was now proposed to leave out, and upon a Division the clause, as such, was accepted. To omit those words now, without substituting anything for them, would have the result of destroying the effect of the whole clause. If they left out these words, he did not think it was possible to invent words that would equally answer the purpose. Although it was perfectly true that the word "crime" did not appear in the Statute Book of this country, it was, nevertheless, a perfectly legal term; and crimes in this country were divided into felonies and misdemeanours, and included both. Therefore, when they described an offence as a "crime," punishable either by penal servitude or hard labour, they were describing a matter that was thoroughly intelligible to everybody. He hoped the Government would adhere to the clause, and insert it in the Bill.

MR. GRANTHAM thought his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) was right in saying that the House ought not to omit these words from the clause. It would be in the recollection of the House that many hon. Members, and especially the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), desired to know what the

clause was to be which the hon. and learned Attorney General was prepared to accept? The hon. and learned Attorney General had stated that the Government were willing to accept certain Amendments; but what they were the House had not been able to understand; and the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) thought the Government intended to leave out these words. Yet now it was found that the clause had been accepted only upon one condition—namely, that the words "on indictment" should be inserted after the word "convicted." Under these circumstances, he wished to ask this question—If in Scotland felony had no meaning such as it had in England, why insert the word "felony" at all? It was quite true, as his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) had stated, that they were introducing into the English law the word "crime," which was not known to it, because in the English law the words were "felony and misdemeanour;" yet in the Scotch law they had the word "crime," and not "felony." Then why not leave out the word "felony" altogether, and do away with the difficulty that was now created by simply saying—"No person convicted of any crime." Those words would cover the whole thing. He meant to vote against the retention of the words "or any other crime," with a view of placing the clause in a satisfactory position subsequently. The hon. and learned Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Waddy) said the words of the clause which specified penal servitude or imprisonment with hard labour showed that the offence contemplated meant a heinous offence; but the hon. and learned Gentleman was entirely in error in supposing that hard labour was only applied to heinous offences. There were many instances in which a man was committed to prison for three months with hard labour, and there were, as everyone knew, who was acquainted with the administration of the Criminal Law, many instances in which hard labour followed as a necessary consequence upon a sentence, if it were only for imprisonment for a week, a fortnight, three months, or six months. Consequently, hard labour was not restricted to what might be termed heinous offences.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he was sorry that the Prime Minister had not

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long ago signified the intention of the Government to accede to the very reasonable request which had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood). If the House were now to pass the clause in the shape in which it stood, it would be unworkable, and no number of Amendments introduced into it that night would make it workable. They were now on the point of providing that a man who had been convicted of crime should not, upon being released from prison, have his name placed upon the Register, in order to be in a position to record his vote. The hon. and learned Attorney General had pointed out, a short time ago, that no power was vested in the Returning Officer or in the Overseer to prevent a man from voting whose name was upon the Register. That being so, the Amendment did not meet the cases for which it was proposed. It did not disqualify from voting in the case of a man serving three, six, or 12 months' imprisonment; because, after he was released, there would be no power to prevent him from voting if his name were on the Register. They might strike the name off when the Revising Barrister went round; but if it was on the Register the man could exercise the vote for 12 months after his release from prison; and this clause, which was brought in in order to curtail his privileges, could not take effect until after he had been released for a period of 12 months. It therefore contained the ridiculous proposal that a released convict or released hard labour prisoner might exercise the franchise for 12 or 18 months after his release from gaol, but that then a motion would be made to deprive him of the exercise of it. This was the logical bearing of the clause; but it was not what was in the minds of the Proposer or supporters of it. He certainly thought the clause would prove to be altogether unworkable, and the time of the House was being seriously wasted by this discussion, even to the extent of endangering the fate of the Bill.

MR. GLADSTONE: I will ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) to withdraw the Amendment now before the House; and I think the reason I shall give him he will deem to be a sufficient one. I know that I shall expose myself to criticism and to laughter, to

which I admit I may be very fairly made the object on this occasion; but I have to confess, and I do so ingenuously and outright, that we have made a mistake. I do not know whether that will disarm the anger of those who may take a severe view of our conduct; but we believed that, by the course we propose to take to-night, we were meeting a wish—at all events, a prevailing wish on the part of the House. But we have now wasted three hours. My hon. and learned Friend behind me (Mr. Hopwood) has understated the case; because it is more than three hours since we undertook the discussion of what I may call this ill-starred proposal, and that circumstances appear to show that it would be the work of several days to adjust the measure before it could receive the final judgment of the House. That is the best estimate I can form. Well, Sir, unquestionably I should have risen immediately after the appeal of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), but for the fact that I had a scruple on the point of Order, which, however, I hope I may now dismiss, because I find myself frankly compelled to beg the hon. and gallant Member to withdraw his Amendment. The Government think the object in view is not worth the time of the House which would necessarily have to be expended upon it. Without further explanation, and fully admitting that we lay ourselves open to all the jeers that may be directed against us on the other side of the House upon this particular occasion, I would make an appeal to the hon. and gallant Member to withdraw the Amendment; and then I would make a further appeal to my hon. and learned Friend behind me (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) to withdraw the clause. We have done all we could for the purpose of promoting his views; but I almost think that he, as a supporter of the Bill, would be disposed to agree with us that the game is not worth the candle, and would desist in his endeavour to attain an object on which the House cannot afford to expend so immoderate an amount of time.

COLONEL NOLAN expressed his willingness to withdraw the Amendment.

Question proposed, "That the Amendment, by leave, be withdrawn."

Mr. Harrington

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, the proposal for inserting this clause was not originally his; but he understood that it was considered desirable to insert some Amendment analogous to it in character; and he had, therefore, submitted the clause. He would remind the House that the matter was discussed at some length in Committee, and that a very large number of Members expressed their opinion by voting in favour of the clause. In consequence of what occurred in Committee, he had placed the present clause upon the Paper which had now been read a second time by the House. He retained the opinion that the clause would be advantageous to the Bill; but he certainly was ready to admit that he would not have made a point of bringing the clause forward, had he thought that the introduction of it would have consumed so much time, because he thought it was of much greater importance that the Bill should pass as it stood, than that its fate should be endangered by discussing the improvement which this clause would undoubtedly effect if it were added to the Bill. Hon. Members from Ireland had, in the course of the debate, chosen to make some remarks as to his motive in proposing the clause. Ever since he had been a Member of the House, he had been prepared to stand up for what he considered to be right, whether it was in favour of hon. Gentlemen connected with the Island on the other side of the water or not, and he would continue to do so in spite of their sneers and insinuations. He was quite ready to withdraw the clause; but he did not know how far he was in a position to do so, seeing that the clause had been read a second time, and was in the possession of the House. Whatever suggestion might be made for that object he would be prepared to adopt.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he understood that the question now before the House was that the Amendment be withdrawn. It was all very well for the Prime Minister to say, at that moment, that the Government frankly confessed they did not think the question was worthy of the consideration of the House; but he (Mr. R. H. Paget) would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the question was one of principle. It was not the first time of asking, but the second, and the Government had had ample oppor-

tunity for making up their minds on the matter. Personally, he considered himself to be an injured person. He had had great satisfaction in supporting Her Majesty's Government in several Divisions; because he thought that, in the matter of principle, they were right; and, having adopted this as a question of principle, he protested against its being abandoned in the way it was now being abandoned by the Government, who all along had been priding themselves upon their consistency. He did not think they could have supplied a more curious instance of their inconsistency. The Government had opposed the question when it was brought before them in Committee; now, upon the Report, they had agreed to support it as a matter of principle which ought to be supported. The clause had been read a second time, and they had put up the hon. and learned Gentlemen the Attorney General and the Solicitor General to advocate it; and, because an opposition had sprung up in one or two quarters, they now suddenly made up their minds that the question was not one that was worthy to occupy the time of the House. Surely, if it was worthy of the support of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, the Attorney General, and the Solicitor General—if it was worthy of taking up three hours of the time of the House in supporting it in Division after Division, it was worthy of being gone on with to the end, and it ought not to be withdrawn. He should certainly raise his voice against the withdrawal of the clause.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he wished to draw the attention of the House to the nature of their proceedings that evening. In the course of the debate it had been admitted by the Government that unless that clause were introduced, or something equivalent to it, they would be deliberately enfranchising crime in Ireland. [*Cries of "No, no!" from the Irish Members.*] Hon. Members below him seemed to have a different understanding of that term from that which he had. There was some dignity in treason; but the phrases which rebellion adopted were sometimes of a lower type, especially when it assumed this phase of outrage and individual murder. Personally, he could not draw any distinction between these offences and offences which were usually

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designated crime. He must say that he thought the House would arrive at a very grave decision if, after having prepared the ground, and approved the clause, it deliberately voted for the enfranchisement of crime in Ireland.

Question put, and agreed to.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH moved a further Amendment, to insert after the word "crime," "or pleading guilty on indictment to any such crime."

Amendment proposed, after the word "crime," to insert the words "or pleading guilty on indictment to any such crime."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GRANTHAM said, he wished to have some information as to the position in which the House was now placed. Did the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister propose to accept the Amendment, on the understanding that the clause would subsequently be withdrawn?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) said, the Government could not withdraw the clause, and the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was quite within his right in moving the Amendment. He thought, after what had been done, that the House should accept the Amendment; but it was the intention of the Government to vote against the clause when it was put.

MR. GIBSON said, the Prime Minister had said that he knew he was exposing himself to some criticism, and possibly to some jeers; but, up to the present moment, he (Mr. Gibson) did not think the observation of the right hon. Gentleman had any foundation in fact. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman was listened to with patience; but there were points now raised which rendered it necessary to make a few short observations in the way of legitimate criticism. The hon. and learned Attorney General had certainly placed himself and the operations of the Bill under the notice of the House in a very peculiar manner. This clause had been under discussion for over three hours, and had been supported by the hon. and learned Attorney General, not rashly or unexpectedly. They had had a discus-

sion upon a cognate subject some four or five days ago, and a Division had been taken—a Division which was of by no means a Party character. The clause seemed to find support on both sides of the House—

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he rose to Order. He was sorry to have to interrupt the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but he appealed to the Speaker whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman was not now discussing the general merits of the clause? He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) might say, in explanation, that he should not have wished to interrupt the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he did not know that on the Question that the clause be added to the Bill there would be ample opportunity for discussing the general merits of the clause.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. and learned Gentleman is not entitled to discuss the general Question on this Amendment.

MR. GIBSON: Then I will defer my observations.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question I have to put is—"That the words 'or pleading guilty on indictment to any such crime' be there inserted."

MR. WARTON said, he was quite sure the House would excuse him for offering a short criticism of the Amendment. He quite agreed as to the importance of the Amendment, which, no doubt, had been moved in consequence of a suggestion made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), to the effect that, under the clause, a prisoner who pleaded guilty would not be punished by having the franchise withheld from him, as would a man who had been convicted of a similar crime. He hoped the right hon. Baronet would allow him to point out that these words "or pleading guilty on indictment to any such crime" would bring about an odd jumble of English and Scotch law. He would recommend that the words of the Amendment should be "or who has pleaded guilty to felony or any other crime." That Amendment would follow the phraseology which had been adopted hitherto, and would be an improvement on the course suggested, wretched as the phraseology of the Bill might be. He did not like the phrase; but he thought if the words "to any such crime"

were used, it would make the clause refer only to the last-mentioned crime. Now that they had got it, they might just as well retain the hon. and learned Attorney General's singular mixture of English and Scotch law as an instruction to posterity.

MR. GREGORY said, he thought it was not worth while continuing the discussion. They were all pretty well agreed that the clause should not now stand part of the Bill. ["No, no!"] Well, there was a preponderance of opinion on the other side of the House in favour of dropping the clause. He felt sure, if the Question was put to the House, "That the Clause should stand part of the Bill," the provision would stand little chance of being adopted. Looking at the important Business on the Paper for to-night, and the discussions they would have to take, he trusted that hon. Members would allow the question before them at this moment to be decided, and would at once proceed to a Division.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, be added to the Bill."

MR. CAUSTON said, that several hon. Gentlemen opposite were very anxious to speak, and he also should like to give one or two reasons why he should be prepared to vote for the rejection of the clause. He declined to punish a man who, having served out his sentence, was entitled to have all the rights of citizenship restored to him. The hon. and learned Attorney General had stated just now that the objection to a voter being placed on the Register should, in all cases, be taken in the ordinary way; but it would be extremely objectionable for a person dwelling in a house in a town, where he had possibly gone to lead a reformed and respectable life, to be cross-examined, on making application for a vote, as to whether he had or had not been convicted of crime. Under the circumstances, he would move the rejection of the clause; although, as he did not wish to take up the time of the House for any lengthened period, he would say nothing more in opposition to it.

An hon. MEMBER: You cannot move the rejection of the clause. You can vote with the Noes.

MR. RAIKES said, he remembered that some time ago Mr. Lever, the

novelist, when he was seeking for a *reductio ad absurdum* to some of the Liberal cries of the day, suggested, as a cry for a new Reform Bill, "Emancipate the unconvicted." It appeared that now they had got a step beyond that, and the cry of the Radical Party was—"Enfranchise the convicted." He was glad to recognize the frankness with which the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. Causton) had adopted that as the platform of the Radical Party. But what he thought was really worthy the attention of the House and the country was the deliberate manner in which Her Majesty's Government had delayed the progress of this measure throughout the whole of this evening. They had had this clause proposed by an hon. and learned Member sitting on the Ministerial side of the House, adopted by the hon. and learned Attorney General, then carefully considered by the House at large, repudiated by the Prime Minister, and now about to be doomed to the limbo to which everything apparently had to go which did not, at the moment, happen to meet with the view of that right hon. Gentleman. He really did think that, having regard to the energy which the hon. and learned Attorney General had devoted to carry this Bill through the House, he deserved better treatment from his Leader than that which he appeared to have received. He (Mr. Raikes) sincerely trusted that it would go forth to the country that this proposition had originated on the Ministerial side of the House, had been accepted by a Member of the Government responsible for the Bill, had occupied the attention of the House for some hours, and was now put aside, because the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had listened to some suggestions made from the Benches below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had reasons for listening to the suggestions of those who brought forward objections from that quarter of the House—reasons which were not known to the hon. and learned Attorney General. It was desirable, perhaps, that the House should take notice of the circumstances under which this clause had occupied their attention for such a substantial part of the evening; and he trusted that if the

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provision went to "another place," all the circumstances attending it would be taken into consideration.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he must say one word with regard to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Raikes). When the right hon. Gentleman had said that he (the Attorney General) had been treated by the Prime Minister in a manner which he did not deserve, he must say that if there had been any misjudgment of the opinion of the House, the responsibility of that misjudgment rested entirely with himself. In the course that had been taken, there had been perfect unanimity of action in regard to this last clause. He would tell the House what had actuated them in the course they had taken. They had been under the impression that there was a large majority in the House willing to accept the clause; but, as they proceeded, they found, not, as the right hon. Gentleman said, that it was the Radical Party who wished to enfranchise the convicted classes, but, to their astonishment, they found that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard), who was supposed to direct the legal counsels of hon. Gentlemen opposite, was an opponent of the clause, declaring himself as willing to vote against it. It was said the Liberal Party wished to enfranchise the convicted classes. Well, was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Selater-Booth) a Member of the Liberal Party? No; yet he had been working against this clause. Was the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) a Member of the Liberal Party? Certainly not. Then was the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham) one of the Radical Party, willing to enfranchise the convicted classes? And what would the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) say of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton)—and although he came last, he was by no means least? Was he a Member of the Radical Party? The fact was, the Government had yielded through a want of support from hon. Gentlemen opposite. Who had been the Tellers in the Divisions against this clause? Why, two of them were hon.

Gentlemen who sat together—two of the most respected legal Members of the Party opposite, the hon. Members for East Surrey and East Sussex. And those two Conservative county Members, having so substantially supported the clause, the Government were now told that they had yielded to the cries of hon. Members from Ireland. They were told that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Surrey were not to be listened to. The Government had thought hon. Members opposite were in favour of the clause. ["No, no!"] He did not mean to say that they had supposed that all hon. Members opposite were in favour of the clause; but, at any rate, the majority, and the most influential amongst them. They, however, found these Gentlemen telling against them. The opposition was such that it did not enable the Government to divide against it; therefore, unsupported by the hon. and learned Member for Launceston, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire, and the hon. and learned Member for East Surrey, they had taken the course which, under the circumstances, they deemed right. At the same time, for their own part, they were of opinion that the question did not deserve the consumption of any further time. Let the judgment of hon. Members opposite be what it might—and he did not think it would be a very severe one—if they were displeased with the course the Government was now taking, they would be able to settle the matter with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Launceston and his Colleagues.

MR. GIBSON said, he did not intend to take up the heroic tone adopted by the hon. and learned Attorney General. He must say he believed the hon. and learned Gentleman's excuse was somewhat of an afterthought. The hon. and learned Gentleman could not have had the slightest conception, a short time ago, of the reasons he was now giving for opposing the clause. Although there had been five or six Divisions on the clause, they had all been in one way, the majority having been in favour of the Government on each occasion, and against the provision—majorities increasing and enlarging every time. The smallest Division which had been taken

against the clause had been the earliest Division, and that had indicated that this was not a clause on which Party lines were observed. Three or four days ago the House knew that supporters of the clause were to be found on the Ministerial as well as on the Opposition side of the House; therefore, with the greatest respect to the hon. and learned Attorney General, he must say that if anyone had said some time ago that the Government would have used the argument that they were altering their view, and taking a particular line in deference to the opinion of the Opposition, he should have said it was rank nonsense. The clause had been moved from the Ministerial side of the House, and many of its most prominent supporters had been hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side. Many of those prominent supporters were now amongst its opponents; therefore, it was asking too much of the House to believe that the Opposition was really the cause of the Government now giving up the provision. It was really remarkable to watch the course this discussion had taken. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, knowing perfectly well what had taken place and what was taking place, knowing that two Friends of his (Mr. Gibson's) had been Tellers for the rejection of the second reading of the clause, and knowing that the second reading was carried by a large majority, allowed the matter to proceed, and many Amendments to be proposed and carried with increasing majorities, until the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) got up, and, declaring that he had steadily voted black was white for the Government in order to facilitate the passing of the Bill, appealed to the Government to drop the clause. It was only then that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, summarizing the statement of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway, declared himself to be greatly exercised at hearing that the hon. and gallant Member had voted against his conscience; but, under the circumstances, the Government had made up their minds that they could not make an exception in reference to this particular matter, and must leave it an open question—that they must leave hon. Members on this particular question to vote according to their consciences. That

might be all very satisfactory; but, still, there ought to be a majority distinctly in favour of the clause. The clause had not been abandoned; but Amendments had been proposed and supported by both sides of the House — by Members sitting opposite as well as Members sitting on the Opposition side. It was really very remarkable that they should then find that, in deference to further statements made, the Prime Minister — certainly with the greatest possible frankness—took the House into his confidence, and declared that “the game was not worth the candle.” The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the Government had made a mistake. [“No, no!”] Well, it was not for him (Mr. Gibson) to question that contradiction. He did not particularly complain of the Prime Minister's statement, or of anything beyond the narrow lines to which the right hon. Gentleman at that moment seemed to be confining himself. Considering that, in the most important Bill of the Session, they were discussing Amendments to a clause which had been adopted, after some days' consideration, it was most remarkable that after three hours had been expended upon the provision, they should find the Government prepared to oppose what had already been agreed to, and for which they themselves had voted some hours ago. The Government could not be surprised if, in consequence of the episode of that night, a lengthy discussion took place on the Report of the Bill. They had assented to the clause after deliberate consideration. They now admitted they had taken a mistaken view of the matter, and, as a result of further consideration, they were prepared to vote against the clause.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that before the House parted with the clause he would like to call attention to the position in which they stood in regard to it. It was not as if this were a small or light matter, or one involving no political principle. In the early part of the evening, the Prime Minister recognized that there was a difference of opinion on his own side of the House; that there had been a difference of opinion on the Opposition side of the House; and that the large minority which voted in favour of the proposal when it came from the Liberal Benches, on a previous occasion, was made up of

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Members on both sides of the House. The Prime Minister having said that, the House went on with the discussion of the clause, and it soon became perfectly clear that there was a majority in favour of having such a clause in the Bill. Let the House just examine what position it was in at the present moment. A considerable amount of time had been spent upon the clause; the consumption of that time was not to be charged on Members of the Opposition. The proposal came from the Liberal Benches—from those who, throughout the progress of the Bill, had acted with the Government. The four valuable hours they had spent in discussing the clause were now beyond recall; but the clause was now in what he ventured to say was a satisfactory condition and shape. Its acceptance would involve no further loss of time. Why should it not be accepted? All the Members of the Government had voted in its favour; it was not accepted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) without consideration, and it involved the principle that those who had exposed themselves to the penalty of the Criminal Law were not, in the eyes of the House, capable citizens in the sense that they ought to be entrusted with the duty of voting for Members of Parliament. He could not understand how those on the other side of the House, who were prepared to extend the franchise to women, and to deprive of the suffrage persons who had been obliged to apply for parochial relief, could refuse to put on the Statute Book a clause which now stood in a complete form, which was accepted by the Government, and which would disqualify criminals from becoming voters. His hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) had said more than once that the Government believed, from all they heard and saw, that a large majority of the House were in favour of the clause. If the clause were put to the House deliberately for its acceptance, he (Mr. Clarke) believed it would still be found that a majority were in favour of it. In the circumstances, which he agreed were strange and perplexing circumstances, but circumstances which could not be charged on the Opposition, the right course would be to take a final decision on the matter at another Sitting of the House—when, for instance, the House

Mr. Edward Clarke

had had an opportunity of considering fully the condition in which the clause now stood, and of coming to a decision, aye or no, whether it was proper to put such a clause on the Statute Book. It would be conceded that this was a right course, when it was remembered that many Members of the House must have gone away, after having heard the hon. and learned Attorney General's firm and deliberate vindication of the clause, convinced that the Government would not treat with such levity and vacillation a matter which had been before the House some time. He begged to move that the debate be now adjourned.

MR. BRODRICK seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(*Mr. Edward Clarke.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, he must decline to attempt to refute the charges which had been made against the Government with regard to the time lost over the discussion of this clause. There was no charge to be made against that, or any other side of the House. The loss of time was due to an unfortunate error of judgment of theirs to amend the Bill. The proposal to adjourn the debate and resume the discussion would only lead to further loss of time; and, therefore, he could not agree to it.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that as the Government were uncertain as to the course they should take, probably the best plan for them to adopt would be to withdraw altogether, and leave the House to decide the matter.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 89; Noes 174: Majority 85.—(Div. List, No. 131.)

Question, "That the Clause, as amended, be added to the Bill," again proposed.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he did not wish to reiterate the observations which had been made by his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), or the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke); but he ventured to make a further appeal to Her Majesty's Government in respect to this clause. He

endeavoured, when the clause was being discussed, to give it such support as he could, and if he criticized one or two verbal points, he was sure the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Henry James) would admit his criticism was friendly to the clause. He attached considerable importance to the clause; it appeared to him to be sound and just in principle; and it was a clause which, to his mind, would be a very material and useful addition to the Bill. That was the opinion entertained by many other hon. Members quite irrespective of the part of the House in which they sat. The clause was negatived, when it was proposed in Committee; because Her Majesty's Government had resisted it. This evening it was discussed at no very great length and the Prime Minister stated that he would, on the part of the Government, consider it an open question, and in no way interfere with the wishes of any of his supporters in regard to the clause. The result of that expression of opinion was, that the clause, which had been negatived in Committee, was carried by a large majority in its second reading on Report. He appealed to Her Majesty Government not to exercise that influence, which, of course, they could exercise over their followers against the addition of the clause to the Bill. He would ask the Prime Minister to inform the House that the votes of hon. Members were entirely within their own discretion; that the Government left the matter entirely to the judgment of the House, in the same manner as when the clause was read a second time. If the result was, that the clause was negatived, through the opposition of the Government, then, he thought, there would be more reason than ever to speak of the mechanical majority on the other side.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Government had taken that course, and Members would vote according to their judgment; the Government had made no attempt to make this a Party question, and what he said a few days ago still held good.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he felt he was somewhat hardly used by Her Majesty's Government on this occasion. He hoped the House would allow him to make a few observations which should not occupy more than two minutes. He had the opinion first, and

held the opinion still, that the new clause, as he originally meant to propose it, was much the better clause of the two; but he was deluded into the idea that the Government meant to accept the clause of the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd). But it appeared to him, that the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris, after hearing the announcement made by Her Majesty's Government had "bolted." That meant, he supposed, that the hon. and learned Member left it to the discretion of hon. Members how they should vote. His hon. and learned Friend, he observed, had just come back; but though he had returned, there was not the slightest doubt that he did not mean to challenge a Division; but he (Viscount Folkestone) should do so, and he hoped a majority of the House would support the clause. He had supported the Amendment, and should still support the clause on this occasion. The Government had changed their minds twice. They had voted against the proposal in Committee; then they changed their minds, and agreed to support it; and now they had changed their minds again, and were going to vote against it. Unless they could bring themselves to a third change, he should certainly challenge a Division, and he hoped the majority in favour of the clause would be larger than on the last occasion.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 102; Noes 156: Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 132.)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Amendment he now had to propose was merely of a clerical character, simply *pro forma* to carry out what had been already decided—

MR. WARTON said, he had an earlier Amendment he wished to move—

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was in possession of the House, unless the hon. and learned Member had an Amendment coming before line 27 of page 1.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. and learned Member wish to move an earlier Amendment?

MR. WARTON said, in Clause 3, page 1, line 19, he wished to propose an Amendment, to omit the word "himself," in order to insert the words "by himself, or by himself and his family."

The object of the Amendment was, first of all, to remove what might be an objectionable practice. "Himself" might seem to exclude his family, but, of course, it meant living in the house by himself, or with his family; therefore it was he wished to introduce the words he proposed. There was another meaning to the Amendment, that the man himself, or with his family, should wholly occupy the house; it prevented a number of persons being collected in the same house under the service franchise, and it would prevent the question of the lodger franchise being raised.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 19, to leave out the word "himself," in order to insert the words "by himself, or by himself and his family."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'himself' stand part of the Bill."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he did not think they would make any practical progress by discussing the Motion then, and he would, therefore, move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Attorney General,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE

BILL.—[BILL 139.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 9th June.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 3 (Rent of £17,500 to be paid out of fees in respect of Royal Courts of Justice).

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he hoped the Committee would consider that it was a matter of sufficient importance to wade through the long Preamble to see the effect of the 3rd clause; but it had exercised the ingenuity of the draftsman to conceal, with as much verbiage as possible, the real and extended operation of the measure. The history of it was this. When the building of the Royal Courts of Justice was decided upon, a communication was made by the Government that it would cost £1,500,000;

deduct from that, the site of the then existing Courts of Justice, which was taken, for the purpose of the Act then in operation, to be worth £200,000—that reduced the cost of the building to £1,300,000; and, in order to pay back to the Exchequer that amount which was to be advanced in the first instance, the first thing the Government were to do, was to lay hands on £1,000,000 of the Suitors' Fund in the Court of Chancery—

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. and learned Member propose to move any Amendment?

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD: No, Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question before the Committee is, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD continued: It was absolutely essential, he thought, that the Members of the Committee should have the history of these transactions before them, to understand the clause under discussion. The first thing, as he was saying, was to lay hands on £1,000,000 belonging to the Suitors' Fee Fund in the Court of Chancery; and, in consideration of that, suitors in Chancery were to be released, for all time, from the necessity of contributing to the fees for the rent of the Court. This was the first thing the Bill sought to violate; because, notwithstanding in consideration of having got that £1,000,000, suitors were to be relieved in future from all contributions to the Court, this Bill proposed to get rid of that, and, in future, all suitors in the Courts of Justice were to pay, whether they were on one side of the Court, or on the other; because, as an incident in the changes which put all the Courts together, suitors were to be deprived of the benefit of that provision. Then, the next provision was a very remarkable one indeed. The rent was assumed to be a proper charge—that was to say, suitors ought, when they came to have justice done, to pay rent for the building in which justice was administered. That seemed a strange notion; but that lay at the root of the Bill. People were actually to be called on to pay, as suitors, for the rent of the Court in which justice was administered. The legal authorities had, it might be said unknown to Parliament, gradually acquired the right to fix fees in the Courts for certain things

Mr. Warton

done therein; what they were he would describe in a moment. They were, by the 3rd section, to have the power to raise £17,500 as rent, which was assumed to be the rent of the Courts; and then, by the 4th section which followed, and which must be read with the 3rd, to be able to understand fully the operation of the latter, as the average of the fees taken increased or decreased to the amount of £10,000, then the fees were to be raised or decreased, in proportion as they fell short of, or exceeded, that amount; so that it was to be treated as a sort of commercial concern. If the rent of the Courts of Justice could not be raised by fees then existing; then, providing they fell short to the amount of £10,000, it was obligatory on the authorities to raise the fees accordingly. It was upon this clause the judgment of the Committee was asked, and he submitted, both in principle and as a matter of practical justice, it was one of the most extraordinary proposals ever made. The effect he would describe by a few instances; but one of the difficulties of discussing a question of this sort was, that it was very much a question of detail. People who spoke generally of the increase of fees, or the increased expenses of litigation, hardly made any way, unless they brought instances before a competent tribunal, and discussed particular increases, and the effect upon suitors; and that could only be done by an enormous amount of detail, that would fritter away the attention of the Committee. He could only give a few examples to show what the effect had been, and what the effect would be, should the Committee permit this clause to pass. The Committee would remember that he tried to alter certain rules of the Judges, which would remain unalterable, except by Parliament, if for 40 days those rules had lain on the Table of the House. The effect of what had been done was, that certain fees were now fixed; and, by statute, it would be irrevocably fixed, that unless the rent was raised out of the unfortunate suitors, fees might be raised to such an extent as to amount to a complete denial of justice. For example, one of the rules, which it was his misfortune unsuccessfully to contest, had relation to the administration of interrogatories. It was provided that the person demanding an interrogatory

should pay into Court £5, as a deposit and guarantee that the power should not be wantonly and vexatiously used. Now, to raise this rent, and as one of the expedients for extorting money from suitors, would the Committee believe that, under the operation of this clause, when a man had paid his £5 deposit, to show his *bona fides*, he would have to pay £2 10s. to get it out again, and he would never get back the £2 10s at all? This was one example. But there were one or two things more startling still in their operation on the poorer class of suitors. He hoped the hon. and learned Attorney General would not deny that one of the most useful Acts of Parliament with which they were familiar was the power of challenging the legality of a decision by an appeal to a Superior Court; it had operated usefully in more ways than one. It had always been a protection to poorer suitors, that they had this power of appealing to a Superior Court; and, under the system of fees—the Committee would remember he was dealing only with the question of Court fees—this could be done for 9s.; but, under this clause, unless enough was raised to meet the charge of £17,500, the fees might be raised from 9s. to £4. It was impossible to go into all the examples; but these two startling examples would show the effect on suitors least able to afford fees of this description. What possible defence was there for suitors, if these extortionate fees were demanded as a condition of their getting into Chancery at all? They had to pay their own costs—their legal advisers; but this was a tax for the administration of justice on every suitor who went into Chancery. There was one protest which he desired to make, and it was against the hour at which the Committee stage of this Bill was taken. He was very much disappointed that such a discussion as this should have been taken at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning. The question was one which was not alone for lawyers to consider; it was a matter for the public. It was not the least in the world a matter of technicality. They who were lawyers knew all about it, and were able to deal with the facts and put them before the general public; but instead of taking the question at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning, when it was almost impossible for them to have

their observations disseminated all over the country, they should have brought it on at a reasonable hour. The only conclusion he could come to, from the hour at which the Government had allowed this question to come on, was that they did not want all the facts to be known and publicly debated. He knew it was said that the error which had occurred was owing to previous Acts of Parliament; and he was aware it was argued that the Courts of Justice had been provided partly on the credit of the future suitor. Probably, that error had been committed, and the Bill embodying it had passed without discussion—in fact, he knew it had. But the theory was that the Suitors' Fee Fund should pay a portion of the expense. The estimate had fallen far short of the actual expenditure, so that the sum now due, in round numbers, was £1,000,000. He believed the fees of 1875 were, in themselves, a very serious and a very improper increase on those which had existed before; and if they compared the present fees, with those which existed before 1875, they would find that the increase was simply enormous. So far as the question of Party government was considered, therefore, neither Party was to blame. He thought, however, the Committee should refuse to adopt so monstrous a system of taxation as was proposed in the Bill, and decline altogether to have a measure passed into law for the purpose of hanging round suitors for the next half-century fees of so extravagant an amount.

MR. COURTNEY said, that he need not assure the Committee that he very much regretted the necessity which had compelled the Government to allow this Bill to come on at so late an hour. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir Hardinge Giffard) knew that if it had been arrived at sooner, the Government would have been glad to bring it on, and that nothing but pressure of Business had delayed it to so late an hour. That being the case, he would proceed at once to the single issue raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said, fairly enough, that there was no particular blame as between the two Governments. The matter had originated in 1865, when the New Courts of Justice were decided upon, and when it was thought that an

expenditure of £1,500,000 would suffice. £1,000,000 had accumulated in the Court of Chancery, and that had been very fairly described by the hon. and Gentleman as public money, though it had come from the suitors. A question as to whether or not that was public money was discussed at the time; but there could be no doubt that it was rightly regarded as public money. That £1,000,000 was devoted to the New Courts; and the residue of £500,000 was to be defrayed, partly by the sale of the materials of the Old Courts of Justice, and partly by a Suitors' Fee, which was to last 50 years. He did not wish to discuss the propriety of that arrangement. The Courts of Justice had cost a great deal more than was originally contemplated, and the matter had come before the late Government in 1879, or probably at an earlier period. In 1879 the Government presented to the House of Commons a Bill in its essential particulars identical with the present Bill. The Bill recited what the present measure recited—namely, the fact that the cost of the Courts of Justice very much exceeded the estimate; and it then proposed to defray the excess by levying a special rent of court fee which was to be calculated at 6 per cent per annum for 25 years on the unliquidated balance, which would make the rent of court fee very much higher than was now proposed. He was not charging the late Government with anything, but was merely putting before the Committee the fact that the principle contained in the present Bill was a principle sanctioned by Parliament in 1865, and taken up by the late Government, although their Bill, when it had passed a second reading, had to be abandoned through stress of circumstances. The issue now raised was, whether the principle of the settlement of 1865 should be maintained—that settlement having been to raise the necessary fund by rent of court fee. This Bill merely proposed that the balance required should be raised by rent of court fee. The proposal of the Bill was a composition, and a very considerable composition, because the Treasury were by no means insisting on all they would be entitled to insist on if they adhered strictly to the terms of the agreement of 1865. The unsettled balance was something like £900,000, and the amount the

Treasury were going to accept in liquidation of that was an annuity of £17,500, which did not represent two-thirds of the amount. [Mr. INCE: An annuity for how long?] For ever; unless redeemed by surplus fees. It represented, at the outside, £600,000, instead of the £900,000—the unsettled balance. With regard to the hon. and learned Gentleman's criticism of the particular fees imposed, he (Mr. Courtney) confessed himself not prepared to meet the special charges which had been made. The fees were drawn up originally by a committee consisting of experts of great character and ability, well acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the Courts, and a committee, he should have thought, hardly liable to err in the direction of charging high or unduly excessive fees. These fees had been approved by the Judges, and were now legally in force, which was a fact hardly appreciated by the Members of the Committee. Fundamentally, the question raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman was whether it was proper to make the suitors in our Courts contribute anything; and, if so, how much, to the expense of the Courts? The principle which had been acted upon hitherto by the Legislature and the Executive Government was this—that the expense of the Courts, other than the salaries of the Judges, should be met by charges levied on the suitors. Those salaries were met by payments out of the general Exchequer; but the expenses of the offices and accommodation of the suitors and Court officials was defrayed by the suitor, which appeared to him to be a very fair and reasonable compromise. He should like, at all events, those who opposed the principle to say what share, if any share, of the cost of the Courts and the expenses of their maintenance should be defrayed by the suitor; or whether they thought that the suitor should be wholly exonerated from all share of the burden thrown on the taxpayers of the United Kingdom? Both in principle and equity, it appeared to him to be desirable that the moderate allocation of the costs of the Court mentioned in this Bill should be defrayed by the suitors. He did not put this forward as a matter originated by Her Majesty's Government, but simply as the carrying out of an arrangement originated in 1865. He was not aware of any circumstances that

should induce the House of Commons to depart from the principle the House and Parliament had acted upon 19 years ago, and which had recommended itself to the late Government.

MR. INDERWICK said, that with regard to these fees, he only wished to point out that the sum to be charged was settled by the officials of the Courts, who might be supposed to be interested, or, at any rate, to be anxious to do everything they possibly could to provide the Government with the necessary funds; and it did not seem to him that the suitors were at all adequately represented in the transaction. However, it was not on the question of fees that he wished to speak, but on the principle involved in the clause. The principle was one which most of them would adhere to. In fact, he should not be surprised if the Secretary to the Treasury himself gave his adherence to it—possibly in a modified form. It was that, so far as might be, the administration of justice in this country should be untaxed. The hon. Gentleman referred to the arrangement made in 1865. The principal reason the clause was opposed—the clause being really an embodiment of the Bill—was that the proposition made was in contravention of the understanding come to in 1865. When this matter was before the House there was considerable discussion, not only in this but the other House of Parliament, as to the propriety of charging suitors with the cost of the administration of justice. The estimated cost of the Courts at that time was £1,500,000, which was raised by the application of certain funds. The charges of 1s. 6d. for each writ issued, and 6s. or 7s. for each probate or letter of administration, were made, and the Attorney General of the day said that charges such as these were infinitesimal, and would operate for only a short period of time. The hon. and learned Gentleman contended that they would not be felt by the suitors. On another occasion the charges were referred to as almost imperceptible, and the result was that they were agreed to, both by this and the other House of Parliament. A limited assent was given to the principle, simply because Members believed they were only making a small charge which was really imperceptible, and that might, to some extent, be justifiable. When the Bill was before

the House of Lords, the Lord Chancellor, in introducing it, referred to this matter himself, and said the charge he proposed to put on suitors was of a very trifling character; in fact, he used the phrase "that it was so small that it would be hardly felt by the suitors." Lord Cranworth had objected to anything at all being charged to the suitors for the purpose of building the Courts of Justice, and had said that the tax on litigation was now as high as it could reasonably and properly be made. It was only on the Lord Chancellor reiterating the statement, that the tax was so small as to be hardly perceptible, that it met with an unwilling assent, and was passed by both Houses of Parliament. What was proposed to be done now? Why, it was proposed to increase the fees on the suitors. The measure would put on a diminishing number of suitors, who came to the Royal Courts of Justice, an increased burden of £17,500 a-year. He said a diminishing number of suitors; and in this he was perfectly accurate, for the number of suitors was larger the year before last than last year, and larger last year than this year. The number was decreasing, and would continue to decrease, and the amount that was taken in fees would also decrease. The fees were less last year than the year before, and there was very good reason for this diminution, because a large amount of work was now done in the Country Registries and in the County Courts that, at one time, used to be brought before the Superior Courts. They must reflect, therefore, upon the desirability of placing increased burdens upon the people, who were bound to resort to Her Majesty's Courts in London for the purpose of obtaining justice. It seemed to him it was their duty to endeavour to diminish, as much as possible, the charges levied upon the suitors, rather than the reverse. It was on that ground, therefore, that he thought the principle of the Bill was bad, and in contravention of the understanding come to in 1865. He objected to the Bill as strongly as he could. The Secretary to the Treasury and the Government would say that they had incurred an expenditure of £2,000,000; and the excess of expenditure over the original estimates must be made up some way or other. They contended this was the best mode of raising it; and they probably did so be-

cause individual suitors could not personally complain. It was not for hon. Members to say to the Government how they should obtain the money they required; but he would suggest that, when the matter was discussed in 1865, there was a sum of £3,000,000, which was described as "Suitors' Money," which it was agreed, in the course of the discussion, could not be in any way touched. It was said that, for some reason which was not very obvious, the capital sum could not be touched, though the Government could deal as they chose with the interest that accrued upon it, because the State held the money as bankers. At that time there was a large amount of profit upon that sum; and what he wanted to say was, that if this £3,000,000 was in existence at that time, it should be in existence still. Some of the interest, no doubt, had been used for the purposes of the Government; but there must still remain a large amount, and he would suggest that it should be applied to the purpose of discharging the debt under discussion. That money existed somewhere in the Public Treasury, and the Courts of Justice were perfectly entitled to it, as it was primarily applicable to the reduction of litigation. If the Government had not applied it to that purpose, hon. Members had a perfect right to say that, until they had accounted for it, it was impossible to come upon the unhappy suitors, as they did in 1865, and put upon them a heavy taxation in the shape of fees. But, as he had said before, he did not wish to indicate the source from which the money which was required should necessarily be drawn; he simply mentioned the existence of a certain sum which was available, and asked for a reply from the Government.

Mr. INCE said, he had listened to the explanation of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) with great regret, seeing that it had contained no reason whatever for the introduction of the measure other than that something had been done in 1865, the principle of which the hon. Member had not attempted to justify. But the matter did not end there, because what it was now proposed to do was to intensify what was done in 1865—to increase, to a very considerable extent, the charge on the suitor. He should like to remind the Committee of what the Act of 1865 did.

It sought to make up the sum of £300,000; but this Bill dealt and proposed to burden the suitor with a sum of over £900,000. The Act of 1865, in the next place, proposed a repayment by means of what were called "Redeemable Annuities," which were not to last more than 50 years, whereas this Bill would make the charge of £17,500 perpetual. [Mr. COURTNEY: No; it will be redeemable.] Yes; but redeemable how? The Lord Chancellor and the authorities who dealt with the fees would have power to increase them or decrease them as they saw fit. They, by increasing the fees, could form a fund to redeem the charge. But the Bill contained no such clause as was contained in the Act of 1865, under which a demand for fees could not last for a longer term than 50 years. In the next place, the former Act kept the Court fees imposed in respect of rent distinguished, so that everyone knew what was being done. Again, under a succeeding Act, which he saw it was proposed by the Schedule of this Bill to repeal, Returns were to be placed before Parliament yearly, showing precisely how these fees had been applied, and what amounts they produced. So that while, in the first place, the Committee was asked to continue the objectionable system of enabling Judges to tax the suitors as they saw fit, they were, in the next place, asked to deprive themselves of any means of knowing what the amount of that taxation was. In addition to what his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Inderwick) had said, there was one other matter which he should like the Committee to bear in mind. The throwing of the charge of £17,500 upon the fees of Court prevented those fees being turned to the very object which his hon. and learned Friend said was the principal object of the fees—namely, the maintenance of Court expenses; and the result was, that the Court, instead of having the money applied to its services, was being crippled in every sort of way. He was told that within the last few weeks the Judges had been deprived of one of their clerks. He knew there were various improvements necessary in the internal arrangements of the wretched rooms forming the New Courts; but, he was bound to say, there appeared to be no money with which to make improvements. Under such circumstances, there was an

additional reason why there should be no fresh charge thrown on the Fee Fund. If there was any fresh imposition on the suitors, it should be kept down to the lowest level, and should not be made by judicial officers. He considered that the Fee Fund was already insufficient for the purposes to which it might be turned, and, therefore, it was inexpedient to throw upon it this larger charge.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) did not mean to say anything upon the general question, which was one of old standing; but he wished to say one word in reference to the question of fees. The omission of the clause would not affect the fees, because they would still go on. Attention had been called to one or two matters which, quite apart from the view which might be taken as to the desirability or otherwise of omitting the clause, deserved consideration. For instance, he thought that £2, though it might be a reasonable hearing fee for the Court of Appeal, or for the trial of an action, was an excessive fee in a case stated by magistrates. He thought, too, the filing fee of £1 in such a case was a very serious matter, and that if an alteration were made it would not result in any great loss to the Revenue. He assured the Committee that this and other matters which had been raised should receive attention.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 47; Noes 71: Majority 24.—(Div. List, No. 133.)

MR. COURTNEY said, that after the result of the Division, perhaps the Committee would allow Progress to be reported, and would not be surprised if he made the Motion.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Courtney*),—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (REPEAL, &c.) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 254.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

MR. WARTON said, he hoped that the hon. Gentleman opposite in charge of the Bill (*Mr. Hibbert*) would consent to report Progress immediately, because he (*Mr. Warton*) had an important Amendment to propose.

MR. HIBBERT said, he was quite prepared to accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman (*Mr. Warton*); but he could not assent to report Progress at once.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered in Committee.*

(*In the Committee.*)

Clauses 1 to 8, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 9.

MR. WARTON moved the omission of the clause.

Motion made, and Question, "That Clause 9 stand part of the Bill," put, and *negatived.*

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

REVISION OF JURORS' AND VOTERS' LIST (DUBLIN COUNTY) BILL.

(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland,
Mr. Trevelyan.*)

[BILL 124.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon Thursday, resolve itself into the said Committee."

MR. HEALY said, the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin (*Colonel King-Harman*) and others, interested in opposing the Bill, had left the House, he supposed, in obedience to a signal that the Bill was not coming on; but himself (*Mr. Healy*) and others, anxious to assist in passing the Bill, had not been told. Why were certain hon. Members singled out, and given information, while others were left to sit out other Business, waiting to assist the Government with this Bill? It was now to be put off till Thursday; but, of course, not with the slightest notion of going on with it then. Did the Government really mean to pass the Bill or not? It looked singularly like an intention to send the Bill up to the other House in

the month of August, giving their Lordships that reason for rejecting it. He shrewdly suspected that the Treasury were responsible for these delays. He did not blame the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, who, he believed, was anxious to see the Bill pass—and it was one of the small number for Ireland that could be passed—but the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Courtney*), thinking it would involve a few hundred pounds additional expenditure in Ireland, adopted this mode of killing it. Let there be a frank statement when the Bill would be taken, so that hon. Members interested might not be brought down and kept waiting for the Bill night after night.

MR. WARTON said, he was present on Friday, when the Bill was postponed, and there were but a few Members in the House; and when an appeal was made to the only Member of the Government present, the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*), he, in a good-natured way, said—"We will set up the Bill directly;" and so it was put down for Monday.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he must add his protest to that of his hon. Friend (*Mr. Healy*). They were slipping very near the day of revision, a most important event in relation to Irish politics, and all parties looked forward to the result with great interest. If the Government allowed that day to arrive, without a better revision being made, they would find themselves stranded in great difficulties. Last year, there was great dissatisfaction at the wretched manner in which the Recorder attempted to get through the business, in order to meet the various engagements attached to his position. It was shameful the way in which voters had to fight to get their names on the list. They had to watch day after day; and, if they chanced to be absent when their names were called, they were passed over. Hundreds of men in the county of Dublin had been omitted, owing to the duties that devolved on the Recorder, which he was wholly unable to meet; 1,000 voters, who should have been on the Register, had been deprived of their votes, simply because of the incapacity of this man to meet the engagements of his position. He would appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Soli-

citor General for Ireland, who knew the necessity for the Bill, would he press upon the Government the urgency of the measure? Why bring it in at all, if not with the intention of proceeding with it? Were they going to accommodate the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin, who hoped, by blocking the Bill, to retain his position for a while? Only a short time since, the Chief Secretary for Ireland said he did not wish to bring the Bill forward in the absence of the hon. and gallant Member, and it would now appear they were only going to have the Bill when the hon. and gallant Member wished it; and how much the Bill would prejudice his position as Member, Irish Members knew. He would propose, as an Amendment, "That the Bill be taken To-morrow at Two of the clock."

Amendment proposed, to leave out "Thursday," and insert "To-morrow at Two of the clock,"—(*Mr. Harrington*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'upon Thursday' stand part of the Question."

MR. COURTNEY said, the hon. Member for Monaghan (*Mr. Healy*) had attributed to him (*Mr. Courtney*) an influence in opposition to the Bill which he did not possess. It was obvious that the simple explanation was that the Franchise Bill was not reached until a late hour, and occupied considerable time; other Business followed in turn, and he felt, at past 2 o'clock, it was too late to go on with the Bill. It was quite open to any hon. Member to ask during the evening if the Bill would be taken. It was now proposed to put it down for to-day; but the only result would be that it would be reached at 10 minutes to 7. If the hon. Member would leave it for Thursday, in all probability the Bill would be taken after the principal Business of that evening was disposed of.

MR. HEALY thought, under the circumstances, his hon. Friend (*Mr. Harrington*) would withdraw his Amendment, on the understanding that the Bill would be taken on Thursday. Would the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland say the Bill should be taken then?

MR. HARRINGTON said, of course, he would withdraw his Amendment if

he saw any probability of the Bill being taken on Thursday; but he should divide on every occasion the Bill was postponed, in order that the public might see how the Bill was treated by the Government.

MR. COURTNEY said, he would consult with his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to taking the Bill. Of course, it could not be taken as the first Business on Thursday; but he saw no reason why it should not be taken later.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (*Mr. Walker*) said, he had no influence in arranging the Business of the House; but he was anxious and ready to go on with the Bill at any time when his Colleagues, who had the management of the order of Business, thought it should be brought on. He would also consult with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland on the subject.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Committee *deferred till Thursday*.

COUNTY COURTS (IRELAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Findlater, Mr. T. A. Dickson.*)

[BILL 258.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

MR. HEALY said, he understood the Bill would be committed, and Amendments inserted *pro formd*, and that the Bill would be reprinted and recommitted. On that understanding, he offered no opposition.

Bill *considered in Committee* [Bill 258]; Bill, as amended, to be *printed; recommitted for Thursday*.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1878 (DISTRICTS) BILL.

(*Mr. Hastings, Sir Edmund Lechmere, Lord Moreton, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Mr. Duckham.*)

[BILL 253.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HASTINGS said, he believed there was no opposition in any quarter to the Bill. Its object was simply to give to Quarter Sessions the same power as to detached or semi-detached portions of their counties, in regard to cattle disease, that they had possessed for a quarter of a century with regard to police,

The names of five county Members were on the back of the Bill, and county Members, he believed, were unanimous in supporting it.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday.

TRUSTEES OF SETTLEMENTS BILL.

(*Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Henry Allen, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Ince, Mr. Elton.*)

[BILL 255.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. TOMLINSON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he believed there was no opposition to the Bill, and its object was well understood.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

MR. COURTNEY said, he must ask the hon. Member to adjourn the debate. He did not now oppose the Bill; but it must be submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown for examination. He would, therefore, move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Courtney,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Friday.

LICENSING ACT (1872) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 248.]

(*Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Armitage.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he believed there was no opposition to the Bill. Its object was a simple one. It was, in cases where a licence was illegally withheld, to make a copy of the licence available in cases of application for transfer of licence, as in cases where it was an application for a licence.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

Mr. Hastings

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 24th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Customs and Inland Revenue* (147); Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order* (148); Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2)* (149); Tramways Provisional Orders* (150); Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3)* (151); Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment* (152).

Second Reading—Water Provisional Orders (No. 2)* (128); Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2)* (126); Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4)* (127); School, &c. Buildings (Ireland)* (129).

Committee—Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) (103).

Committee—Report—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4)* (119); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9)* (120); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10)* (121); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3)* (122); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act)* (123); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Waterworks)* (124); Fisheries (Ireland)* (77).

Third Reading—Criminal Law Amendment (107); Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland)* (104), and passed.

NEW PEER.

James Earl of Seafield in the Peerage of Scotland, having been created Baron Strathspey of Strathspey in the counties of Inverness and Moray in the Peerage of the United Kingdom—Was in the usual manner introduced.

PUBLIC HEALTH—CHOLERA—REPORTED OTBREAK AT TOULON, FRANCE.—QUESTION.

EARL DE LA WARR said, he wished to ask Her Majesty's Government a Question of which he had given private Notice—namely, Whether any information had been received respecting the alleged outbreak of cholera at Toulon?

LORD CARRINGTON: My Lords, up to 3.25 p.m. to-day the Foreign Office had received no reply to a telegram which they sent, asking for information about the outbreak of cholera at Toulon. I might remind my noble Friend opposite (Earl De La Warr), in regard to this Question, that the regulations which were issued by the Local Government Board last year, with respect to ships arriving from ports where cholera is

prevalent, or suspected of having cholera cases on board, are still in force. In July last, a circular letter was also issued to the local sanitary authorities with respect to the precautions to be taken against the infection of cholera. All reasonable precautions are still in force.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.—(No. 103.)

(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he must be allowed to express the hope that the noble Earl opposite (Earl Fortescue) would not persevere with his intention of moving the rejection of Clause 3. The object of the Bill was to enable information to be obtained of cruelties practised which had not hitherto been available, and it was necessary that some persons should be empowered to enter the premises where the pigeon-shooting was proceeding and examine the birds that had been trapped.

House in Committee accordingly.

Clause 1 (Short titles of Act and of 12 & 13 Vict. c. 92, 13 & 14 Vict. c. 92) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Penalties on keeping ground for trap-shooting, and on shooting at birds from traps, &c.)

Amendment made in title by leaving out all after ("on"), and inserting ("mutilating, &c., birds for shooting purposes").

On the Motion of The Earl of REDESDALE, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 17, after ("liberated") insert ("or about to be liberated"); line 18, after ("otherwise") insert ("cruelly"); line 19, leave out ("so as to affect") and insert ("for the purpose of affecting"), and after ("flying") insert ("or for any other purpose"); line 20, after ("shall") insert ("so mutilate or injure, or who shall trap, liberate, or"); line 22, after ("offence") insert—

("Or in the discretion of the court before which the offender is brought, to imprisonment

with hard labour for any term not exceeding one month.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Justices may empower two persons to examine birds provided for shooting).

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES), in moving as an Amendment, in line 27, leave out ("the"), and insert ("a"), and after ("which") insert ("who has received reliable information"), said, the Bill itself was to enable information, which hitherto had not been easily attainable with regard to cruelties alleged to be perpetrated at pigeon-shooting matches, to be obtained more readily. Persons engaged in these matches carefully excluded all persons likely to give information with regard to the cruelties; and the only chance of their being able to get proper information was by giving authority to certain persons to enter places where shooting matches were going on.

Amendment *moved,*

In line 27, after ("in") leave out ("the") and insert ("a"), and after ("which") insert ("who has received reliable information that"). —(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, the effect of the clause, as amended, would be that an order might be made without an information upon oath. He knew of no case in which a man's liberty or property was interfered with without an information upon oath. He suggested that that should be provided for.

Amendment *amended,* by leaving out ("who has received reliable information that"), and inserting ("he has received information on oath that"), and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Earl of REDESDALE, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 1, after ("may"), insert ("if he shall consider it desirable").

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN moved an Amendment providing that one of the two persons named in the order should be a police-constable.

Amendment *moved,* in page 2, line 2, after ("persons"), insert ("one of whom shall be a police constable"). —(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

LORD ABERDARE said, he thought the work would be better done by the officers of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; although the police were found very useful in assisting those officers, 19-20ths of the work was done by the latter, and done very well. The great drawback was, that the policeman would always be in uniform, and his coming would, therefore, easily be discovered.

THE EARL OF ANNESLEY said, he wished to ask the noble Lord (Lord Aberdare) how he proposed to detect all these cases of cruelty? For instance, the cruelty might be committed in an underhand manner, and in placing the birds in the traps. Supposing that the birds were severely pinched and so injured as they were placed in the traps, how would the Inspectors proceed?

LORD ABERDARE said, the Bill was not his Bill; but such cruelty as that mentioned would be discovered after the birds had been shot. The Inspectors would have the power of examining the birds after, as well as before, they were shot at.

Amendment agreed to; words inserted.

On the Motion of The Earl of REDES-DALE, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 10, after (“before”), insert (“or after”).

EARL FORTESCUE said, that the noble Earl at the Table (the Earl of Redesdale), in accepting the words “information upon oath,” had really disarmed his (Earl Fortescue’s) objection to the clause, and he therefore withdrew it.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Acts to be construed together with previous Acts) *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Earl of REDES-DALE, the following new clause added after Clause 3:—

(Power to pay part of penalty to prosecutor.)

“In addition to the moiety of any penalty under this Act, or the Acts to be construed therewith, recovered before any justice, and directed to be paid to the person who shall prosecute for the same or to such other person as to such justice may seem right, such justice may in his discretion direct the whole or any part of the other moiety to be paid to such person.”

Report of Amendments to be received on *Thursday* next.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 107.) THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, “That the Bill be now read 3^d.”—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, he would ask the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie) if he thought it possible to carry the Bill that Session, seeing that there were no less than 22 Amendments entered upon the Paper; so that, practically, the House must go into Committee again after the third reading? It was evident that Parliament was still so uncertain how to deal with this subject, that, in his opinion, it would be better to withdraw this Bill, and introduce a matured measure next Session.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he was of opinion that, as so many Amendments were to be proposed, the most convenient course would be to recommit the measure. It would be inconvenient to discuss the Amendments of which Notice had been given after the third reading had been agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that it would be unusual to take the course suggested by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Galloway), as Notice of the proposal to do so had not been given. The apparent great length of the Paper of Amendment was due to the repetition of particular Amendments, all of which had reference to one point. The fate of one of them, when decided, would determine that of all the others.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 101; Not-Contents 45: Majority 56.

Resolved in the affirmative; Bill read 3^d accordingly.

Moved, “That the Bill do pass.”—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

LORD FITZGERALD said, that it was really necessary to look at the character of the Bill, which created one felony, 10 misdemeanours, and six offences punishable by summary conviction. With respect to these cases, there was this novel and extraordinary proposition—that they might be heard

in camera. In addition to that, the administration of the measure was intrusted entirely to the police. His excuse for calling the attention of their Lordships to the subject was its extreme danger and its impolicy, especially as it was provided in regard to several classes of cases, that they could be disposed of summarily. There was no one in that Assembly who had so large an experience in Criminal Courts as he had. For 23 years he had presided in them, while the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack and the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns) had scarcely ever been in a Criminal Court in their lives. The provision was not only bad in itself, but was contrary to public policy. If there was any excellence in our Courts of Law over those of other European countries, he believed it depended on this—that our Courts were open, while theirs were closed. In other countries, the accused did not see the witnesses; in ours, the witnesses and accused were brought face to face, and there was publicity at every stage. For his part, if he had still to administer the Criminal Law, he should be afraid to do so if the public were not admitted, and if his acts and words were not open to public criticism. It was that publicity which gave security to the subject in the administration of the law, and which secured for the law the admiration and respect which was to be found in no other country in the world. This Bill struck at the very foundation of all that. During all the years that he presided in Criminal Courts, he never had to hear a case *in camera*. On several occasions application to do so was made to him, but he refused. On the other hand, whenever an intimation was given to the public Press that the details of a case ought not to be published, he never knew such an intimation to be disregarded. In particular cases women and children ought not to be present, and in such cases he had always exercised his power of excluding them. He would appeal to the noble Earl in charge of the Bill (the Earl of Dalhousie), who would like, no doubt, to descend to posterity with the Bill in his hand, not to allow the measure to be disfigured with such provisions as those he had pointed out. As regarded the subject itself, he would call their Lordship's attention to the danger that existed in an enthusiastic

and generous mind being allowed to run riot as regarded its sympathies upon it; and, indeed, he must confess that his (Lord Fitzgerald's) confidence was much shaken as regarded the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell), on account of the general support which he had given to the Bill as it stood. He (Lord Fitzgerald) would appeal to him not to let his enthusiasm run away with him. He would conclude by moving to leave out the provision which gave power to any Court, Justice, or Magistrate to exclude the public from the hearing of the cases specified in the clause, with the view of inserting a general clause providing that the exclusion should only extend to women and all young people under 21.

Amendment moved, in Clause 2, page 1, leave out from line 20 to end of clause.—(*The Lord Fitzgerald*.)

LORD BRAMWELL said, he agreed with the noble and learned Lord (Lord Fitzgerald) as to the great danger of a too enthusiastic character in dealing with matters of this kind, and in proof of it he would refer to the enthusiastic speech of his noble and learned Friend. He said his confidence in him (Lord Bramwell) was much shaken. However much he might regret this, he was aware that the good opinion which he had of him was so much more than he deserved that he could afford to have a large piece of it taken off, and more than his due would be left. While his noble and learned Friend appealed to his 23 years' experience, he (Lord Bramwell) was able to refer to 26 years' experience. With regard to the point in question, there could be no doubt that there were many cases heard in public which were more indecent than those mentioned in the clause. He would, therefore, rather see the sub-section omitted altogether, because it was generally assumed that Magistrates and Judges had the power of excluding women and children at present; and the insertion of such a provision in the Bill would throw doubt on the right to exercise the power in other cases.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that on the part of the Government, he would agree to the Amendment. With regard to the Amendment to be subsequently proposed by the noble and learned Lord (Lord Fitzgerald), he

should be prepared to agree to it, with the exception of the words "investigation or other proceeding."

Amendment agreed to.

Words left out accordingly.

Consequential Amendments made.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he hoped their Lordships would be induced to amend the Bill, and to take away many of the objectionable provisions which it now contained. He wished to propose, as an Amendment, that the age at which consent might be given, in the case of children dealt with by the Bill, should be reduced from 16 to 15. He wished to say one word generally on the Bill; and as regarded it, many of its provisions seemed to him to be very harsh, and he thought that an endeavour should be made to carry out the original intention of the measure—namely, to prevent outrages being committed on young children. He considered that one effect of it would be to make any young man or young woman liable to lose liberty and character at the dictation of the police. That, he considered, was not a right state of things. He contended that, if they drove professional prostitution from the streets, the consequence would be that seduction would increase; and the evil, when driven from the streets, would find its way into private life. He believed that legislation such as this would not redound to the credit or popularity of their Lordships' House in dealing with social questions. After a long experience of 40 years in the other House of Parliament, he thought he could say that the mode in which Business was conducted in their Lordships' House would not suffer in comparison with the manner in which it was carried on in the House of Commons. But what was more important than the way the Business was done was, what that Business was, and he did not think that this law would redound to the credit of their Lordships' House. Some of their Lordships appeared to think that, no matter what the provisions of this Bill might be, they ought to be passed, provided they were sufficiently stringent. He knew that, as regarded the right rev. Prelates, they always held to whatever was most stringent in regard to the provisions of the Bill, which reminded

him of the Prelate who spoke of the "Blessedness of the lash," and who expatiated upon the excellence of keeping a man sentenced to it in ignorance of when it was to be inflicted, so that he might rise, every morning, to a day of mental agony and torture. From doctrines such as that, one would suppose that we were ready to resort to all the punishment of the Inquisition. The right rev. Prelate would, he thought, make a most admirable flogging-master. What the public expected of their Lordships was not gushing, unreasonable legislation—not that they should deal with this question from the point of view of a celibate clergy, and as if they had no knowledge of human nature—but that they should deal with it as men of sense, who had a knowledge of the passions, the feelings, the temptations, the trials, and the struggles of poor, feeble human nature. That was what the people of this country had a right to expect from their Lordships; and he ventured to say that, if this Bill passed their Lordships' House, and if their Lordships said "Content" to the measure in its present form, the result would be that they would not pass their measure eventually, and they would lose much of the good that otherwise they might gain; and along with the loss of the measure, which they were anxious to pass, there was the danger also of the loss of the confidences with which the administration of their Lordships' House had hitherto, on the whole, been regarded. In order to diminish that danger, he would move the reduction of the age from 16 to 15.

Amendment moved, in Clause 5, page 3, line 6, to leave out ("sixteen"), and insert ("fifteen").—(The Earl of Wemyss.)

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN, in opposing the Amendment, said, that with regard to what had been said by the noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss), and in despite of the several compliments contained therein to their Lordships' House, he (the Earl of Aberdeen) must confess that he did not esteem it as a very high compliment that, because the Bill was not likely to be received as a popular measure in the country, therefore their Lordships were not likely to receive it favourably, or to do the thing that was right respecting

it—in short, that they were to be influenced in doing what they were about to do by a regard for popularity. The object of this legislation was to protect children from outrage. Was Parliament to do nothing to find a remedy for admitted evils? He agreed with the noble Earl that the powers given to the police was a question which required the gravest consideration; and he ventured to predict that, if this Bill suffered shipwreck in “another place,” the rock on which it would split would not be the stringency of certain provisions, but that too much power was given to the police. It was no argument to say that the Bill attempted to put down what had never been put down. If, by that, it was implied that existing evils must prevail to the same extent, he ventured to hold a different opinion; the present amount of evil was not inevitable; and men of sense and education were banding themselves together with strong determination to protest against and eradicate such a pernicious and demoralizing idea as that these evils were inevitable, and to protect girls, whom all regarded as children, from temptation, to which, by common consent, they ought not to be subjected. He, therefore, hoped that their Lordships would not agree to the proposed reduction of the age from 16 to 15.

LORD MOUNT TEMPLE said, in ordinary cases a girl of 15 was more a child than a woman. Trained to obedience, she found it difficult to say “no” to those who spoke with the authority of age and station. She could not be expected to resist a procuress, or a man of strong will and experience. She could not realize the terrible results of the traps and nets set for her, more than goldfinches could avoid the nets concealed from their sight. It would be cruel to deprive these young girls, who were exposed to so many serious temptations, of the protection which they deserved.

EARL CAIRNS said, the noble Earl who had spoken from the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) had paid their Lordships the compliment of saying that, after a long experience of the other House of Parliament, he thought the proceedings of their Lordships’ House were conducted in a manner so orderly and efficient, that their Lordships need

not be afraid of any comparison on the subject. He (Earl Cairns) was sorry to say, however, that his noble Friend went very far himself to overthrow the truth of that compliment, because anything more disorderly than the speech his noble Friend had just addressed to their Lordships, he (Earl Cairns) had never before heard in that House. Their Lordships had passed the third reading of this Bill, after a Division; and yet, after that, the noble Earl rose to make a speech which ranged over every section of the Bill from beginning to end; and he had so far forgotten himself as to say to their Lordships—“If your Lordships say ‘Content’ to the third reading of the Bill, so-and-so will happen.” Well, their Lordships had said “Content” to the third reading of the Bill, although his noble Friend tried to prevent that vote being carried. The noble Earl had read a letter, too, calling attention to the action of the House and to the power of the House, and as to whether that power should be continued or curtailed. Then his noble Friend had made an attack upon the right rev. Bench of Bishops, and, in particular, upon a right rev. Prelate opposite—an attack which, he was bound to say, was entirely unjustifiable, and was not in the best possible taste. The noble Earl next proposed an Amendment on one clause dealing with a particular subject. Their Lordships certainly had the power of amending Bills after third reading; and, whether that power was desirable or not, it was quite clear that it was not the habit of the House, where an essential feature of a Bill had been fully discussed in Committee and upon Report, and upon which Divisions had been taken, to raise that question entirely as a fresh question after the third reading of the Bill had been carried. If his noble Friend was really jealous and anxious for the order rather than the efficiency of the House, he (Earl Cairns) hoped he would not set the example of pursuing a course of this kind, which was altogether irregular, most inconvenient, and most repugnant to common sense. This question had been fully discussed. A Select Committee, chosen from both sides of the House, had been appointed; most important evidence, deserving of great weight, had been heard; and the Committee unanimously came to the decision that this change of the

law was desirable. He must say that that finding was in accordance with a strong feeling that prevailed out-of-doors, and that had been expressed in numerous Petitions. His noble Friend had not advanced a tittle of argument in support of his contention, that the age of 15 would be better than 16. He had spoken about the difficulty of knowing the age of these persons; but an Amendment had been inserted to meet the difficulty as to mistakes occurring with respect to age. In fact, what the noble Earl desired was that there should be no change in the law.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he wished to say a word of a personal character. He had been a Member of the Committee referred to by the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns), and, as the noble and learned Earl had said, the decision arrived at was, in one sense, unanimous. But he (Lord Bramwell) wished to point out that he moved an Amendment that the age should be 15. As no one, however, agreed with him, he thought there would be no use in dividing upon the subject, and, not seeing what the consequence would be, he did not divide.

EARL CAIRNS: I do not think my noble and learned Friend moved this Amendment.

LORD BRAMWELL: Yes; I did, indeed. At all events, I expressed my intention to move that the age be 15.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE: No, no!

LORD BRAMWELL: Well, possibly it might be so; in the next Committee, if he should be on one, he should do better. But he remembered well that he expressed the opinion he now expressed. Their Lordships must make an allowance for his inexperience. He thought that 15 was a better age than 16. If this clause were one which dealt solely with cases of original seduction, the circumstances would be very different; but this was quite impossible, and it might be that, under this clause, a youth who was himself seduced by a girl under 16, who had long been immoral, would be convicted. He was afraid that if the Bill passed without the Amendment, the Act would be brought into contempt by the injustice to which it would lead and the ridicule it would cause.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he trusted the House would adhere to the

Earl Cairns

clause as it stood. He had to complain of the question being raised at so late a stage of the Bill, and after it had been decided by their Lordships. There could be no doubt that the subject was a very difficult and delicate one to settle; but it had been many times debated, and the Government had heard nothing to induce them to change their opinion that 16 was the most desirable age to fix. This was a matter of degree, and the age of 16 had been fixed as a compromise as between the noble Lords who desired to see it placed at 20, and those who would have it remain as now. The Bill was not to suppress immorality, but to protect young children; and the case mentioned by the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) would be met by the Proviso in the clause.

LORD BRAMWELL said, the Proviso would certainly not touch it.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, the sole argument that had been used in favour of 16 years being fixed was that it had been unanimously recommended by the Committee. But the unanimity, or rather disunanimity, of the Committee was shown by the fact that one Member of the Committee (Lord Bramwell) desired to alter 16 to 15; while another (Lord Mount Temple) suggested 17, and had actually made a Motion to that effect in the House, and that Motion was supported by three other Members of the Committee—Earl Cairns, Lord Norton, and the Bishop of London; therefore, he held that it was perfectly absurd to assert that that House was bound by a compromise which even the Members of the Committee had not adhered to. Reference had been made to the foreign law on this subject; but in France, Belgium, and Germany the age was, as now in England, 13. He strongly objected to its being raised.

On Question, That ("sixteen") stand part of the Bill?

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 70; Not-Contents 58: Majority 12.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 8 (Defilement of girl by guardian).

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he should like to know the reasons for this clause, and what guardians had done to earn this special distinction under the Bill? Why were they to

have a term of hard labour apportioned to them if they offended against the provisions of the measure? Why should not the same enactment apply to fathers, and to the family doctor, and the family lawyer? He had never heard that this particular offence was one that was frequently committed.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in reply, said, he was in some measure responsible for the clause; and he should have thought that if there were a subject upon which opinion was unanimous it would be this.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 10 (Amendment of 2 & 3 Vict. c. 47. s. 54., and 10 & 11 Vict. c. 89. s. 28., as to prostitutes).

LORD BRABOURNE, in moving to omit the clause, said, he would make an appeal to the Episcopal Bench. In Committee on the Bill the Lay Peers had negatived the clause by 12 votes; but that majority was converted into a minority of 3 by the action of right rev. Prelates. He (Lord Brabourne) would be the last man in that House to say one disrespectful word of the Episcopal Bench, or to deny their perfect right to vote as they pleased. But he would humbly submit to the right rev. Prelates that they, of all men in the House, had probably the least knowledge of the administration of the Criminal Law; and, therefore, they ought to be careful when those who had a knowledge of it told them that this clause would make fresh complications, and render more difficult the effectual administration of that law. This was not a question of morality against immorality. All their Lordships were, no doubt, equally anxious to promote morality; but the question was whether, in the attempt to do so, they were not about to legislate in a direction, and to a degree, beyond that which public opinion would sanction, and thereby to cause a reaction against their legislation which would be positively injurious to the morality they desired to promote. The noble Earl in charge of the Bill (the Earl of Dalhousie) had told their Lordships that the Bill was not one to put down immorality, save when it affected young girls. Well, then, this clause was alien to the objects of the Bill—it mentioned no age, and was simply a new police regulation, giving

to the police new and most dangerous powers. Moreover, it was a police regulation not demanded by the police, and would place in their hands an enormous temptation. There was not only the danger that a policeman in collusion with a man or a woman might get up cases against innocent persons; but there was also the danger of making the police unpopular, which was the very thing they ought to avoid. He was convinced that the wisest course the Government could take in the interests of the Bill would be to assent at once to the omission of the clause.

Moved, To leave out Clause 10.—(The Lord Brabourne.)

LORD MOUNT TEMPLE supported the clause as it stood.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE said, that the great feature of the debate appeared to be the frequent appeals made to the Episcopal Bench, and the strong lectures—such as the one they had just listened to—given them by noble Lords as to what they ought and what they ought not to do. The noble Lord on the Cross Benches (Lord Brabourne) had said the Bishops had no knowledge of the administration of the Criminal Law. He quite admitted that charge, but they had heard the practice of Courts of Law explained by noble and learned Lords; and he did think they were quite as sensible and capable of forming a judgment upon the evidence before them as any of their Lordships, and most certainly so with regard to the clause under consideration. They were capable of knowing and seeing whether the condition of the London streets was a credit to the Metropolis; or whether it required some further interference on the part of the police. It was because the clause was intended to mitigate a monstrous evil that he would vote for its retention.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he would call their Lordships' attention to the fact that there was no register of prostitutes in this country; and, therefore, how could the police say whether a woman was a prostitute or not? The police was placed in an utterly false position by the clause, and one that was exceedingly dangerous, for they must depend upon hearsay testimony alone. Every woman who belonged to the class of unfortunates was

not outrageous and degraded. He believed that there were very few of their Lordships who had not, when young men, been guilty of immorality. He hoped that they would pause before passing a clause within the range of which their sons might come. He would ask them whether their class was so desperately moral that they were entitled to insist upon all people being moral? They might rely upon it, the more they attempted to prevent the indulgence of natural passion, the more they would force unnatural crime.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that the police were given power by the clause to arrest women as prostitutes; but the character of the women so arrested would, of course, be subsequently investigated. There would not be any difficulty in deciding whether a woman was a public prostitute or not, as they were all known to the police. The subsection of the clause was inserted by the House against the wish of the Government.

LORD ABERDARE said, there could be no doubt that a policeman, after arresting a woman as a prostitute, would have to satisfy a judicial authority that she really was a woman of bad character.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, that under the clause, as it stood, a lady speaking to one of their Lordships in the public streets would be completely at the mercy of any policeman. No doubt, before conviction, it would be necessary that a judicial authority should be satisfied that the woman was of bad character; but the mere fact of arrest, which would be left absolutely to the discretion of the policeman, might irretrievably ruin a woman's character.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, that, in his opinion, the clause was entirely foreign to the real object of the Bill, and ought to be rejected.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, he could not think that the clause was entirely alien to the Bill, or see how the Bill was to be complete without it. It was necessary, in order that the first object of the Bill should be completely carried out, that the streets should be cleared of this sort of traffic. That was the right way to protect boys and young men who came to spend a holiday in town. The head of a great penitentiary had recently told him that

the great cause of the corruption of boys was the state of the London streets. Young lads were corrupted in London, and then carried corruption into their native villages. A noble Lord had recently laid stress on the supply of prostitutes coming, as he said, from the poorer classes; but he had not explained with equal clearness from what classes came the demand. It had been said that all men alike were guilty. He protested against that, for all men were not guilty. He knew well soldiers, sailors, and men in every rank of life who were pure as children. The promulgation of such a doctrine as that, from that place, was likely, he feared, to be a corrupting influence. And it was not true. A noble Lord had said, on a former occasion, that it would be better to divert their attention to the houses of the poor than to pass a Bill like the present; but the wretched condition of the dwellings of the poor was not the sole reason of the extensive corruption that existed. Miserable as were many of the hovels of Ireland, there was no such immorality there as there was in England. In London, people sometimes talked as if the poor were bent on polluting and corrupting the rich; but there were tens of thousands of poor people who were as pure and good as they could be, and as jealous for the honour of their families as any of their Lordships, and they were very anxious to see their Lordships do justice in this matter. He considered it strange that it should be expected that the clergy, to whom so many interests here and hereafter were committed, should stand aloof, and not vote on this subject. He rejected with horror the suggestion that if these fountains of vice were cleared away, the evil would break out in private life. He had too much confidence in the morality of the English people to subscribe to the opinion that, if they put an end to the open violation of morality, worse fountains of evil would burst up within their own households.

On Question, "That the said Clause stand part of the Bill?"

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 62; Not-Contents 43: Majority 19.

Resolved in the affirmative.

LORD NORTON, in moving to insert, after Clause 10, a clause enabling the

Court in which a girl under 16 had been convicted under that clause to send her, in substitution for any punishment to which she might be liable, to a certified home within the meaning of the Act, said, that he was only moving for what was in the Bill at first, but was subsequently omitted, because there was no provision for, or definition of, a home for the purpose. As it was now proposed to be re-inserted, this defect would be supplied. The Secretary of State might certify homes as special reformatories under the provisions of the Act of 1866, only omitting the infliction on girls admitted to them, of a previous imprisonment. The Industrial Schools Act, 1880, enabled Justices to send children living with prostitutes to such schools, often very young, and never after the age of 14. This clause would admit girls up to the age of 16, convicted, under the previous clause, of soliciting prostitution in streets, who had no guardianship, or lived with prostitutes, to special reformatories for such cases. Other reformatories would refuse to admit them. Some guardianship was necessary to rescue such girls from ruin, and train them to decent life. There were some few voluntary homes now established by benevolent ladies for this class; and if by this clause they could be certified and brought under inspection, it would be all the better. It was desirable, if not essential, that such homes should be small—say, each not admitting above 12. There would be power under the Act besides to board out suitable cases in cottage homes. The noble Lord concluded by moving the insertion of the clause.

Moved, after Clause 10, to insert the following clause:—

“Where any person convicted in pursuance of the last preceding section is in the judgment of the court a girl under the age of sixteen years, the court, if satisfied on inquiry that such girl—

- (a.) has no proper guardianship, or
- (b.) is lodging, living, or residing with common or reputed prostitutes, or in a house resided in or frequented by prostitutes for the purpose of prostitution,

may, in addition to or in substitution for any punishment to which she may be liable, order such girl to be sent to a certified home within the meaning of this Act.

One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State may, in manner provided by the Reformatory Schools Act, 1866, certify any home in-

tended for the reception of girls sentenced to be sent to a certified home under this section as a special reformatory school for that purpose. To any home so certified all the provisions of the Reformatory Schools Act, 1866, and any Acts amending the same, shall apply, except that any girl may be sent to such a certified home without any previous sentence of imprisonment.”—(*The Lord Norton.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that he was sorry he could not accept the Amendment of the noble Lord. The original clause he had referred to had been struck out, because, on inquiry, it had been found that it would be extremely difficult to work.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, that the Bill did nothing whatever for the reformation of the girls, who were left by it precisely in the same state in which they disgraced our streets.

Clause *negatived*.

Moved, in page 5, before Clause 11, to insert the following clause:—

“When any trial takes place in relation to any offence under this Act, it shall be lawful for the court or presiding judge or magistrate, in their discretion, to direct that all women, and also all persons being or appearing to be under the age of twenty-one, shall be excluded from the place where such trial is being heard or conducted.”—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

EARL CAIRNS, in opposing the clause, said, he believed it would throw a doubt on the existing power of Judges to exclude the public from their Courts when they might consider it advisable to do so. It would, he thought, be better to leave the matter as it stood.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR supported the clause.

Motion *agreed to*.

Clause *added* to the Bill.

Clause 12 (Summary proceedings against brothel keepers, &c.).

THE EARL OF LIMERICK, in moving the rejection of the clause, said, he did so on the ground that they would be overburdening the Bill if they adopted its provisions. He was as anxious as any of their Lordships to promote morality; but he believed that they would defeat their object if they made their legislation too drastic. The retention of the clause would be likely to lead to the resort to public-houses and hotels rather than the homes of the women, who could not be got rid of by merely

driving them from their lodgings. He therefore moved its omission.

Moved, To leave out Clause 12.—(The Earl of Limerick.)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, the clause did not make any substantial addition to the present law, although it rather enlarged the definition of the houses and of the keepers of them. By instituting a summary mode of procedure it would greatly facilitate the working of the law, which at present was very ineffective.

On Question, "That the said Clause stand part of the Bill?"

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 49; Not-Contents 15: Majority 34.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 13 (Future tenancies determinable for keeping brothel).

On the Motion of The LORD CHANCELLOR, Clause *struck out*.

Question, "That the Bill do pass?" put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature Acts; and for other purposes—Was *presented by The LORD CHANCELLOR*; read 1st. (No. 152.)

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 24th June, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Third Reading*—Smith's Trust Estate, and *passed*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders * [259].

Second Reading—Medical Act Amendment [207], *debate adjourned*.

Considered as amended—Representation of the People [249-260].

Considered as amended—*Third Reading*—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) * [254], and *passed*.

The Earl of Limerick

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

SMITH'S TRUST ESTATE BILL. [Lords.]

(*By Order.*)

THIRD READING.

The Prince of Wales's *Consent*, as Duke of Cornwall, signified.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he suspected that very few Gentlemen in that House knew what this Bill was about. It was called "Smith's Trust Estate Bill," and its object was to enable a lease to be granted to Mr. Smith, or rather the extension of an existing lease to be granted to Mr. Smith, of the entire Scilly Islands. Those Islands comprised between 3,000 and 4,000 acres, and there were rather more than 2,000 inhabitants upon them. Some of these inhabitants were employed in raising vegetables for the London Market; others were employed in matters connected with shipping, and there was not a single stipulation in the whole of the Bill as to how these people were to be treated. The whole of the Islands were to be handed over to Mr. Smith, who was to be called what was known as "the Lord Farmer." This system had been followed in the case of the Smith family since the year 1831. From the year 1570 down to 1831, the Islands were held by members of the Godolphin family under successive leases for varying periods granted by the Dukes of Cornwall, or by the Sovereign. The Godolphin family appeared to have gained their living by wrecking. The last lease expired in the year 1831, and the then lessee, in whom it was vested, being unable to arrange for a new lease on satisfactory terms, the possession of the Islands reverted to the Duchy of Cornwall. Shortly after the termination of the lease, Mr. Augustus John Smith, an ancestor of the present Mr. Smith, negotiated with the Duchy for a lease of the Islands, which was agreed to on the 20th of November, 1834. He believed that the despotism of the late Mr. Smith was a benevolent despotism; but still it was an absolute despotism, as it was at the present moment. Indeed, there was a clause contained in the Bill

—one of the “whereases” of the Bill—which assigned as a reason why the Bill should be passed, that Mr. Smith had reduced the population, and had succeeded in keeping it within the reduced limit. When Mr. Smith took possession of the Scilly Islands, the resident inhabitants were about 2,800 in number; but he reduced them to 2,200, and during the remainder of his life kept it within that limit. Whether Mr. Smith acted upon some Malthusian scheme, whether he prevented marriage altogether, or whether he drove any man who wanted to marry out of the Islands, he (Mr. Labouchere) did not know; but the House was simply asked to put over the Islands, as a sort of hereditary “Lord Farmer,” a descendant of this gentleman, and one of the grounds for doing so was that the family rule had succeeded in reducing the population. He had been told that when anybody did not act in accordance with the wishes of Mr. Smith he was banished from his native Island; that Mr. Smith was the absolute master of these Islands; and no sort of condition or stipulation was contained in this Bill as to the manner in which he was to treat his tenants. There was no fixity of tenure; nothing paid for improvements; nothing they had been agitating for in that House; and he was sure that such a Bill, handed to them as “Smith’s Trust Estate Bill,” and containing such stipulations, would not receive the support of any Radical Member of the House. It was true that the Bill had passed the House of Lords. He was not surprised at that, because the House of Lords was a landlords’ Assembly. It had also passed two stages in the House of Commons, simply because nobody knew anything about it; and he thought that no better exemplification could be put forward of the necessity of the plan intended to be proposed by his hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) to-morrow, for insuring that the House should be placed in possession of some facts concerning Bills of this kind when they came down from the House of Lords than the present measure. Upon the present occasion he should not put the House to the trouble of a Division, for the simple reason that he knew he should not get a majority. If, however, hon. Members desired to divide, he was perfectly ready to divide with them; but

he did not think it was likely they would have a majority on a Private Bill which had already passed the House of Lords and been confirmed in two stages by the House of Commons. It was scarcely probable that such a measure would be thrown out on the third reading. He had only brought the matter under the notice of the House as an exemplification of the way in which Bills that were termed Private Bills were passed in that House. He wished, however, to express his opinion that a more monstrous, a more mischievous, a more scandalous, or a more iniquitous Bill, had never passed through that House.

Mr. DILLWYN said, he very much agreed in principle with the views which had been enunciated by his hon. Friend; but it really seemed to him that the matter the House now had to deal with was a simple and practical one. Before Mr. Augustus Smith, the late proprietor, obtained a lease of these Islands, the Scillonians were destitute and starving wreckers and smugglers, and every year it was found necessary to raise a subscription in order to relieve these discarded people. The late Mr. Augustus Smith, whom many hon. Members knew as a Member of that House went there on a benevolent mission; indeed, it was a most benevolent one. They had heard that he had reduced the population. The real fact was that he found the Islands containing nearly 4,000 acres, upon which a population of nearly 3,000 persons were endeavouring to obtain a livelihood. He reduced the number of acres available for this purpose, first to 3,000, and ultimately to 2,000—he (Mr. Dillwyn) did not think there were more. Mr. Smith found that the Islands were not large enough to support the population, and he induced some of the people to emigrate to the mainland, so that they might find employment and be in a condition to support themselves. In that way Mr. Smith brought about a very useful reform, and succeeded in effecting a vast improvement in the condition of the Islanders. He (Mr. Dillwyn) had himself stayed in these Islands, and he could say that he had never seen a better conducted or a more prosperous set of people. There was now no wrecking or smuggling, and pauperism was unknown in the Islands. When he had seen what benefits had been conferred upon the Islands by a lease like this, he felt that

it was desirable to continue it. It was most desirable that in a group of Islands like the Scilly Islands, isolated from the mainland, being more than 40 miles from Penzance, which was the nearest port, there should be some wealthy capitalist to look after their interests. Therefore, although he agreed with the general principle laid down by his hon. Friend, he thought this was altogether an exceptional case, and he could not oppose the Bill.

SIR JOHN ST. AUBYN wished to say, in a few words, why he concurred with the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). He had known the Scilly Islands for many years. He had paid many visits to them, and it was a matter of notoriety that the condition of the inhabitants had been materially benefited by the action of the present proprietor and of his predecessor, the late Mr. Augustus Smith. It was perfectly true that when Mr. Smith first took over the lease from the Godolphin family that the inhabitants were in a most wretched condition, whereas now they were a prosperous and thriving community. When the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) described the present Bill as a monstrous, scandalous, and iniquitous measure, he (Sir John St. Aubyn) had felt surprise, because he had the honour of representing this community, and he had not had a single complaint from any one of them as to the way in which they were treated. As far as his own personal knowledge went, he believed that the hon. Member for Northampton must have been misinformed, and he thought the House would do well to pass the Bill.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he hoped that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) would be convinced by the testimony of two hon. Members of the House, who were best acquainted with the condition of affairs, that theories were not always consistent with facts. Those who knew anything of the condition of the Western Islands of Scotland could not help wishing that there had been some such care taken of those Islands as had been evinced in the case of the Scilly Islands. The contrast in the condition of the population of the Western Islands of Scotland and in that of the Scilly Islands was extremely striking. The hon. Member for Northampton

spoke of tyranny and despotism; but what was this Bill? It was only under peculiar circumstances of tenure that an Act of Parliament was necessary in regard to the making of a lease. Under ordinary circumstances, a lease could be made by the landlord of his own motion. Everybody who knew the Scilly Islands knew that the influence of the proprietor had been used for nothing but good; and it was only the peculiar circumstances of the tenure which required the sanction of Parliament to the lease. No doubt the sanction of Parliament would not be given to a lease, or to anything else, if it were considered to be inexpedient and likely to be detrimental to the population. The present system of leases, as the hon. Member acknowledged, had existed since the year 1570; and therefore what the hon. Member asked the House to do was to reject a system of tenure which had the prescription of three centuries, without any allegation that the slightest evil had resulted from that tenure, and upon grounds which had been controverted by those who knew most about the matter. He hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton, having heard what had been stated by the hon. Member for West Cornwall (Sir John St. Aubyn) and the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), who could not be accused of being adverse to necessary land reforms, would not divide the House.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, that his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had denounced this Bill with more than his usual vigour, and had said that a more mischievous, scandalous, and iniquitous Bill had never been brought into the House. [MR. LABOUCHERE: Hear, hear!] Now, as he (Sir Arthur Otway) was responsible for the measure, he would take the liberty of showing what the real facts of the case were, and how contrary they were to the allegations of his hon. Friend. The Bill had already passed through the House of Lords, where it had received a careful investigation at the hands of Lord Redesdale, the Chairman of Committees in that House. It then came down before him (Sir Arthur Otway), when it again received careful consideration. The hon. Member had talked of tyranny over the population of the Islands; but everyone who was an authority upon the question agreed that Mr. Smith had

Mr. Dillwyn

conducted his estate in the best manner for the good of the population upon it. His hon. Friend stated that the population had been reduced by Mr. Smith from 4,000 to 2,000. The fact was that it had been reduced from under 3,000 to 2,200; but it had not been reduced by any means that were objectionable. Mr. Smith did that which every landowner ought to do; he conducted his estate to the best of his ability, and for the advantage of the people who lived upon it. When there were no means of subsistence, and the population were in excess of the means of livelihood, he found employment for those who were inclined to emigrate to the mainland. The history of these Islands might be told in a few words. He proposed to make the House acquainted with the real character of the measure, which was very different from the version which had been given by his hon. Friend. Previous to the year 1831 the Islands had been leased by the Godolphin family; but as the lessees were unable to arrange for a new lease on satisfactory terms, the possession of the Islands reverted to the Duchy, and a lease was granted to the late Mr. Augustus Smith in 1834 for a term of 99 years. There was, however, one condition—namely, that he and two others should live for so long a period. For this lease Mr. Smith paid a sum of £20,000, and a yearly rent of £40, in addition to certain stipends for the clergy, school houses, and other things. In 1837, and again in 1864, the original leases were surrendered, and a new one was made. The population, which was 2,800 in 1832, and not 4,000 as stated by his hon. Friend, was then a little over 2,000. The Islands contained about 3,600 acres, of which, however, only 2,000 were suitable for grazing and cultivation. Under the Duchy of Cornwall Act a lease could not be granted for more than 31 years, and the lease had now been surrendered. Upon what terms had it been surrendered? It was upon terms that were highly advantageous to the people inhabiting the Islands. Mr. Augustus Smith spent £80,000 in improving the estate, and the Bill which the House was now asked to sanction had been granted, on the surrender of the original lease, for a term of 31 years dating from March, 1883, not on a rental of £40 a-year, but upon a yearly rental of £740. After the

testimony which had been given as to the condition of the Islands, and now that his hon. Friend knew the terms of the lease, he hoped his hon. Friend would not retain the opinion he had expressed that this was the most wicked, mischievous, and scandalous measure ever presented to Parliament. On the contrary, he trusted that his hon. Friend would abstain from carrying his opposition further; but that he would allow the measure, the terms of which were exceedingly reasonable, to pass.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he was of opinion, after the two speeches they had heard from the Treasury Bench, that his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was bound to go to a Division, in order to show that the obsolete principles laid down by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary did not prevail. His hon. Friend did not object to what was done, but to the method of doing it. His objection was entirely one of principle—namely, that at this time of day it should be possible to lease an Island to a single man without any condition whatsoever to secure the rights of the people dwelling upon it. He (Mr. Jesse Collings) said it was not the question what the result of the arrangement might be—whether it would be for the benefit of the people who inhabited these Islands, or not. To hand over these persons without any condition whatever might be a reason for letting the Bill go through the House quietly; but after the defence of the measure they had heard from the Treasury Bench, it became absolutely necessary for some hon. Member to enter a protest against the principle, even although the adoption of the principle, in certain cases, might have had the result of doing good to those who were operated upon. For these reasons he thought his hon. Friend ought to divide the House. As for the defence which had been set up by the hon. Member who represented West Cornwall (Sir John St. Aubyn), there was a tone of innocence about it which was quite charming. The hon. Member said that these men, who were handed over without any condition for the preservation of their rights and liberties, and who were, as a matter of fact, deprived of their liberties by the Bill, had made no complaint. Of course they had made no complaint, and they were not likely to

do so. They rarely heard an articulate complaint from any district in England in which such a system obtained. They might hear plenty in private, but not in public. He had had experience of what it was to live under territorial power, and he certainly declined to give to any man power over his fellow-men to this extent. It was all very well to talk of benevolence; but he did not recognize any benevolence in the matter. A man born upon the land had the strongest right to remain upon it if he chose; and it was not for Parliament to say that any one man should have the right of determining whether a district should maintain 2,000, 3,000, or how many persons. That was a decision which ought to be arrived at by some other process more in accordance with modern ideas; and he certainly trusted that as the Bill had been defended on such grounds as it had been, his hon. Friend would go to a Division against it.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, it was quite refreshing to hear that, in considering the provisions of the present Bill, the care and consideration which Mr. Smith had paid to the estate and the people upon it, during his occupation of the Seilly Islands as "Lord Farmer," was not to be regarded. It was perfectly certain that the effect of this lease had been greatly to raise the character of the population, as well as their intelligence and comfort, and to put an end to practices which were certainly a disgrace to the Islands and to those who lived in them. The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) had, of his own knowledge, borne testimony to the good effect of the system which now prevailed in these Islands. Was it an obsolete practice and an obsolete principle that a landlord should do his best to improve the condition of the people who lived on the land which he owned? It appeared to him that it would be a grave misfortune to the Islands and to the inhabitants if Parliament were to refuse the sanction that was necessary to complete this arrangement — an arrangement which had hitherto worked well and beneficially to the people themselves, and the refusal of which would remove from these Islands a gentleman who had devoted his life to studying the interests of the inhabitants, and without whose presence among them great loss must ensue. What was the difference be-

tween a landlord who devoted himself to the benefit of the people among whom he lived and a gentleman who had a large manufactory, and having erected a number of cottages for the accommodation of his workpeople, insisted that good order should prevail in them. It appeared to him that there was no difference in the exercise of the duties of life in the one case or in the other.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and *passed*, without Amendment.

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE—LICENCES TO TELEPHONE COMPANIES.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD (for Mr. SLAGG) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in all licences granted by him to Telephone Companies, he has restricted their operations to a radius varying from two to five miles from the centre of the respective towns; whether he is aware that, in the case of Manchester and Liverpool, this restriction excludes large numbers of suburban inhabitants who reside outside the licensed radius; whether he will consent, in the towns of Lancashire and Cheshire, to an extension of the radius to cover the residential area of each respective town, so as to include the suburban districts whose residents desire to be afforded facilities for immediate connection with their business houses; whether, when the licensed areas intersect each other, he will allow intercommunication between such areas; whether he is aware that the difficulty of the restricted radius is not met by permission in certain cases to extend wires outside the district under the ultra-radial agreement, inasmuch as not only do the Department insist upon an extra royalty of two and a half per cent. on the gross receipts from such wires, but, further, insist upon a separate wire being run from the residence of each individual subscriber the whole distance to the central exchange, instead of permitting local subscribers to be connected together, and afterwards connected with the central exchange by a single wire; whether he is aware that, although the latter condition adds nothing to the revenue of the Post Office, it imposes heavy and unnecessary expen-

Mr. Jesse Collings

diture on the Companies, and compels them to charge increased, and in many cases prohibitive, rates to the inhabitants of the outlying suburban districts, who otherwise would avail themselves of the advantages of the telephone system; and, whether he can see his way to such a reasonable extension of the radius, or other modification of the conditions, as will obviate the apparently vexatious impediments which are placed in the way of the use of the telephone in the suburban districts?

MR. FAWCETT: To reply to the series of seven Questions addressed to me by my hon. Friend would involve so many complicated details that I could not properly answer them without unduly encroaching on the time of the House. I am about to make a proposal which I hope will be thought fair and reasonable. I am frequently asked by the various Telephone Companies to modify in different respects the existing terms on which they carry on business. I am, therefore, about to propose that the Telephone Companies should meet and endeavour to come to an agreement as to the modifications of these terms, which, in their opinion, would meet the public requirements. Should they act on this suggestion and communicate the result to me in writing, their proposals shall at once be carefully considered with every desire to allow the greatest freedom possible to telephonic communication which is compatible with due protection of the interests of the Revenue.

MR. GRAY: If the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman is adopted, and some propositions from the Telephone Companies should be laid before him, can he now give any undertaking that he will give a reply with sufficient promptitude to permit of the subject being discussed in the House in the event of no arrangement being arrived at? Otherwise, if a discussion should be raised, the right hon. Gentleman might say that the matter was under consideration, and that discussion was therefore premature.

MR. FAWCETT: I cannot state the exact time within which I shall be able to announce the result of my proposition, as it is a very difficult and complicated subject; but I will give this assurance—I will do my utmost to come to a decision as soon after receiving the reply of the Telephone Companies as possible.

It would be wrong of me to go further than that.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT — FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE (LINCOLNSHIRE).

MR. PELL asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, What steps have been taken by the local authority in Lincolnshire to meet the alarming outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in that county, of which he informed the House on the 19th; whether measures now adopted by the local authority are sufficient to meet the exigencies of the case, and prevent the disease spreading; if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will exercise the powers they possess for stamping out the disorder, and thus protecting farming stock in other parts of England; and, whether he can give the House an approximate estimate of the cost which would be incurred in this instance by killing the diseased animals and selling the carcasses?

MR. DODSON: The outbreak in question took place among sheep within the limits of a large infected area which had been declared on May 22 upon the recommendation of our Chief Inspector, who had visited the locality and held an interview with the Local Authority in the last part of May, in consequence of a previous outbreak. The Local Authority made Regulations to restrict the entrance and exit of persons into and out of the infected places, for the disinfection of persons, for the isolation of the disease and infected animals, and they employed the police to carry the Regulations into effect. It appeared to the Privy Council that the measures taken by the Local Authority were sufficient. We have since been informed by the Inspector of the district that the 338 diseased sheep have all recovered. The estimated value of the sheep was from £1,100 to £1,200, and the estimated cost that would have been incurred by slaughtering them, allowing for what might be realized by sale of carcasses, from £500 to £600. The number of animals in Great Britain known to the Privy Council as affected with foot-and-mouth disease was, for the week ending June 21, 10 in five different counties. The Local Authorities of these several counties have power to slaughter and compensate, and the

Privy Council have written to each urging them to use those powers. I have just heard that one of these Local Authorities has slaughtered the two animals in its district, thus reducing the total number in the country, assuming that there are no concealed cases, and no fresh outbreaks beyond those reported on June 21, to eight.

MR. CHAPLIN asked whether, in the circumstances, the Government would not consider the propriety of going a little bit further, and not merely urging on the Local Authorities the compulsory slaughter of these animals, but insisting on it under the powers vested in them under the Act?

MR. DODSON said, they hoped that would not be necessary; but that Local Authorities would use their powers with that discretion which Local Authorities could possess in a greater degree than a Central Authority.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CASE OF ——— BENNETT, DUBLIN.

MR. HEALY (for Mr. SEXTON) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if Mr. J. A. Byrne, a Divisional Police Magistrate in Dublin, recently committed a young man named Bennett, the son of a magistrate in the South of Ireland, to stand his trial before the Commission Court; whether, after the committal had been pronounced, and the Press had left the court, Mr. Byrne again took up the case, re-opened it, cancelled the committal, and dealt with the case by summary judgment; and, what is the explanation of this proceeding, and whether any notice will be taken of it?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that a young man named Bennett was charged before Mr. Byrne in Dublin Police Court, and committed for trial, bail being refused. Subsequently his counsel put in a plea of guilty. The magistrate in his discretion accepted the plea, and sentenced the prisoner to two months' imprisonment, which he considered ample. The magistrate is not aware whether reporters were present or not. Nothing occurred, at all events on his part, to prevent publicity; and, as a matter of fact, the conviction on the plea of guilty appeared at least in one of the Dublin papers. There did not appear to be anything in the transaction calling for further notice.

Mr. Dodson

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE EDUCATION ACT, 1870, SEC. 9.

SIR MASSEY LOPES asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether it is a fact that, in cases where ratepayers feel aggrieved by a decision of the Educational Department, and demand a public inquiry, that the Educational Department, previous to authorising such inquiry, require a bond of indemnity against the expenses of such inquiry to the amount of £300; and, if so, whether, since the imposition of so stringent an obligation is calculated to discourage local inquiry, he could take steps to prevent persons interested being deterred from obtaining a full and fair investigation of their grievances?

MR. MUNDELLA: Under Section 9 of the Act of 1870 ratepayers who are not satisfied to provide the accommodation required by the Education Department may demand a public inquiry. In such cases Section 73 of the Act authorizes the Education Department to make an order directing the costs of the proceedings to be paid by the district, or by the applicants for the inquiry, and may, if the Department think fit, require the applicants to give security for the costs of the inquiry. This security has been always required when the Department are not satisfied that the costs should be thrown upon the district. Of course, the hon. Member understands that the £300 mentioned is a mere nominal sum.

UNITED STATES—MR. ALFRED SHELDON.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has yet received from Her Majesty's Minister at Washington information of the safety of Mr. Alfred Sheldon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: From a despatch received yesterday at the Foreign Office, dated the 13th instant, it appears that up to that date the inquiries that were being made by the authorities to discover the whereabouts of Mr. Alfred Sheldon has been unsuccessful; but my hon. Friend may feel certain that no effort will be spared to secure the release of this gentleman, whose position is, I am aware, the cause of great anxiety to a numerous circle of friends and relatives.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, after the Second Reading of the Medical Act Amendment Bill, the Government will see their way to inserting a Clause in favour of the claim of the Apothecaries' Hall of Ireland to be duly represented in the Bill?

MR. MUNDELLA: When we reach the Committee stage of the Bill we shall be prepared to consider in a fair and conciliatory spirit any Amendments that may be placed upon the Paper; but I could not state till after the second reading what Amendments the Government will be prepared to accept.

INDIA—THE CHOLERA.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If complaints have been made by European Governments of the laxity of the supervision of cholera by the Indian Authorities; whether cholera of a severe type has been raging recently at Bombay and Calcutta; whether 578 deaths from cholera took place in Calcutta during the four weeks ending the 10th of May last; and, whether a Military transport vessel was allowed lately to leave Bombay for Europe *via* the Suez Canal, although three cases of cholera had declared themselves on board the ship while still in Bombay Harbour, one of the patients dying of the disease and being buried at Bombay?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I am not aware that any complaints have been made by European Governments as to the laxity of supervision of cholera by the Indian authorities. There has been a good deal of cholera, both at Calcutta and Bombay, since the beginning of the year. The Calcutta deaths are correctly stated by the hon. Member. During March they were 435; during April they rose to 811; but during May and the first week of June they fell to 382. From the official Report of the proceedings of Her Majesty's ship *Crocodile* communicated to the India Office by the Admiralty it is clear that there was no outbreak of cholera on board the troopship while still in Bombay Harbour, and that there was no case among the crew or troops for some days after she had sailed.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true that Asiatic cholera has broken out at Toulon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No information has been received with respect to this alleged outbreak of cholera; but a Report has been called for by telegraph, and intelligence is expected in the course of the day.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for War, If he has asked for any information as to the outbreak of cholera on board the troopship *Crocodile*, while still in Bombay Harbour, and the landing of three cholera patients from the vessel while at Bombay, one, a sergeant, dying of the disease; if he can state what quarantine, if any, was imposed upon the troopship *Crocodile* subsequent to the discovery of cholera on board, and previous to her being allowed to proceed to Europe *via* the Suez Canal; and, whether any subsequent cases occurred during the voyage to Europe?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: A sergeant-major of the 2nd Norfolk Regiment died in Bombay Harbour of violent diarrhoea. The man had neglected to seek medical aid, and his case was much aggravated by the fact that he had been drinking freely. The medical officer in charge reported the case to the Surgeon General at Bombay, who agreed that the case was one of diarrhoea, and not of cholera. Nevertheless, the same precautions had been taken as if the case had been cholera; the bedding, &c., being destroyed, and the hospital ward fumigated and disinfected. No quarantine, therefore, was imposed, and the ship left Bombay on the 3rd of April. Between the 6th of April and the ship's arrival at Malta eight cases of cholera occurred, and six of them terminated fatally. The third case having occurred after the *Crocodile* entered the Suez Canal, she coaled in quarantine at Port Said. The Governor of Malta refused to allow the women and children to land in quarantine at Malta, as recommended by the medical officer in charge of the troops. No case occurred after leaving Malta.

MR. O'DONNELL asked whether it was not the case that two men of the family of the man who had died in Bombay Harbour were attacked with choleraic symptoms, and were removed from

the *Crocodiles* to the shore at Bombay, but recovered?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have not heard of that. We have received voluminous Reports on this subject, and I do not believe that any case of that kind occurred.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he would ask the Question again, and would supply the noble Marquess with the newspaper reports to the effect which he had stated.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX IN LONDON.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has received information that small-pox was imported into the east end of London by vessels trading with Madras and Calcutta; and, if he is aware that a severe epidemic of small-pox has been raging for several months past in both these towns?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: This matter has nothing to do with the Home Department. The only small-pox cases in the present epidemic that I know of as having relations with such vessels are the cases of five Lascars who were removed from the steamship *Eldorado* into Homerton Hospital. The *Eldorado*, however, happened to be outward bound. She had been lying in Port 20 days previously, and her infection clearly originated in London. This was in last November, when Homerton Hospital already contained 37 small-pox patients. As to any more recent introductions of small-pox into the Port, I have no information—none since Christmas, 1883. But at that time the disease was already epidemic, to a moderate extent, in London; and any subsequent importation that may have taken place is, probably, of no particular concern. A severe epidemic of small-pox has been prevailing since last autumn in Madras; it reached its highest mortality in March, when it was fatal to nearly one per 1,000 weekly. There is some small-pox, but no epidemic small-pox, in Calcutta, beginning in the early months of this year, but little above the mean.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN).

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that British Infantry are being advanced to Assouan; and, if so,

Mr. O'Donnell

whether this be intended to check the armed movement of the Mahdi and his followers; and, what steps are being taken by Her Majesty's Ministers to save General Gordon and those dependent upon him at Khartoum from the fate of the garrisons of Sinkat and Berber?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; a battalion of British Infantry is leaving Assiout for Assouan. The reason given by Sir Frederick Stephenson is, that the tribes in front are becoming troublesome, and that it is desirable to support Egyptian troops, and to give confidence to the Natives. As to the second part of the hon. Member's Question, we have at present no certain information of the fate of the garrison at Berber. It is believed, though it is not absolutely certain, that the place has been taken, or has surrendered; but the report of the massacre of the garrison is in no way confirmed. With reference to General Gordon and the garrison of Khartoum, the Government have received no information which leads them to modify the statements which they have previously made of their views and intentions. The latest information received is contained in a telegram dated yesterday, in which it is stated—

“Chermside telegraphs to-day—‘Pilgrims have arrived at Suakin; 40 days from Khartoum, and 24 from Berber; report Khartoum in hands of Government; steamers going and arriving; a few Arabs only on the road between Khartoum and Berber; latter was in hands of Government; there were soldiers there; road clear, except near Suakin.’”

Under these circumstances, I am unable to add anything to the statements already made respecting General Gordon and Khartoum.

MR. BERESFORD: Is it intended to replace the Sussex Regiment by any other from Cairo?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: General Stephenson, I think, reported that he was prepared to send another, or two battalions if necessary; but orders have not been given for the removal of any further troops from Cairo.

MR. CHAPLIN: Are we to understand that the Government are taking no steps, or have made no preparations up to the present time, to save Khartoum?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I stated the other day, in answer to

the right hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), all the information we had, and I mentioned that the Government were making some preparations, the nature of which I did not give. No decision has been come to in respect to an expedition, or with regard to the construction of a railway between Suakin and Berber.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: With reference to the noble Lord's answer to the first part of my Question, may I ask whether these Arab Tribes, whom the British troops are being advanced to Assouan to hold in check or control, are people struggling to be free?

[No reply.]

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that a regiment is to be sent to reinforce the troops in Zululand; and, whether he can give any information as to the strength of Her Majesty's forces in that country and Natal?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The 2nd South Lancashire Regiment, 620 strong, will embark for Natal on the 26th instant, but not necessarily, as the Question implies, for Zululand, and drafts of 337 men are also under orders for Natal at the same time. By the last official Returns the forces in Natal were, in round numbers, 1,300, and in Zululand—that is in the Reserve Territory—500, principally Cavalry; but since the date of that Return a battery of Royal Artillery, of 81 men, and a company of Royal Engineers, of 60 men, had proceeded from Cape Colony to Natal, and it is understood that the General Officer in command has also ordered 300 men of the Northampton Regiment to Natal. As to the distribution at the present moment of the troops between Natal and the Zulu Reserve, we have no accurate information beyond what was contained in a telegram from the Governor of Natal, in which he informed us that the General had been into the Reserve, and had determined to increase the force there to 800 men, of whom 200 are to be with Mr. Osborne, the Resident.

MR. O'DONNELL asked whether instructions had been given to the Commanders of British troops in the Reserve to oppose by force of arms the in-

vasions by which the Boer contingent were now operating in Zululand?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: A General Commanding British Forces is in the habit of resisting all invaders, whether Boers or others.

PUBLIC HEALTH—OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA IN FRANCE.

MR. GRAY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has any information as to the reported outbreak of Asiatic cholera at Toulon; and, in the event of its having appeared in France, whether he intends to take any steps to enforce early precautions against its importation and spread in this Country?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The Regulations which were issued by the Board last year with reference to ships suspected to be infected with cholera are still in force. The Board in July last issued Circular Letters to the several Sanitary Authorities with reference to the precautions to be taken against the infection of cholera. The Act of last year is still in force.

DR. CAMERON asked the right hon. Baronet whether he would send out a Medical Commissioner to ascertain the nature of the disease which is said to have broken out, and to report directly to the Local Government Board?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not answer the Question for a few days, as the only information the Department had at present was that contained in the newspaper reports.

EGYPT (THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE).

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the House are to understand that the Great Powers, in consenting to enter into the Conference, have assented to the principle that the International decisions arrived at in the Conference are to be inoperative unless sanctioned by the Parliament of Great Britain?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Powers have not given, nor have they been asked to give, any assent to any proposition, except those which have been mentioned to the House by Her Majesty's Government, and which have for the most part been printed in the Papers in possession of the House. I may, however, say that we are acquainted

with the Constitutional practice of this country; and we know that for four weeks or more it has been matter of public notoriety that the proceedings of the Government in relation to Egypt would be subject to the decision of Parliament.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: There is nothing in the Papers laid before Parliament to show that the Great Powers have in any way assented to this principle. If the right hon. Gentleman will allow me, I will just remind him of a Question which was put yesterday, and which was identical with mine, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who said—

“I suppose we should be perfectly in the right in assuming that the Government have been perfectly candid with the Great Powers, and have informed them that the final assent of England must depend on the action of Parliament; and also in assuming that the course taken by the Government to-day will preclude them from afterwards telling the House that they must assent to the proposals that have been assented to by the Great Powers.”

Well, the Prime Minister assented to that. Now, I want to know if the Prime Minister has any kind or sort of documentary evidence whatever that he can lay on the Table in support of that?

MR. GLADSTONE: I thought I had conveyed that in my answer. The noble Lord is perfectly right in saying that the answers of the Great Powers do not contain anything bearing on that question, and no formal communications have taken place on the subject; but we are as certain as we are that we are going to hold a Conference that the Powers are aware of the fact, which has been notorious for four weeks past—namely, that the proceedings are contingent upon the consent of Parliament being obtained.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: In order to be sure whether we shall not fall into error on this point, I wish to know whether the Prime Minister will not pledge the Government to communicate to the House the result of the exchange of views between England and France after consultation with the other Powers. If I recollect aright, the Prime Minister used, more than once, the words—“We will consult the Powers, and then communicate with the House;” and I, therefore, wish to know,

if the Powers have been consulted, how it arises that they have not expressed any opinion?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is perfectly true and accurate, and the noble Lord is quite right in his citation. We have consulted the Powers; but that consultation has been a very recent one. As the noble Lord will see from the dates, the communications with France have only been brought to a conclusion within a very recent period. The full answers of the Powers have not yet been received.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: In reference to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman—

“That he will undertake to engage that, in the event of a common understanding with France, and after consultation with the Powers, any plan resulting therefrom, those results and the whole conclusion arrived at shall be presented to Parliament before the Conference meets”—

I wish to ask, Whether there is any foundation in fact for the statement which has appeared in the Press, that it is the intention of the Government in Conference to propose or to assent to any arrangement under which this Country may be committed to make any advance in money by way of gift, grant, loan, or guarantee on behalf of Egypt; and, if any such arrangement is to be made, to what extent this country is to be committed?

MR. GLADSTONE: In reference to the preamble of the right hon. Gentleman's Question, that is exactly the pledge which we have fulfilled, and the entire result of our communication appears in the Papers which have been laid before Parliament. The whole conclusion at which, in common with France, we have arrived is before the House in the Papers which have been published.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: After consultation with the Powers?

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord seems to reproach me with having, as he implies, made our communications to Parliament too soon. We have stated that we have consulted with the Powers; but it does not follow that we should necessarily have received all the answers from them.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question with regard to whether any arrangement has resulted from the communications, and will be submitted?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; the plan resulting from these communications is exactly what we have made known in the Papers presented to Parliament. With regard to the Question of which the right hon. Gentleman has given Notice, I am not sorry he has given me the opportunity of repeating what I stated yesterday. We have had to consider, in the first place, the precedents applicable to it; in the second place, the deference due to the Powers; in the third place, the relations of the Legislative and Executive Governments of this country; in the fourth place, the practical conduct of the business before the Conference; and, in the fifth place, the welfare of Egypt. Each of these considerations involves objections, some of them absolutely conclusive, to our making known to Parliament, at this moment, the financial proposals which we intend to lay before the Conference. The Question of the right hon. Gentleman refers to something which, if it were true, would, of course, necessarily constitute a part of those financial proposals?

MR. CHAPLIN: What I think the House wants to know of the right hon. Gentleman is, whether it is, or is not, the case that the Government undertook, after the agreement between France and England had concluded, and the Powers had been consulted, that the result of that consultation should be submitted to Parliament before the Conference met?

MR. GLADSTONE: The result of the consultation, so far as the answers of the Powers are concerned, cannot be made known, because the answers have not yet all been received. Only one Power—or, I should say, in the main, the answers have not been received; and, indeed, there has not been time. We were anxious to fulfil our engagements with Parliament at the very earliest moment; and when we had placed ourselves in full communication with the Powers on these matters, we at once proceeded to make the communication known to Parliament.

MR. CHAPLIN: Will the Conference be postponed until the answers to the communications have been received, in accordance with the reply of the Prime Minister?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; certainly not. The meeting of the Powers has no relation to the matter of the

agreement between this country and France, but to the financial necessities of Egypt, which require immediate attention.

MR. SOLATER-BOOTH: I would now ask, is this communication connected with a Question which I had intended to put on Thursday in reference to the financial proposals? It is obvious that there are financial proposals of two kinds—those with which this House has nothing whatever to do, and those requiring the assent of the House; and I wish to ask whether any of these proposals could be put into execution without the assent of the House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have already declined, in terms most explicit, founded on a conviction based on an important principle, to give any information as to the nature of our financial proposals. At the same time, I have said that the whole matter will be submitted to the judgment of Parliament, and will be dependent upon that judgment.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether he did not in 1855 make a strong attack on Lord Palmerston for guaranteeing the Turkish Loan without the consent of Parliament?

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord gives me credit for a better memory than I possess; and he asks me whether in the year 1855—29 years ago—I objected to a measure for guaranteeing the Turkish Loan? I am not able to follow the terms of my speech on that occasion. I am very glad, however, to see that the noble Lord thinks my speeches worthy of the honour of reading them. If he likes to give Notice of the Question I shall be happy to answer it.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I shall put the Question on Thursday, and I may say that I read the speech with great pleasure.

VISCOUNT GALWAY asked the Prime Minister whether he could not so far state to Parliament the nature of the financial proposals to be submitted to Parliament as to say whether any advance of money would be proposed or not?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Question is simply varied in its terms from others which have been put and answered. If a question of so great importance were brought before the Conference, it would form part of the financial proposals. I

have already stated that we cannot give any information. It would be contrary to our public duty; while we reiterate the full assurance that the House is not bound to be committed in any way by what we do.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The right hon. Gentleman has guaranteed this House perfect freedom of action in dealing with certain proposals. Now, I wish to ask how he can guarantee this House freedom of action if these proposals be of a financial character, and he has not yet taken the opinion of the Powers as to their consent to an international decision? To put the Question in another way, how can he guarantee that when that proposal has come before this House it will come before it, not as the proposal of the Government, but as the proposal of the Powers of Europe?

MR. GLADSTONE: There are two Questions involved. One is, whether, in point of fact, we have undertaken to guarantee the freedom of Parliament; the other is, in what way that guarantee could take effect? We have undertaken to guarantee the freedom of Parliament; but I cannot as yet on principle explain the mode, because it would be treading upon ground on which, as I have said, we cannot on principle enter. I have promised, not only that freedom of action shall be maintained, but that we shall do everything in our power to expedite the time when we can make the fullest explanation and communication.

MR. GIBSON: Would the Prime Minister say if the communications made to the French Government on the financial proposals intended to be made by the Government to the Conference will be laid before the House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I rather think that the Question has already been put and answered; but if the right hon. and learned Gentleman gives Notice of the Question, I will take care that he receives an answer.

MR. HENEAGE: I should like to ask the Prime Minister, whether each of the Powers enter into the Conference with the same reservation as England—namely, that the proceedings are not to be final until they have been referred to their own existing Parliaments?

Mr. Gladstone

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: As a Question supplementary to that of the hon. Member, I should wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman what Parliament exists in Russia to which the proceeding of the Executive of that country could be ratified?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not aware that any reservation of the character indicated by the hon. Member's Question has been made.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON observed, that this Bill was the second Order for this Sitting; but as the Representation of the People Bill was likely to occupy some hours, there would not be much time left before 7 o'clock for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill. He therefore suggested to the Prime Minister whether it would not be better to name another day for the Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he quite agreed with the hon. Baronet that it was not worth while to keep a large number of Members in expectation of the Bill coming on at the fag-end of the Sitting; and, therefore, he would say at once that it should be deferred. The Medical Act Amendment Bill would, therefore, be taken after the Representation of the People Bill. Assuming that the Report stage of the Representation of the People Bill finished that morning, he should propose to take the third reading on Thursday next.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 249.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.*)

CONSIDERATION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to the Bill [23rd June], on Further Proceeding on Consideration, as amended.

And which Amendment was,

In page 1, line 19, to leave out the word "himself," in order to insert the words "by

himself, or by himself and his family wholly."
—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'himself' stand part of the Bill."

Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 23, to leave out the word "an," in order to insert the word "the."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That the word 'an' stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 24, to leave out the words "as a tenant."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That the words 'as a tenant' stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Clause 4 (Restriction on *fagot* votes).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) moved, in page 1, line 27, to leave out "after the passing of this Act." The Amendment was consequential on the new clause moved by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) fixing the commencement of the Act as January 1, 1885.

Amendment agreed to.

MR. HEALY moved an Amendment for the purpose of enabling Roman Catholics to exercise the voting powers which they had hitherto possessed in respect of residing in, or carrying on any trade or business in, premises that came up to the requisite qualification.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 14, after the word "and," to insert the words "reside or."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'reside or' be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that this clause dealt only with ownership, and had nothing whatever to do with occupation. The Amendment was, therefore, quite unnecessary. Under the Occupation Clause Roman Catholics would retain all their former privileges. If mere residence were permitted as a qualification for voting, all the members of a family would be enfranchised, which obviously could not be allowed.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 21 to leave out the words "otherwise legally," in order to insert the words "legally or otherwise."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That the words 'otherwise legally' stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Clause 5 (Assimilation of occupation qualification).

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 31, after the word "respectively," to insert the words "including the conditions as regards joint and successive occupancy."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause 6 (Voter not to vote in respect of occupation of property in borough).

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 39, after the word "borough," to insert the words "Provided, That nothing herein contained shall apply to any land or tenement situate partly in a borough, and the occupation of which does not qualify to vote at an election for such borough."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, in the case suggested by the hon. Gentleman the owner would probably be the dweller in either the county or borough. There would be great practical difficulty in accepting these words.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause 7 (Definition of household and lodger qualification and other franchises, and application of enactments relating thereto).

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) moved, in page 3, line 19, after "twenty-two," insert "and twenty-three."

Amendment agreed to.

MR. HEALY moved, in page 3, line 19, after "twenty-two," insert "and twenty-three."

Amendment agreed to.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) moved, in page 3, line 24, after "1868," to insert—

"And in the said section twenty-two of 'The Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act, 1878,' the reference to section thirteen of 'The

Parliamentary Registration Act, 1843,' shall be construed to refer to the enactments of the Registration Acts in Ireland relating to the making out, signing, publishing, and otherwise dealing with the lists of voters, and the reference to the Parliamentary Registration Acts, shall be construed to refer to the Registration Acts in Ireland, and the following dates shall be substituted in Ireland for the dates in that section mentioned, that is to say, the twentieth day of July for the last day of July, and the fourteenth day of July for the twenty-fifth day of July, and the word 'overseers' shall be construed to refer in a county to the clerk of the peace, and in a borough to the town clerk."

Amendment agreed to.

MR. HEALY moved, in page 3, line 24, after "1868," to insert—

"And the reference in the said section twenty-two to section thirteen of 'The Parliamentary Registration Act, 1843,' shall be deemed to be made, as regards boroughs to section thirty-three, and as regards counties to section twenty-one of the Act of the Session of the thirteenth and fourteenth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter sixty-nine; and the reference in the said section twenty-two to the Parliamentary Registration Acts, shall be deemed to be made to the Registration Acts as defined by this Act; and in the construction of the said section, the word 'overseers' shall be construed to mean, in a borough the town clerk for such borough, and in a county the clerk of the peace for such county; and the following dates shall be substituted for the dates therein mentioned, that is to say, the fourteenth day of July, for the twenty-fifth day of July, and the twentieth day of July, for the last day of July."

MR. HEALY moved, in page 4, line 17, after "1868," to insert—

"In the case of any franchise arising out of the occupation of any dwelling-house, lands, or tenements, or of any lodgings, where, in the Representation of the People Acts, as defined by this Act, the qualifying period of occupation is fixed as twelve months prior to any date, the occupation of such premises for six months prior to such date shall, after the passing of this Act, be held to qualify for such franchise."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the Government could not accept the Amendment; but they were in favour of its principle, and hoped to deal with the question at a future day.

MR. WARTON said, he thought the House ought to be on its guard against allowing the whole effect of the Bill to be altered in a democratic direction by proposals to lessen the period of residence required to qualify a voter. The sympathies of the Prime Minister were

with the worst class of householders; and he must protest against any pledge being given that the Government contemplated a reduction of the term of residence, which would practically enfranchise vagrants.

MR. LEWIS said, that under that Amendment the occupier of a room let for 1s. a-week in a large town would in six months be entitled to the franchise.

Question put, and negatived.

MR. HEALY moved, in page 4, line 17, after "1868," to insert the following:—

"In the case of any franchise arising out of the occupation of any dwelling-house, lands, or tenements, where it shall appear that any person claiming to occupy, or to have occupied, any such premises as tenant, was evicted from such premises at any time during the qualifying period of occupation, but was subsequently reinstated in the possession of same, such person shall, so far as regards qualification for any such franchise as aforesaid, be deemed, notwithstanding such eviction, to have been in occupation of said premises during the whole of the qualifying period."

The hon. Gentleman said, that in many counties in Ireland hundreds of persons were deprived of the franchise by a subterfuge which this Amendment was intended to abolish. In the North, and especially in the county which he represented (Monaghan), it was a common thing to serve tenants with an ejectment for non-payment before the 20th of July, in order to break the qualifying occupation, and after the 20th of July was past they were put in again as caretakers. In the County Monaghan, at the last Sessions, no less than 80 persons were served under these circumstances; and he believed that no less than 300 or 400 persons had received notices recently with the same object. His contention was borne out by a statement made a few days ago by County Court Judge Barron with regard to certain cases upon the estate of an ex-Member for the county; and Mr. Barron was not a gentleman likely to express opinions of that kind without reason, for it would be remembered that on one occasion he boasted that if he had a match he would set fire to a Land League hut. Under these circumstances, he hoped the Government would accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 17, after "1868," to insert the words—"In the case of any franchise arising

out of the occupation of any dwelling-house, lands, or tenements, where it shall appear that any person claiming to occupy, or to have occupied, any such premises as tenant, was evicted from such premises at any time during the qualifying period of occupation, but was subsequently reinstated in the possession of the same, such person shall, so far as regards qualification for any such franchise as aforesaid, be deemed, notwithstanding such eviction, to have been in occupation of said premises during the whole of the qualifying period."—(Mr. Healy.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), said, that this case must be treated as a whole. If the Government were to make any exception in this particular case of evicted tenants, other matters of detail would be brought forward, and there would be great difficulty in dealing with them. He trusted, therefore, that the hon. Member would not press the Amendment.

Mr. LEWIS said, he thought that this Amendment was an absolute *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle involved in the Bill. He thought that the House was to be congratulated on the fact that the assurances of future consideration given in respect to it on the part of the Government were a little less strong than those which had been given with reference to some other proposals of a similar nature. At all events, they could only protest against the plan of giving away of little bits of the Constitution and the rights of property.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, he thought the speech of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) was a proof of the small hold which the Irish Tory Party felt that they had upon the constituencies they represented in Ireland. When they had recourse to artifices of this kind in order to retain their seats in that House, he did not see how they could stand up there and say that they represented the feelings of the majority of the people of the North of Ireland. If they represented the majority of the people of Ulster, why did they seek to curtail their franchise by miserable tricks of this kind? The Amendment was one which deserved the serious consideration of the Government. By the process described by his hon. Friend (Mr. Healy) the tenant's continuity in his holding was broken, and the franchise was taken away from him. He had to discharge all the obligations of a

tenant in occupation—he had to pay his rent and his rates, which gave him the qualification for a vote. Yet, because he was put outside his door, and immediately readmitted, he was placed without the bounds of the Constitution. This was a grievous injustice, and it was not alone practised largely in the county of Monaghan, but in the counties of Tyrone, Donegal, and Antrim. He, thought, therefore, the Government was bound to accept the Amendment.

Mr. P. MARTIN stated he was in favour of the principle asserted by the Amendment. In Ireland the evicted tenant was entitled to redeem his holding at any time during six months from the date of the enactment of the *habere*. That equity of redemption, as it was called, was a statutory right. When he thus re-entered, he was deemed to be restored to his previous tenancy, with all its rights, and subject to all liabilities. Why, then, should he be deprived of the franchise? The Amendment could do no injustice; but it more properly belonged to a Registration than to a Franchise Bill.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he thought that the Government should redress the grievance now, instead of merely holding out an expectation of its being remedied at some future time, which might never arrive.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he thought the statement in which the Amendment was introduced disclosed a substantial grievance, and he thought it would be a discreditable thing if it were not remedied.

Mr. HICKS said, he thought the Amendment struck at the whole principle of occupancy in the Three Kingdoms. He urged the Government to avow pure Democracy at once, and abandon all disguise.

Mr. WARTON wanted to know when the Government would stop throwing sop to the Parnellite Members? He considered the proposal a most dishonest one.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE pointed out that the tenant had an easy remedy against this injustice—namely, by paying his rent. He consoled with the Government on the opposition being raised against this Bill in its later stages, and thought that after the *volte-face* of the previous night on the Criminal Clause, they would be extra careful of

the concessions they might make. He should leave the Government and their Irish Friends to fight the question out among themselves.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA cordially supported the Amendment, but hoped the House would not be put to the trouble of a Division.

MR. HEALY said, that, as the Tory Party evidently intended to make this Amendment an occasion for talking out the Bill, he should not press it.

MR. GIBSON said, he was not aware that any Members of the persuasion referred to had taken any part in the discussion.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Clause 8 (Definition of "Representation of the People Acts" and "Registration Acts").

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved, in page 5, line 8, at end, insert as a separate paragraph—

"In Scotland all enactments of the Registration Acts which relate to the registration of persons entitled to vote in burghs, including the provisions relating to dates, shall, with the necessary variations, and with the necessary alterations of notices and other forms, extend and apply to counties as well as to burghs; and the enactments of the said Acts which relate to the registration of persons entitled to vote in counties shall, so far as inconsistent with the enactments so applied, be repealed: Provided, That in counties the valuation rolls, registers, and lists shall continue to be arranged in parishes as heretofore."

The right hon. and learned Gentleman, in explaining the effect of the Amendment, said, it was known to hon. Members from Scotland that there were different rules applicable to the making up of the voters' lists in counties and burghs. He need not enumerate these in detail, and would only mention two. In the case of counties, it was not necessary in each year to publish a full list of the voters. It was only necessary, according to the existing law, to publish a list of those who had become disqualified, or who had died, during the year, and of those who had become qualified; whereas, in the case of burghs, a full list of voters in each year was published. Then there was another material difference in regard to dates. The date for completing the voters' lists in counties was the 25th of August, while in burghs it was the 15th of September. It was necessary to consider,

when similar rules were to be applied to the two, what method should be followed—whether the old county method should be followed, or whether it might not be more convenient to extend to counties the rules at present applying to burghs. It was represented with great force that, in consequence of the large change in the character of the rural constituencies, when all householders were enfranchised, there would be many more alterations if the old county method were adhered to, and there would consequently be a much longer list than was customary in former days. That being so, it had been thought better to have a full list in counties as in burghs; and as there would be more labour in making it up, it had also been thought better to give an additional three weeks in counties, as in the case of burghs. But while it was convenient that these changes should be made, it would not have been convenient to take away the rule that in counties the parish should be the unit, with reference to which the lists should be made out, and so in the Proviso that rule was adhered to. He believed the propositions in the Amendment would be generally acceptable.

Amendment *agreed to*.

Clause 9 (Definition and application of Rating Acts).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) moved, in page 5, line 18, leave out from beginning of line to end of line 31, and insert—

"In every part of the United Kingdom it shall be the duty of the overseers annually, in the months of April and May, or one of them, to inquire or ascertain with respect to every hereditament which comprises any dwelling-house or dwelling-houses, within the meaning of the Representation of the People Acts, whether any man, other than the owner or other person rated or liable to be rated in respect of such hereditament, is entitled to be registered as a voter in respect of his being an inhabitant occupier of any such dwelling-house, and to enter in the rate-book the name of every man so entitled, and the situation or description of the dwelling-house in respect of which he is entitled, and for the purposes of such entry a separate column shall be added to the rate-book.

"For the purpose of the execution of such duty, the overseers may serve on the person who is the occupier or rated or liable to be rated in respect of such hereditament or on some agent of such person concerned in the management of such hereditament, the requisition specified in the Third Schedule to this Act requiring that the form in that notice be accu-

ately filled up and returned to the overseers within twenty-one days after such service; and if any such person or agent on whom such requisition is served fails to comply therewith, he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding forty shillings, and any overseer who fails to perform his duty under this section shall be deemed guilty of a breach of duty in the execution of the Registration Acts, and shall be liable to be fined accordingly a sum not exceeding forty shillings for each default.

"The notice under this section may be served in manner provided by the Representation of the People Acts with respect to the service on occupiers of notice of non-payment of rates, and, where a body of persons, corporate or unincorporate, is rated, shall be served on the secretary or agent of such body of persons; and where the hereditament by reason of belonging to the Crown or otherwise is not rated, shall be served on the chief local officer having the superintendence or control of such hereditament.

"In the application of this section to Scotland the expression rate-book means the valuation roll, and where a man entered on the valuation roll by virtue of this section inhabits a dwelling-house by virtue of any office, service, or employment there shall not be entered in the valuation roll any rent or value against the name of such man as applicable to such dwelling-house, nor shall any such man by reason of such entry become liable to be rated in respect of such dwelling-house.

"The proviso in section two of the Act for the valuation of lands and heritages in Scotland, passed in the Session of the seventeenth and eighteenth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter ninety-one, and section fifteen of 'The Representation of the People (Scotland) Act, 1868,' shall be repealed: Provided, That in any county in Scotland the commissioners of supply, or the parochial board of any parish, or any other rating authority entitled to impose assessments according to the valuation roll, may, if they think fit, levy such assessments in respect of lands and heritages separately let for a shorter period than for one year or at a rent not amounting to four pounds per annum in the same manner and from the same persons as if the names of the tenants and occupiers of such lands and heritages were not inserted in the valuation roll."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11 (Construction of Act).

Amendment proposed,

In page 7, line 21, after the word "heritages," to insert the words "the expressions 'joint tenants' and 'tenants in common' shall include 'pro indiviso proprietors.'"—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, after the word "shall," to insert the words "in Scotland."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That the words 'in Scotland,' be there inserted," put, and *negatived*.

Question, "That the words 'the expressions 'joint tenants' and 'tenants in common' shall include 'pro indiviso proprietors' be there inserted,'" put, and *agreed to*.

Amendment proposed,

In page 7, line 28, after the word "same," to insert the words "Provided, That where in Ireland any land or tenement in the occupation of any person is not separately valued under the said Acts, the occupier may show what the clear yearly value of such land or tenement in fact is."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed,

In page 7, line 28, after the word "same," to insert the words "unless the occupier shall show that the clear yearly value is in fact greater than such net annual value."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *negatived*.

Clause 13 (Commencement of Act).

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved, in page 7, line 43, at end, add—

"Provided, That the register of voters in any county or borough in Scotland, made in the last mentioned year, shall not come into force until the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, and until that day the previous register of voters shall continue in force."

He said, this Amendment was the proper corollary of the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which was accepted the other day. In England the new Register for each year did not come into operation until the 1st of January of the following year. In Scotland, however, the new Register for each year came into operation on the 1st of November; and if they did not make some provision like that now proposed, the anomaly would arise that if there was a General Election during the months of November and December, 1885, it would be on the new constituency in Scotland, while in England it would be on the old constituency. The object of his Amendment, therefore, was to provide that the new constituencies in both countries should begin to vote together.

[*Second Night.*]

SIR JOHN HAY: I hope this change will only apply to that particular year?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes.

Amendment agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time upon *Thursday*; and to be *printed*. [Bill 260.]

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

[*Lords*].—[BILL 207.]

(*Mr. Mundella*.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. MUNDELLA, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was a great measure of reform, earnestly desired by the Medical Profession, and one of great public interest. The Bill had been so long before the House and the country, however, that it was not necessary he should dwell at great length upon it. The proposed reform came from the Medical Profession, and was not forced upon them by Parliament or the public from without. It was a case of the Medical Profession demanding, in the interests of the public, better government and a higher status as regarded education. This demand on the part of the Profession was not a new one, inasmuch as an agitation in favour of such a reform had been going on for many years. In 1853 a deputation, headed by Lord Maule, Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. Bright, and others, waited upon Lord Palmerston, and urged upon him the necessity for legislation to secure—first, uniformity of custom; secondly, reciprocity in regard to practice; thirdly, direct representation on the Medical Council; fourthly, a National Pharmacopœia; and, fifthly, the registration of legally-qualified medical practitioners. The Act of 1858 had dealt only partially with certain portions of the subject, leaving others altogether untouched. The consequence of this failure to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Profession had been that the agitation, which had been commenced in 1831, had been continued to the present day, and had increased in force and in intensity as time went on, with the result that during the 16 years in which he (Mr. Mundella) had had the honour to occupy a seat in that House scarcely a Session had passed without a Bill at-

tempting to legislate for the Profession being introduced into Parliament. In 1870 Lord Ripon, and in 1878, 1879, and 1880, the Duke of Richmond and Gordon had brought in Medical Bills, the last of which was referred to a Select Committee, but was ultimately dropped. In view of these facts, the present Government had felt it to be their duty to make an effort to secure a satisfactory settlement of this vexed question, and they were supported in that attempt by the almost unanimous opinion of medical men, and by the Medical Press of the country. In 1881 the question was referred to a Royal Commission, presided over by the Earl of Camperdown, the Members of which had in their Report unanimously approved certain leading principles which had been embodied in the present Bill. The measure, which had received the assent of 19-20ths of the Profession, was a consolidating, as well as an amending, Bill to a large extent, for it absolutely repealed eight Acts of Parliament, and portions of nine other Acts, so that the whole of the rules for the government of the Medical Profession would be found in the Bill. There were at present in existence in this country 20 Medical Licensing Bodies, who had the power of conferring 60 registerable medical diplomas. The evidence showed that one of the great evils of the present system was the inequality of the examinations for the licence. This inequality in the test of efficiency was the more unfortunate, as every licence equally conferred the right to practise everywhere. Men of the highest eminence in the Profession had shown that an easy examination by one Examining Body had a general tendency to lower the standard of education. Sir James Paget said that candidates who failed to pass the examination of the Royal College of Surgeons had no difficulty in getting their diplomas elsewhere. It was obviously desirable, therefore, that there should be something like uniformity of examination providing for the minimum of qualification. The importance of this object had been recognized, for on the 26th of February, 1870, the Medical Council passed, with only one dissentient, a resolution to the effect that a Joint Examination Board ought to be formed in each of the three divisions of the United Kingdom, and that every

person who was desirous to be registered on any of the qualifications set forth in Schedule A of the Medical Act should be required to appear before one of those Boards, and be examined in all the subjects specified. There was much more evidence of the same kind as this to be adduced in favour of the Bill. The main principles of the present Bill were contained in a very few clauses. The first had reference to the reform of the Medical Council; and, in saying that, he did not mean to imply that the present Medical Council had not done its work as well as it was possible to do, but it had hitherto only been able to recommend, but not to enforce, its views. This reform was sought to be obtained by diminishing the number of the members of the Council, strengthening its powers, and giving to the Medical Profession what they had so long demanded and what they had been so long denied—direct representation. He believed it was the absence of direct representation which had wrecked most of the measures hitherto introduced. The next point was an approximation, as he had said, to uniformity of examination; and this was accomplished by the establishment, in each division of the United Kingdom, of Medical Boards, which should regulate the examination under the control of the Medical Council. The third point—and he thought that in the interest of the public this was, perhaps, the most important—was that, in future, a three-fold qualification should be required from everyone who required to be admitted to practise, before he could be placed on the Register. Clause 3 contained what was really the pith of the question, as far as this three-fold qualification was concerned. It provided that no person should be entitled to be placed on the Medical Register unless he or she had proved, at the final examination, his or her competency in medicine, surgery, and midwifery. Nothing could be more important to the public generally than this clause; and it redounded to the honour of the Medical Profession that, for 50 years, they had been advocating the change. This was a most important and long-desired reform; and it was due to the Medical Profession that he should state that it was not that Profession that had retarded it, but rather certain interested bodies, and he hoped

they were now within measurable distance of a reform which everybody desired. The multiplicity of the Examining Bodies had been long tolerated by the State, but its effect on the Profession was unfavourable. Its effect had resulted in what had been aptly called the “downward competition,” and he hoped they were now about to get rid of that sort of competition. He believed this country was almost the only State in Europe that had tolerated this downward competition. The Government had no desire to imitate the strict State examinations of Germany and other countries; but they desired that the Medical Profession in Great Britain and Ireland should rank, as it would rank immediately this Bill was passed, among the very first in Europe. They did not, however, aim by this Bill at an ideal uniformity, or an unnecessarily high standard; but what they asked for in the public interest was a minimum qualification. They were now agreed that there should be one Board for this purpose, and that no person should be entitled to registration unless he had the three-fold qualification he had described. They wished, however, to deal justly by the Examining Bodies; and they would continue to have the power of conferring the present diplomas and degrees. He had stated the main principles of the Bill; and he might add that while adhering to them, they were not pledged pedantically to all the details of the measure by which they should arrive at that result. He asked hon. Members to consider the Bill fairly, and to allow it to go into Committee as soon as possible, in order that the details might be discussed. There were a number of minor questions—questions of Colonial and Foreign titles, penalties for misuser of titles, medical education, and other questions of interest and importance to the Profession, upon which, doubtless, there might be some difference of opinion; but all of them could be dealt with in Committee. The title of registration was the one question, after passing the final examination, about which they were most anxious. They had in this country about 23,000 licensed medical practitioners, of whom about 12,000 were members of the British Medical Association, which Association was almost unanimously in favour of this measure; while of the many deputations from the Profession

which had come before him not one had expressed a desire to escape from the legislation proposed by it. He approached the question with feelings of the deepest respect and gratitude to the Profession, and he hoped that the Bill would settle all those questions in a manner which would give satisfaction to the medical authorities, and would set at rest a vexed question respecting the dignity and honour of a noble Profession. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Mundella.*)

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: I think it has been a surprise to most of us that this Bill has been reached to-day; and if I do not discuss it fully, it is because I really did not expect that I would be called on to speak on it until a later date. The reason I intervene so early in the debate is that out of 6,500 constituents, 3,000 of them are medical men, and therefore they are deeply interested in a Bill which will add much to the dignity of the Profession and to its importance in the future. My right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council has clearly explained the leading features of the Bill. Since 1870 more than 20 Bills for medical reform have been before the House, and have been referred to Select Committees, and ultimately to a Royal Commission. This Bill is certainly the best which has been framed; and it is desirable that it should pass, so as to give peace to a long-agitated Profession. The main object of the Bill is to secure efficient medical education, and to ensure the possession of adequate knowledge on the part of all persons who receive licence to practise. The present Authority, which supervises medical education, is a General Council, created in 1858, partly nominated by the Crown, and partly representative of the Universities and Corporations. This Central Authority, strengthened by direct representation from the medical practitioners of the United Kingdom, is continued by this Bill. In addition to it, three Divisional Boards, one for each section of the Kingdom, are now created. They are in future to be the sole licensing authorities recognized by the State. Their examinations are to be made equally sufficient by the General Coun-

oil, and they are to require from every candidate a knowledge of the three fundamental subjects of the Medical Profession—medicine, surgery, and midwifery. This is an essential condition of medical reform. At present, the public have no security that the general practitioner possesses such knowledge. A College of Surgeons may pass into the Profession, a man entitled to attend medical cases, such as measles or scarlet fever, although he has not been examined in the practice of physic. A College of Physicians may license a man legally entitled to amputate a leg, although he may not have passed in surgery; while both may send out licentiates without having passed in midwifery. There are now 19 Licensing Boards, furnished among them with 50 to 60 titles of all sizes and shapes, out of which an embarrassed public has to judge of efficiency. It is true that the Licensing Bodies have been lately reforming themselves, and have, in some cases, coalesced, in order to pass licentiates with a knowledge of the three fundamental subjects; but these arrangements are private, and not statutory. The general purpose of this Bill is therefore unassailable; for it provides that every licentiate shall have adequate knowledge of medicine, surgery, and midwifery. Opinions differ as to whether the General Council and the Divisional Examining Boards are properly constituted. I do not propose to discuss this question till we reach the Committee stage of the Bill. At present, I confine my remarks to the educational effect of the Bill on the public interests of a great and noble Profession. I have said that the General Medical Council is charged with seeing that the three Divisional Examining Boards in England, Scotland, and Ireland shall have a common standard of sufficiency in their examinations. The standard of sufficiency must not be placed higher than average candidates can pass, for the waste of the Medical Profession must be supplied. This waste is about 1,600 men yearly. The three doors of admission to a licence must be wide enough to let 1,600 men at least pass through them. Suppose that the door was made as narrow as that of the University of London, only 40 or 50 licentiates could pass through annually. Suppose it was merely widened to the size of the Scottish University, only 300

Mr. Mundella

men could pass through it. With such higher examinations, four-fifths of the medical men annually required by the country would be rejected. The new Divisional Boards of Licence cannot, therefore, have too pedantic views of their functions, because already the supply of medical men throughout the Kingdom does not increase in proportion to the population. Between 1851 and 1861, it positively decreased; for the medical men in 1851 were 15,241, and fell to 14,684 in 1861. In the following decade, ending in 1871, the medical men increased 2 per cent, while the population did so by 13 per cent. In the Census of 1881 the medical men of England increased 3 per cent, while that of the population was 14 per cent. Scotland showed a better proportion, for the increase of doctors was 7 per cent, and that of the population was 11 per cent. In Ireland the doctors increased in all to the extent of 50 men, although there was a slight decrease in population. None of these figures are satisfactory. They show that the present conditions of medical men are not attractive enough to induce students to enrol in sufficient numbers to supply the population. This Bill may provide a remedy, or it may increase the evil, according as it is wisely framed and wisely administered. The conditions of licence must aim at providing a minimum examination for sufficiency, but dare not try for a maximum of efficiency. As Sir William Gull puts it, the Licensing Divisional Boards must only try to give "a better lowest examination than is now given." Of course, that in the future will embrace the three fundamental subjects of medicine, surgery, and midwifery, which all the 19 Licensing Authorities do not do, and, certainly, are not bound by statute to do. No doubt, however, a low pass examination has its danger. Candidates will certainly look to the State examination as the main end to be achieved. Its natural tendency will, therefore, be to produce and often to reduce to a low level of uniformity. In careers barred by examinations, the latter become the motive power, while a desire to attain a higher standard of excellence is limited to the ambitious few. The minimum standard of the State examination will, in future, govern the teaching of medical schools as surely as the main motive wheel of a factory engine governs

the motion of 1,000 bobbins. This has not escaped the attention of the Royal Commission, which was obliged to adapt its recommendations to the varying circumstances of medical education in the three divisions of the Kingdom. In England, medical education is chiefly conducted by hospital schools, the pupils of which are examined by the London Colleges of Surgeons or Physicians. The Universities of England have hitherto contributed only 8 per cent of the licentiates of England; but I am glad to say that both Cambridge and Oxford are rapidly developing their medical schools. In Ireland, the Universities play a more important part, for they graduate one-third of all the licentiates. The Irish Corporations also have their own teaching schools, and differ in this respect from the Corporations both of England and Scotland. In Scotland, the Universities take a very conspicuous part both in medical education and graduation. If we compare double licences in medicine and surgery, the Scotch Universities now licence 61 per cent of all the licentiates in Scotland. The students prosecuting medicine at the Universities are 2,700 in number; while their annual graduates are 300, or exactly six times more than the medical graduates of the English Universities. A system somewhat less organized than the hospital schools of England prevails in Scotland under the name of extra-mural teachers, who have a considerable number of students, partly preparing for the Corporation licences, and partly for University degrees. It will, therefore, be observed that Scottish and Irish medical education is essentially different from that in England. Indeed, it more resembles that in Germany, where, out of 25,000 University students, 6,000 are engaged in the study of medicine. The effect of having medical education within Universities is to associate general culture with technical training. Mere professional schools give length, but they do not give breadth to technical training. In the case of the Universities it is different, for their primary object is to give a cultured education, and then to make professional training its natural and logical development. The Royal Commission, and the Government acting upon their Report, were obliged to adapt any new system of licensing to the varying conditions of medical attendance in

the three divisions of the Kingdom. This they have endeavoured to do by making the representation on the Divisional Boards in proportion to the part which the Corporations and Universities respectively take in medical education, giving, however, a preponderance to those bodies which both teach and graduate over those which merely influence medical education by systems of examination without teaching. So the Divisional Boards in the three sections of the Kingdom are differently constituted. In England, where the Universities have in the past only trained 50 graduates yearly, the Corporations and Universities have equal representation on the Divisional Board. In Ireland, where both the Universities and the Corporations have medical schools, the Universities have a majority of two. In the Scottish Divisional Board there are eight University representatives to five from the Corporations. At present, I do not desire to discuss whether these are fair proportions between the Universities and the Corporations. This is a subsidiary question, which had best be considered in Committee. At the same time, I entirely uphold the principle of the Royal Commission—that where teaching Universities do much to promote medical training, they ought to have a preponderating influence over mere Examining Boards. The reason for this is obvious, that we desire to promote methodical education, and not mere cram. Unless you encourage Universities to aim at maximum qualifications, the State Boards will have the effect of inducing candidates to work down to the minimum of sufficiency, instead of working up to the higher qualifications of Universities. Examination is not education; it is only a test of what education has achieved; and it is always attended with uncertainties, and very frequently with evils. The Bill abolishes two Examining Boards; but it adds three, so that 20 will still remain if it were not for the tendency of the Corporations to unite in order to form conjoint examinations. Thus, the three Scottish Corporations have united; and, instead of five means of entering the Profession, they will hereafter have only one entrance, so that all the candidates must pass in the three subjects—medicine, surgery, and midwifery. The London Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons

have a conjoint scheme prepared, which will no doubt be ratified by the Medical Council in October, and they will consolidate their examinations in a like way. According to the present Bill, all the candidates for University honours, or for Corporation licences, must pass a final examination before the State Divisional Board. This was necessary when the Corporations gave licences for single subjects, such as medicine, surgery, or midwifery. But now that some of them have conjoined, and give one final examination for all three subjects, the whole question becomes much simpler. Frequent and repeated examinations on the same subjects are an intolerable oppression on candidates. The Medical Council and the subordinate Divisional Boards have to satisfy the public that the examinations for licence to practise are sufficient. This is the essence of the scheme, and with it I have no intention to interfere. If they can do this without adding to the number of examinations, it will be an immense gain, no doubt. The whole security for efficiency must be maintained. But this could be done in two ways—either by the Divisional Board instituting a completely new final examination, entirely by its own examiners, or by sending its examiners to take part in the final examinations of the Universities, and of the conjoint examinations of the Corporations. Both these plans were under the consideration of the Commissioners, who, by a majority, recommended a new and separate examination. The two Commissioners of the highest professional authority—Professor Huxley and Professor Turner—dissented, and gave very strong reasons indeed for the second plan of sending examiners from the Divisional Board to the University examinations and to the conjoint examinations of the Corporations. This is, in fact, the present system adopted in Germany. The State sends examiners to the Universities, and, associating the Professors with them, conduct the final examination. Germany first tried the other system of having a Central Licensing Board, but abandoned it, because it was found to lower very materially the medical qualifications of licentiates. I believe that if the majority of the Commissioners had now before them the schemes of conjoint examination since adopted, they would have reported in

favour of a combined, rather than of a new and separate examination. Let me show how grievous a hardship an additional examination would be in the case of the University of Edinburgh. The final examination therein in medicine, surgery, and midwifery occupies the examiners five or six hours daily for three or four weeks; and then six weeks more are occupied in clinical examinations at the hospitals. Upon that long and searching examination the University grants its degree. But according to this Bill, the candidate who has been successful at the University has to take his prolonged and harassing examination twice over—once at the University, and once at the Divisional Board. Of course, the result would be that many men will be content with the minimum examination which will put them on the Register, and never take the maximum examination required for a University degree. But that would defeat the purpose of the Bill, which is to promote, and not to deteriorate, medical education. It is quite possible that the Corporations might accept the final examination of the Divisional Board, although it would not add to their dignity or to the permanence of their existence; but it would be impossible for the Universities to do so unless they lowered their standards for degrees. Another practical difficulty stands in the way, which would not be felt in a large capital like London, but which is fatal to the proposal of the Bill in a city like Edinburgh, which, it must be borne in mind, contains by far the largest medical school in the country. At present, the clinical examinations in its hospitals require all the patients who can be used with safety to themselves. If a second examination in clinical subjects is enforced by the Divisional Board, one of two things must follow:—either that the hospitals will refuse to place themselves at the disposal of the examiners of the Boards or of the Universities. It must be borne in mind that patients are patients, and that it would be wicked to expose them to the exhausting effects of a double use of their bodies. But this double examination is wholly unnecessary, when Universities and conjoint Corporations are willing to allow the examiners of the Divisional Board to take part in their final examinations in as full and complete a way as the Divisional Board and

the General Medical Council may desire. I can answer for the University of Edinburgh in this respect—indeed, I know it to be the opinion of all the medical authorities in Scotland; and if there are any Universities or Corporations in England and Ireland who object to the introduction of public examiners into their final examination, let them remain under the present provision of the Bill, which provides for a separate and additional examination. All that I ask is, that when Universities or Corporations, acting under a conjoint scheme, are willing, this simple method of sending public examiners should be adopted, for thus the most complete security of efficiency will be given to the public, and the evils which must follow from an additional examination will be reduced to a minimum. I know how difficult it is to command the attention of the House to a Bill of this character, which includes so many technical and professional points. It is this feeling which prevents me from discussing them fully on the second reading. But when the Bill passes into Committee, I hope that we may have ample time to discuss the details. The public interests of a Profession which has to deal with the health, and even with the life, of the people ought not to be hastily continued by the House. The long-considered agitation for amended laws relating to it has prevented the natural growth of the Profession. It is essential, therefore, that we should have permanent legislation on a wide basis. This Bill makes an honest attempt to give us it, and I have resisted many efforts to make me an opponent instead of a supporter. But let me warn the House to keep in view that teaching and training, and not examination, make the physician. A distinguished surgeon, Sir James Paget, has lately claimed for the medical man that, within a generation, he has lengthened human life, decreased pain and suffering, while he has increased the working powers of the people. I admit this, with the qualification that we Legislators may claim some part of this result by our sanitary laws. The results, both as regards medicine and law, are primarily due to the advance of science. The microscope, which lately has led to such wonderful discoveries in regard to the small organisms which produce disease; chemistry, which has discovered anesthetics,

and enabled us to examine diseased secretions; the investigations which have led to antiseptic treatment in surgery; the stethoscope, which enables us by sound to know the working of the internal organs—these we owe to advancing science. It is, then, of extreme importance for the future advance of Medicine that medical men should be efficiently trained, especially in those practical means of research which modern laboratories offer to students. Mere examination may promote cram, but will not advance science. The Bill recognizes this broad truth by encouraging Universities to continue the training of the Medical Profession. Some of these undoubtedly fear that the Bill will be prejudicial to their higher education, and I admit that it would be in its present form. But I have pointed out how easy it will be to remove this danger either to the Universities, or to those Corporations which have joined together to make a complete examination, without altering in the slightest degree the structure of the Bill, or lessening the powers of the General Council to enact the conditions for licence, and without diminishing the powers of the Divisional Boards to admit to the Register on well ascertained qualifications. I have pointed to an Amendment, which might be inserted in three lines, enabling those Boards to send their examiners to Universities or conjoint Corporations, for the purpose of assuring the Medical Council that the examiners were not only sufficient but efficient. If this were done I think much of the alarm which now prevails would subside. I know that the Scottish Corporations are not at present supporters of the Bill. But their objections are on another ground, and can be fairly considered in Committee. I should deplore as much as they do any prejudice to their prosperity by legislation. They have a useful and important function to perform in promoting the welfare of the Medical Profession. I am sure that they are sensible, although they are Examining Boards, that the scientific training of medical students is far more important as a means of education than the mere stimulus of examination. They, therefore, when they understand the proposal, will not object to the limitation, instead of to the multiplication of the examinations. As to the fundamental object of this Bill, which

is that all medical men in the future should have a sufficient knowledge of the three chief divisions of Medicine—medicine, surgery, and midwifery—there is a consensus of opinion in its favour.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN, who had a Notice on the Paper to move its rejection, said, his object in placing a block to the Bill was to insure that a measure of such magnitude should not be taken at a late hour, when it would be impossible to have the discussion on it reported. Had it come at such a time, the House would probably have lost the benefit of the able and instructive speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh. He thought that the House and all branches of the Medical Profession were agreed that the Bill was one which was well worthy of consideration, and would, if passed with proper safeguards, be of great advantage both to the country and to the Medical Profession. Undoubtedly, there were a great many points which deserved to be very carefully considered in Committee; but there was one question of principle in it that he thought was rather lamentable, and that was that there was too much of the principle of centralization in it. The right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Sir Lyon Playfair) said that the Bill was opposed on some minor points by two Universities in Scotland, and some of the Corporations there. Now, there was the same objection among the Corporations of Ireland, and, in a minor degree, by some of the Universities. The Corporations in Ireland complained that the Bill aimed, to a very great extent, at minimizing the powers which they had exercised, and, no doubt, exercised worthily; that their funds were being confiscated; and that the means which they had also so worthily used were being taken away from them. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, no doubt, did not desire to do any injustice to any Corporation; and he (Colonel King-Harman) hoped, therefore, he would consider the very strong feeling there was that injustice would be done to Irish Corporations under it, and that he would give his best consideration to the Amendments which he intended to place upon the Paper with regard to this question, so that they might be inserted in the Bill. No doubt, it was in the power of the Government to pass the Bill in whatever

Sir Lyon Playfair

form they liked; but, as the object of the Bill was to put an end to agitation, he thought it ought to be passed in a form which would insure that a fresh agitation should not take place.

Mr. BRYCE, as a Member of the Royal Commission upon whose Report it had been founded, said, he did not intend to oppose the Bill; but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council would give them some fuller opportunity for discussion of it upon going into Committee. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh University (Sir Lyon Playfair) that this was the best of the many Bills that had been presented on this subject. He was not, however, quite sure that it might not have been better to have had no Bill at all. If we had been 30 years ago in the position in which we were now, this question would, perhaps, never have been raised; and now he doubted whether the improvements in medical education and examination effected during recent years had not made superfluous the reforms which were then urgently needed. In moving the second reading, the Vice President of the Council had mentioned the three main points of the Bill. As to the three-fold qualification, he thought that there was no difference of opinion. It was clearly necessary. As to the reform in the constitution of the Medical Council, the right hon. Gentleman had dwelt upon the question of the introduction of the representative element. For his own part, he (Mr. Bryce) could not see that much would be gained by this, or that a Medical Council so constituted would be really more representative of the Profession than the present Council, although it might appear so. The third, and, in his opinion, the most important, point in the Bill was the new provisions, not only for examination, but for the supervision of teaching. Sections 10 and 19 were, he considered, the most critical parts of the Bill, and on this point of it he hoped that they would be able to look for some concessions or modifications. He confessed that he did not see quite clearly what was meant by Section 10. He was afraid that, under that section, there might be established a final examination which would supersede the examinations conducted by the present Licensing Bodies.

He should like, in Committee, to have it made plain that it was not intended to substitute one final examination for these examinations, but rather to secure that the several examinations held by the Licensing Bodies should be adequate and satisfactory, and should be accepted as sufficient and final. This matter had a special importance for Scotland, because in Scotland it was the Universities that were the chief teaching bodies. He hoped hon. Members were aware what it was this country possessed in the Universities of Scotland, particularly in the University of Edinburgh. They had a Medical School which, both for efficiency and the number of its teachers, and the completeness of its whole scientific apparatus, had never been equalled in any part of the world, and such as was not dreamt of 30 years ago. They ought to be careful to do nothing to diminish the popularity, the elasticity, the independence of such a school as that. The level of efficiency had risen enormously of late years; and he thought it would be more advantageous to endeavour to secure a good minimum under the present examination system, striking off, if necessary, some two or three of the Licensing Bodies, than to create a new final licensing examination irrespective of any of the present Examining Bodies. He submitted to the House that the main thing they had to look to in the Bill, and in any scheme for the reform of medical education, was to secure the variety and freedom of the Teaching and Examining Bodies; and to avoid the danger, always present in the pursuit of uniformity, of interfering with and checking the efficiency of institutions which had been steadily improving, and of which they had now every reason to be proud.

Mr. GIBSON said, the House was under great obligations to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair), for his extremely interesting and suggestive speech, which he (Mr. Gibson) hoped would not be lost sight of when they reached the next stage of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) had expressed much confidence in the future progress of the Bill. He (Mr. Gibson) remembered, however, that similar confidence had been expressed by his Predecessors with respect to a large number of similar Bills, all of

which had been thought the best Bills possible. If the Bill succeeded in raising medical education where it required to be elevated, without lowering the education of those institutions where it was already elevated, it would accomplish the ideal objects of a Medical Bill. It must be remembered, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman opposite would note it, that a great many of the Universities and Corporations in all parts of the Empire, at present, supplied splendid medical education; that they had behaved in the most spirited manner, and had acted most generously, not only towards this, but towards all preceding Bills; and he trusted that it would not be found that the working of the Bill would tend to the lowering of the standard of medical education in those Corporations and Universities which had so steadily maintained a high standard; and that, while maintaining a reasonable standard of Medicine, the Medical Councils would not fall into the error of encouraging cram, for that would do much harm. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh, in his most important speech, revived an interesting suggestion with respect to examinations—namely, that of placing an Assessor at the examinations of the different Corporations and Universities, instead of creating Examining Boards, which he had no doubt would attract much attention. From what had fallen from the Vice President of the Council, it appeared that some opportunity would be afforded of discussing that and other matters on going into Committee. He hoped the Bill would be fairly dealt with by the House, and would in an amended form take its place in the Statute Book. If it succeeded in improving medical education without lowering the standard of existing educational establishments, it would prove a really useful Medical Bill.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL said, his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair) had referred to two Universities in Scotland, which were Medical Schools, as not being very friendly to the Bill. Having the honour to represent those two Universities, he (Mr. J. A. Campbell) wished to explain the facts of the case. It was true that those Universities did not look upon the Bill with very great favour in its present form; but he was

not sure that even the University of Edinburgh had any great favour for the Bill in its present form. All the Universities of Scotland which were Medical Schools regretted that the Bill was brought forward in the shape which it had taken, inasmuch as it introduced a greater change than they thought necessary for the excellent object in view. He thought he might say that they would all have preferred if the principle of having coadjutor examiners, which was recommended by the minority of the Medical Acts Commissioners, had been adopted, instead of the views of the majority. But with regard to the general objects of the Bill, he thought there was little difference of opinion. Not only the Universities, but the Medical Corporations of Scotland, were agreed that it was desirable to put an end to the system of licensing men who had not a complete qualification. That would be accomplished by the Bill; but he thought it was very desirable that the suggestion of his right hon. Friend (Sir Lyon Playfair) with regard to the final examination should be adopted by the Government. Both the Universities and the Corporations of Scotland had considerable hesitation about the Bill, inasmuch as they thought it would interfere with their individual independence. The Universities could not very well do without the Medical Corporations, and the Medical Corporations could not do without the Universities; and it was very desirable that both should be supported. He hoped, whatever the shape in which the measure would pass into law, that they would find that neither the individual character nor the individual independence of the different Universities and Corporations had been seriously interfered with. In Committee there would be many Amendments proposed, without which he thought there would be great opposition to the Bill. However, from what he had heard, they might, he thought, assume that all facility would be given for full consideration of Amendments in Committee; and if the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council would accept the suggestion of his right hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh University, and find some way of getting over the difficulty of final examination, a great impediment would be taken out of the way for the peaceful progress of the Bill.

Mr. Gibson

MR. GRAY said, that while heartily sympathizing to a certain extent with the objects of the Bill, he could not but regard it with a certain amount of apprehension. Its centralizing tendency, which he distrusted, might be extremely applicable to England; but the effect of that centralizing tendency would in Ireland be disastrous. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlet (Mr. Bryce) said he did not oppose the Bill on principle, though he had opposed it in its details; but every argument that the hon. Member used was an argument not against the details of the Bill, but against its principle. The principle of the Bill was to destroy independent Local Corporations. Now, he (Mr. Gray) did not set himself up to speak as a judge of the Medical Profession of England and Scotland, or the manner in which the Corporations in those countries performed their duties; but he maintained that the effect of the Bill would be to extinguish, eventually, the Medical Corporations of Ireland. [MR. MUNDELLA: Not at all.] He might be permitted to have his opinion, and that opinion, as well as the opinion of men of a leading position in the Medical Profession, was that the eventual effect of the Bill would be to extinguish the Irish Medical Corporations; and he maintained they did not deserve the fate the Bill would bring on them, for they had had a long and an honourable record. They had striven manfully, in spite of great difficulties and great temptations, to elevate the standard of medical qualifications in Ireland; and it was no reason, because one or two Corporations in one part of the United Kingdom appeared to think more of the fees to be received than the maintenance of the standard of education, why they should now endanger all the other great Medical Corporations of the three countries. No doubt, the annals of Parliament were full of abortive Bills dealing with medical education, and he was reluctant to oppose any well-considered scheme on the subject; but he objected to any measure endangering the old established Corporations for the sake of a theoretic change. He viewed, with a considerable amount of distrust, Bills introduced late in an afternoon, the principle of which every person appeared to admit, but the details of which were condemned on all sides.

The manner in which such Bills were introduced always pointed to one thing—an agreement by which the opponents of the Bill were squared by the Government. He would like to know why the Government would not apply, in this matter, the arrangement which worked so satisfactorily for many years in connection with its own Medical Service? The Government were not satisfied with the medical degrees conferred by the existing Corporations, and insisted on a second examination at Netley; but, although they had a separate examination, no candidate was admitted to that examination until he passed through some of the existing Bodies. That was a satisfactory arrangement; but the effect of the present Bill would be to drain away the resources of the existing Medical Corporations and transfer their revenues to the new Government Boards. Now, the very limited experience he had of Government Boards disinclined him very much to believe that any great improvement would be effected by the introduction of another of them into Ireland, more especially when the effect of their introduction would be to destroy the independent institutions already in existence there, of which every Irishman was proud. He also objected to the undue importance given to the Universities under these new Boards. What title had the University of Dublin and the Royal University to the appointment of four members to the Irish Examining Board, while only three members each were given to the College of Physicians and the College of Surgeons? Another serious objection to the Bill was that it would destroy an ancient Corporate Body in Ireland known as the Board of Apothecaries, which was analogous to the Pharmaceutical Society of England. [MR. MUNDELLA: That is not the proposal of the Bill.] Of course, that was not the proposal of the Bill in so many words; but the Bill did not propose to give the Board of Apothecaries any representation on the new Board; and, not being represented, it need hardly be said the effect of the new system would be to destroy that Corporation. The examinations of that Body might not be as high in their standard as those of the Universities, but it by no means followed that they were inadequate. To suppose that a uniform standard of examination ought to be in-

sisted on both for a skilled specialist and a gentleman supplying the wants of the poorer classes was absurd.

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes to Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at five minutes after Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 25th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Considered as amended*—London, Chatham, and Dover Railway (Further Powers)*; Plymouth, Devonport, and District Tramways.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Cemeteries [21], *debate adjourned*.

Committee—*Report*—Licensing Act (1872) Amendment* [248].

Report—Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order* [233]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7)* [235]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4)* [212]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7)* [241]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8)* [242]; Local Government Provisional Order* (Poor Law) (No. 14)* [243]; Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 15)* [246].

Considered as amended—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 4) [202].

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11)* [213], and *passed*.

Withdrawn—Copyright (Works of Fine Art and Photographs)* [183].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BUSINESS—
ESTATE BILLS—NEW STANDING
ORDER.—RESOLUTION.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in moving the following new Standing Order:—

Mr. Gray

“Estate Bills—188B, That in the case of any Estate Bill, the Committee on the Bill shall report specially to the House if the Bill contains provisions extending either the term or the area of any Settlement of Land, and the Report of the Committee shall be printed and circulated with the Votes,”

said, the terms of the proposed Standing Order which stood in his name were very plain and simple; but it would not be respectful to the House if he did not explain the object he had in view in proposing it, which, however, he would be able to do in very few words. He certainly would not have presumed to propose a new Standing Order if he had not been encouraged to do so by the Prime Minister. The House would be aware that in every Session there were a certain number of Bills introduced dealing with private estates. Those Bills always arrived somewhat late in the House of Commons, because, owing to immemorial custom, such Bills were first introduced in the House of Lords. He did not suggest that there should be any interference with that custom. It appeared to have grown out of the judicial functions of the House of Lords. The Lords had at all times had the power of consulting Her Majesty's Judges on matters of law, and these Bills, dealing with settlements, long leases, and limited ownership of land, were often of so complicated and difficult a character that their due examination required the highest legal attainments. If an Estate Bill had not been settled in the Court of Chancery, on petition to the House of Lords on the first reading it was referred to two of the Judges in rotation, not being Peers of Parliament, for examination and report. If an Estate Bill were introduced first into the House of Commons, it would be referred in the same way to two of the Judges, after a first reading in the House of Lords. There was, therefore, some advantage in the custom by which these Bills were first introduced in the other House of Parliament. When they came to the House of Commons, the House knew that two of the Judges had reported that the allegations contained in the Preamble of such Bills had been satisfactorily established, and that the provisions of the Bill were proper for carrying into effect the purposes of the measure, so far as the opinion of two of the learned Judges was concerned. These Bills were rarely opposed, and the exa-

mination by the Judges was extremely useful in securing that Parliament should act with legality—at least with legality—towards the various parties. It was at this point that he had ventured to interfere, not in disapproval of the procedure upon Estate Bills, but in order to secure that the duty of Parliament, which was much larger than the duty of the examining Judges, should be as far as possible fulfilled. The Judges had only to see that the law was observed, and that the private rights of parties in these Bills were not unduly extended. The Judges had no concern whatever with the public interests in land. It was their high function to be interpreters of the law; but the Legislature, which composed both Houses of Parliament, had the much higher function of making the law. This House was now in exactly the same condition as the other House, in having no Report whatever in regard to questions affecting the public interest which might be involved in the introduction of one of these Bills. For instance, a settlement of land might be proposed to Parliament, which might include the land of half a county, and might be placed in hands which, from pecuniary embarrassment or some other cause, would not be the best, having regard to the improvement of the soil. But the House of Commons would not have one word on such a subject before it from Her Majesty's Judges; and the House, which, next to the rights and liberties of the people, was most of all concerned in the improvement of the soil, might, through some inadvertence, be guilty of neglect of duty in reference to one of these measures. Many hon. Members were of opinion that the settlement of land was opposed to simplicity of transfer, and might, in certain instances, be unfavourable to improvement. Lord Cairns himself was certainly of that opinion, because, in the Settled Lands Act, he had proposed that the life tenant should, with certain small limitations, have the power of selling any part of his estate with a view to the improvement of the remainder of his property. All of them, he was sure, would agree that when the House allowed a new or an extended settlement of land, they ought to know what they were doing. That was all he asked the House to agree to in submitting this Standing Order—namely,

that they should receive certain information upon points in regard to which it was not the duty of the examining Judges to report to the House of Lords. The Judges to whom these Bills were submitted had nothing whatever to do with the improvement of land. They had no concern whatever in the public interest in land; but the House of Commons had. He would only say, before resuming his seat, that there was a Committee of the House of Lords appointed in the year 1873, to report upon the improvement of the soil and the Land Laws generally, and he had been informed that the Report of that Committee was drawn up by Lord Salisbury. There was one remarkable sentence contained in it to which he wished to draw the attention of the House. It was this—

“The case for Parliamentary consideration lies in this—that the improvement of land in its effect upon the price of food and upon the dwellings of the poor is a matter of public interest.”

The Standing Order which he proposed asked only for such information as he respectfully submitted it was right that the House should obtain as plainly and simply as possible. He made the proposal with confidence that it would be accepted by Her Majesty's Government after the assurance of support which he understood he had received; and he was not without strong hope that, if it should be the pleasure of hon. Members, he would have the high honour of placing to-day among the Standing Orders of the House a perpetual record and acknowledgment of its sense of the public interest in land. He begged to propose the Standing Order which appeared in his name on the Paper.

Mr. CRAIG SELLAR, in seconding the Motion, said, the reasons why this proposal should be accepted, and be made a Standing Order of the House, had been so clearly explained by his hon. Friend that he felt hardly justified in trespassing upon the House, even for a few minutes, in urging anything in addition to what his hon. Friend had stated; but while his hon. Friend and he had the same object—namely, that they should give some formality to, and have some check upon, the proceedings of Committees in regard to Bills relating to settled estates in land, in the case of unopposed Bills, he was not certain that the motives which actuated his

hon. Friend and those which actuated him were identical. His hon. Friend had stated that he desired that there should be a distinction made between Private Bills dealing with estates in land and Private Bills dealing with other matters. No doubt, as his hon. Friend had shown, there was a distinction made in the other House of Parliament. In that House it was provided that a Report should be made by two of the Judges upon all Estate Bills. The Judges were to report whether, assuming the Preamble was proved, they were satisfied that the Bill was a reasonable one, and calculated to carry out the intended objects; and they were further to report to the House of Lords what Amendments, if any, they had to suggest. In the House of Commons they treated Bills of this nature with somewhat less respect. They were, he might say, for the most part family Bills—Bills which dealt with estates connected with families. They were arranged outside the House, and, as a rule, were unopposed; and, undoubtedly, unless due supervision were exercised over them, some objectionable provision might be allowed to slip through Committee. The object of his hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) was to secure that these Bills should be marked in a particular manner, because they dealt with land; whereas he (Mr. Craig Sellar) desired that they should be marked in a particular manner, but for an entirely different reason. His hon. Friend had admitted candidly what was in his mind, and he (Mr. Craig Sellar) would admit just as candidly and frankly what his motive was. He supported the proposal, because he had no abiding confidence in the existing system by which legislation upon Private Bills was carried on in that House. There was not that amount of publicity which ought to prevail with regard to these Bills, especially when they were unopposed. The House delegated its functions to its Committees, and the Committees, to a large extent, delegated their functions to the Chairman of the Committee. That fact threw upon the Chairman a very grave responsibility, and particularly so in regard to measures which dealt with any question relating to land. He was of opinion that this was a responsibility which should not be thrown upon one

man, however eminent he might be, but that it should be shared, to a large extent, by the House itself. He believed a Committee did well, in many instances, to delegate their duties to the Chairman of Committees; and certainly there would not be much objection if the Chairman of Committees was an ordinary official. But he thought the House would agree with him that the Chairman of Committees in that House was not an ordinary official. He was two or three important officials rolled into one. He was the hardest worked man in the House; and, however willing, able, and devoted to his duty a Chairman of Committees might be—and he was sure the House would agree with him that no more able, more willing, or more devoted official could occupy that position than the hon. Gentleman the Member for Rochester (Sir Arthur Otway)—no man, however willing, able, and devoted he might be, was capable of discharging the enormous mass of public duties which fell upon the Chairman of Committees. He would ask the House to consider for a moment what those duties were. From 2 o'clock until 7 he must be at the Table of the House whenever the House was in Committee; and, again, from 9 o'clock until probably 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning he was again to be found presiding over their deliberations, with his mind in a state of tension owing to the watchful care he was compelled to exercise over the complicated details of the clauses of Public Bills, or the intricacies of Supply. The next morning it was necessary that he should be down to the House by noon, in order to conduct the proceedings of the House in reference to unopposed Private Bills, and to wade through the clauses of a general mass of Private Bills that were placed before him. Was it possible that any man could discharge such duties with all the care which the House had a right to expect? No doubt, the Chairman of Committees had a most able staff of officials to assist him; but it was a very small staff—very much too small considering the large amount of Bills presented to Parliament. What supervision did the House exercise over this branch of Private Bill legislation? How was it to know that any Estate Bill, or any unopposed Bill, was before the House at all? Under such circumstances, it was impossible for

Mr. Craig Sellar

the House to exercise any due or proper supervision over this branch of legislation. He believed that the time was not far off when a thorough and radical reform of the whole system of Private Bill legislation must take place. Indeed, it would appear, from recent discussions, that the time was nearly ripe now; and if he was in Order in referring to a recent debate in "another place," which only took place a few days ago, it would seem to be in contemplation to effect great reforms in that branch of the Legislature. No portion of the proposition submitted to the House of Lords was received with such acclamation in that august Assembly as the proposal for adopting new principles in dealing with Private Bill legislation in that House. It was perfectly true that the number of Estate Bills introduced into Parliament was limited. He held in his hand a list of those which had been introduced since 1873; and although they had apparently increased since 1873, the number was still only small. It amounted to about five, on the average, in a year. Some years there had been as many as nine, in some years seven, and in others only two; but the average was about five in each year. If the system of requiring Reports to be furnished should be once established, even in this small class of Private Bill legislation, it would help, and greatly help, the solution of the larger question of Private Bill legislation generally, which, he believed, not only in the House of Commons, but in the other House of Parliament, was nearly ripe, and for which the public out-of-doors had long been sincerely anxious. On that account he had much pleasure in seconding the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Salford.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That in the case of any Estate Bill, the Committee on the Bill shall report specially to the House if the Bill contains provisions extending either the term or the area of any Settlement of Land, and the Report of the Committee shall be printed and circulated with the Votes."—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold.*)

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY: I do not rise for the purpose of following my hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig Sellar) in any of the observations he has made, and which, no doubt, are of considerable importance, in regard to Private Bill legisla-

tion. Nor will it be expected that I should enter into the general question of the settlement of land, which has been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold). I will only say, with regard to the Standing Order itself, which has been proposed by my hon. Friend, that I think it will be a valuable addition. There is no doubt whatever that great responsibility would be cast upon any Member of the House who occupies the position I do if it were not for the protection afforded me by the knowledge that these Estate Bills have been thoroughly investigated by two of Her Majesty's Judges before they reached me. If it were not for that fact, I could not undertake to give my sanction to these Bills without a much more elaborate investigation than the time and opportunities I have at my disposal would allow me to devote to them. I wish my hon. Friend the Member for Salford to put his mind at rest in regard to these Bills, which have already been passed, if he supposes that they have not been very carefully and thoroughly considered. In the first place, it is not unimportant to remember that all of them, when they are introduced in the House of Lords, undergo a careful investigation at the hands of one of the most experienced public servants of the country—Lord Redesdale, the Chairman of Committees in that House, assisted by able counsel. That noble Lord has had a very long experience; and when the Bills come down to me, they have already received the sanction of his high authority. When they reach me, I give them as careful an investigation, and devote to them as much time as circumstances will allow, and I have the assistance of two most able men in the process—a gentleman who gives me his services in the position of secretary, a gentleman of considerable knowledge and some 30 years' experience—and I have, in addition, the assistance of the counsel to Mr. Speaker, of whom it is quite unnecessary for me to say one word in praise. The House, therefore, may be pretty well satisfied that these Estate Bills do receive very careful investigation. However, as they do treat of important matters, and contain the important proposals to which my hon. Friend the Member for Salford has referred—involving probably questions of entail and disentail, I agree with him

that it is desirable the attention of the House should be called to the circumstances of all Bills of such a character by such a Report as that which my hon. Friend suggests in his proposed Standing Order. Indeed, I know of no better form of bringing the provisions of Bills dealing with the settlement of land before the House. Therefore, I have much pleasure in supporting the proposal of my hon. Friend. I will only add one word in regard to the observations of the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs. Certainly, the labour imposed upon the Chairman of Committees is, no doubt, sufficient for any one man to undertake; but it is not quite so onerous as my hon. Friend supposes. Private Business is not undertaken by the Chairman every day. If it were, it would be perfectly impossible for any one man to preside at this Table, and conduct the Private Business of the House at the same time; but the duties of the Chairman in connection with Private Bills are limited to two days a-week.

Question put, and agreed to.

188b. *Resolved*, That in the case of any Estate Bill, the Committee on the Bill shall report specially to the House if the Bill contains provisions extending either the term or the area of any Settlement of Land, and the Report of the Committee shall be printed and circulated with the Votes.

Ordered, That the said Resolution be a Standing Order of the House.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (LABOURERS' ACT) (No. 4) BILL.—[BILL 202.]

(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland,*
Mr. Trevelyan.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered*.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR, in moving, in page 7, line 20, to insert the words, "3 | Cooleen | 10, 11, and 12," said, the Bill which the House was now asked to consider was one of very considerable importance, because it was the first Bill under the provisions of the Labourers' (Ireland) Act, passed last year, which had been tested, and which had not come before the House in a purely formal and unpretentious manner. The Amendment which he had put upon the Paper

was practically a traverse of the decision of the Committee which had considered the Bill. He need hardly say that this was a course which he had not taken without very considerable hesitation, particularly as the Committee which had considered the Bill was presided over by such a staunch friend of popular rights as the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). But as many representations had been made to him on the subject by the gentlemen belonging to the locality to which the Bill applied, and after a careful perusal of the evidence, he had come to the conclusion that he had no course open to him except to oppose the decision which had been arrived at by the Committee. In order to explain the nature of the case to Members of the House generally it would be necessary for him to make a few observations upon the Labourers (Ireland) Act of last year. As everybody knew, under that Act it was necessary that representations should be made to the Board of Guardians by no less than 12 ratepayers as to the necessity for the erection of labourers' cottages, and this representation having undergone investigation before it could be accepted the Board of Guardians were enabled then to prepare a scheme. The matter was next brought before the Local Government Board, who made a Provisional Order for the erection of the dwellings, which Provisional Order was brought forward for the sanction of the House of Commons by an Act of Parliament. These formalities were gone through in the district for which this Bill was promoted. There was a scheme of some largeness proposed for the division of Kilmore, in the Poor Law Union of Nenagh, county Tipperary, and it was proposed by the Guardians to erect 14 new cottages under the provisions of the Act. He assured the House that it was not out of the "lightness of their hearts" that the Guardians of the Nenagh Union decided to erect these cottages, nor was it in any way with a desire to embarrass or annoy the landlord. The erection of these 14 cottages had been decided upon because the medical and sanitary officers of the district had reported to the Guardians that the houses occupied by the labourers were utterly unfit for human habitation. He wished to dwell particularly on this fact, for a moment, for this reason—that it proved the case of

Sir Arthur Otway

the promoters of the Bill that there was an urgent necessity for increased accommodation for the labourers of the district. Lord Dunally, who opposed the Bill, had argued that emigration had so thinned the population of the district that there was not a necessity for these cottages; and he further stated that for that and other reasons he had himself dismissed a considerable number of his own labourers, and that, as a matter of fact, instead of there being more labourers than houses, there were more houses than labourers. However, the medical officer of the district reported that there was a necessity for the erection of 14 additional cottages in order to afford habitable and sanitary accommodation for the labourers of the district; and in support of this point he might quote a passage from the evidence of Mr. Bourke, the Local Government Board Inspector, an officer whose impartiality in the matter he did not believe would be questioned. Mr. Bourke was asked this question by a Member of the Committee—

“What is your opinion about this district; do you think there is a necessity for cottages; I want your opinion?”

The witness replied—

“I have not the slightest doubt that the present accommodation of the great majority of the labourers is such as no one would tolerate.”

He thought that evidence of the Inspector of the Local Government Board, taken in conjunction with the Report of the medical and sanitary officer of the district, showed that the Board of Guardians had a perfectly just right to propose some additional accommodation for the labourers. The scheme was accordingly prepared on the 6th of November, 1883, for the erection of 14 cottages; and on the 16th of February, 1884, there was an inquiry held by the Local Government Board, under the supervision of Mr. Bourke, and the result of it was that on the 10th of May the Local Government Board announced their decision to reject six of the cottages, and to allow the remaining eight to remain. This fact showed that the Local Government Board, as might have been anticipated, had made a thorough, searching, and honest inquiry into the matter. The Local Government Board did not pass the scheme in its entirety; but they had exercised a very close discrimination,

and had actually struck out nearly one-half of the cottages proposed. But that fact to his mind, and he thought in the judgment of the House, confirmed the necessity for the remaining eight. The three cottages which were the subject of the present Bill had been approved of by the Local Government Board, and were to be erected at Cooleen, on the property of Lord Dunally. Lord Dunally, against whom he desired to offer no observations, as his whole complaint was simply directed to the unreasonable nature of the opposition—Lord Dunally from the first expressed a determined hostility to the erection of any additional cottages in this district at all. He thought it would readily be gathered from the statements which Lord Dunally had made from time to time on every occasion when the question was raised, that in his opinion there was no necessity for erecting additional cottages at all. Lord Dunally had been asked by the Guardians, who were in no way desirous of acting in opposition to him, to send his bailiff in order that they might confer with him as to the selection of the site that would be the best, so far as the property was concerned, for the erection of the cottages; but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) understood that Lord Dunally refused this offer on the part of the Board of Guardians. He refused to send his bailiff to confer with the Guardians, and left it to the Board themselves to select a proper site. There was another point which he wished to bring before the notice of the House. The local inquiry held by Mr. Bourke was attended by Lord Dunally. Lord Dunally made objections to the scheme. He objected to four out of the 14 proposed new cottages as being likely to injure his property. Those four were rejected. He offered no evidence in regard to the other three, such as he alleged in his Petition against the Bill; and, as a matter of fact, his hostility to those cottages arose long after the decision of the Local Government Board was arrived at. It was most unfortunate that a nobleman, or anybody else, should put a Board of Guardians like this to serious expense, when every single farthing spent must necessarily fall upon the ratepayers of the district. He thought that Lord Dunally ought to have displayed more fixedness of purpose in such a matter. Why did he not object

to the four cottages when the question was brought before the Local Government Board? Surely he knew that he might expect full justice at the hands of Mr. Bourke and the Local Government Board; because, as a matter of fact, the four cottages to which Lord Dunally objected as being inconvenient so far as the position of the property was concerned, had been rejected by the Local Government Board. He did not wish to give expression to any opinion as to the action of this nobleman in the matter which would in the smallest degree prejudice the case in the eyes of any Member of the House; but he would merely state that he thought Lord Dunally might have given full expression to his views while the inquiry was taking place. The inclusion of the three cottages at Cooleen could only be put down to the neglect of Lord Dunally, who ought to have raised his objection at the proper time. A further point was this. Lord Dunally now took up this position—that he did not object to the erection of three additional cottages, but that he objected to their erection on this particular piece of ground. Now, in the first place, he would point out that it was not until the 9th of April, 1884, or two months after the inquiry before Mr. Bourke, on the part of the Local Government Board, was concluded, that Lord Dunally offered his alternative scheme. This was the second occasion on which he should be able to show that Lord Dunally had made an unreasonable delay in putting forward his demands upon the Board of Guardians. In the first place, he did not object to the erection of these three cottages at the proper moment—namely, while the inquiry of the Local Government Board was proceeding; and, secondly, he did not propose his alternative scheme until two months after the inquiry was concluded. And then what was the offer which was made by Lord Dunally? It was this—"I have three cottages vacant in the same townland. They are now uninhabited, and have fallen into a dilapidated state on account of there being no persons to occupy them. I am quite ready to give these up to the Guardians." But Lord Dunally ought to have known from his legal advisers that the Board of Guardians had no authority, under the Labourers' Act of last year, to accept his proposals. Able as he was, the learned

counsel who represented the Guardians before the Committee, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not think he had made himself sufficiently upon clear this point to them—namely, that the Labourers' Act of last year contemplated the erection of new cottages, but did not contemplate the purchase of existing cottages. As a matter of fact, the Supplementary Bill which had been proposed by the Irish Members last year to amend the Labourers' Act, but which was rejected by the Government, contained a Proviso giving powers to Boards of Guardians to purchase and repair existing and dilapidated cottages, instead of incurring the expense of erecting new ones; but no such Proviso was to be found in the existing Act. He trusted that he had made this point sufficiently clear to the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who presided over the Committee—namely, that the offer of Lord Dunally to give up these three cottages was an offer which the Board of Guardians were legally precluded from accepting.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON remarked that the Board of Guardians were not precluded from taking the land on which the cottages stood.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was not sure whether the Guardians had the right to take the land upon which these dilapidated cottages stood. As a matter of fact, the cottages which Lord Dunally wished the Guardians to accept had not the necessary plot of land attached to them; and he had declined to give it with them. The first occasion upon which he had offered to do so, was during the inquiry before the Committee of the House of Commons. The original offer was not an offer of land, but of three dilapidated cottages, which the Board of Guardians were precluded from accepting by the provisions of the enactment of last year. The next step was the inquiry before the Committee of the House of Commons; and when the Committee of the House of Commons met for the first time, this offer was made which the hon. Baronet seemed to regard as a reason why the proposition made by the Board of Guardians should be refused. He thought this was the third instance in which he had shown that Lord Dunally was guilty of unreasonable delay. He must say that the very essence of the provisions of the

Labourers' Act was that the proceedings under it should be conducted as economically as possible, as the ratepayers were to be taxed for the erection of these cottages; and opinion was united in Ireland as to the fact that one shilling a-week was as much as an agricultural labourer could afford to pay for a residence. It would, therefore, be seen that it was most important the cost of their erection should be minimized as much as possible. If unnecessary expense were placed in the way of carrying out the provisions of the Act, the Act itself was rendered as nugatory as if it had never received the sanction of the two Houses of Parliament. Now, what did the Committee of the House of Commons do? He had made no reflection upon Lord Dunally, still less did he feel called upon to make any reflection upon the Committee; but he must express his astonishment that the very first appearance of anything like weakness where popular rights were concerned should have come from a man like the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who had stood up so manfully, and almost alone, even against his Party, to protest against the proceedings of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. Surely, after the determination which the hon. Baronet had displayed on that occasion he ought to have been able to hold his own against three or four Members of his own Committee. The hon. Baronet would, he was certain, make better fighting were the case one for the rights of the Egyptian people; and, therefore, taking the matter as it stood, he might be pardoned for suggesting that the hon. Baronet had been a little "weak-kneed" upon this occasion. He should have thought, however, that the hon. Baronet would have taken his stand for the labourer's cottages at Cooleen just as firmly as he had for the rights of the Egyptian people and Arabi Pasha. What had the Committee done? They threw out the scheme for the erection of these three cottages, and allowed the substitution for it of an undertaking by Lord Dunally, that he would provide a site for three cottages in another place. Now, the site which had been put forward by Lord Dunally was a site which he had reason to believe, if it had been originally selected by the Board of Guardians, would have been just as bitterly opposed by his Lordship

as was the present site at Cooleen; and Lord Dunally would have had a far more reasonable ground for objecting to it than he had now, at the eleventh hour, for objecting to the site chosen by the Guardians; because, as a matter of fact, the reason why the site proposed in the Bill had been selected was from an apprehension that if the other site were chosen, it would bring about hostility to the proposals of the Guardians on the part of Lord Dunally—a result which the Guardians were most anxious to avoid. He would call the attention of the House to the evidence of one of the Guardians, Mr. Joseph Ryan, at page 13 of the Report, Question 181. Mr. Ryan was asked whether some of the cottages offered by Lord Dunally, and the reply was—

"The three that Lord Dunally offered have no accommodation with them, because that is the part where his Lordship made a large field, taken from the tenants of the adjoining land behind the house; where Lord Dunally is giving these houses, the land was taken from them, and the tenants were compensated. This land is nearly attached to the demesne lands; and that is the reason that the houses were not put on his land, because we considered that it was adjacent to his Lordship's demesne. This other place, where the houses are to be situated, is outside."

In other words, the Board of Guardians were anxious to obey the letter and spirit of the Act, one of the distinct provisions of which, moved by the late Attorney General for Ireland, and accepted by the House, was, that cottages should not be erected in such a manner as to interfere with the demesne of the landlord. It was the desire of the Board of Guardians to respect the provisions of the Act of Parliament, and the susceptibilities of Lord Dunally which induced them not to select the site which Lord Dunally now insisted upon them taking. Well, what was now the position? Lord Dunally had given an undertaking that he would provide an alternative site, after putting the Board of Guardians to all this expense and delay most unnecessarily. He would make no comment whatever upon the terms of the undertaking; but he hoped the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) would get up and tell the House that it would be distinctly binding upon Lord Dunally. There was a very considerable legal difficulty also in the way of carrying out

the undertaking; and if the learned Solicitor General for Ireland took part in the discussion he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would relieve the minds of the Nenagh Board of Guardians by telling them whether the acceptance of this alternative scheme would not mean a delay of 12 months in the erection of these cottages? He believed that the interpretation of the Act was that whereas the Local Government Board could accept a site for the erection of cottages, and could exclude cottages from the scheme submitted to them, they were precluded from adding or including cottages that were not in the scheme. Now, the cottages proposed by Lord Dunally were not included in the scheme brought before the Local Government Board, and therefore the offer of his Lordship could not be brought within the terms of the Act. If that apprehension were not correct, he hoped that all doubt upon the matter would be removed by the learned Solicitor General for Ireland. He feared, however, that the responsibility would rest with the Chairman and the Members of the Committee of having postponed for a full 12 months the erection of these cottages, which was most urgently and cryingly demanded by the labourers in this district. He now came to his last point. Looking at the matter in this light he regretted that he felt forced to describe the position which the Committee had taken up as distinctly iniquitous. What was the decision of the Committee? He had proved conclusively that all the delay in the matter was due to Lord Dunally—that Lord Dunally had objected to have these cottages provided at all; that there was a delay of two months before he made his alternative proposal; that when it was made it was made in such a manner that the Board of Guardians were precluded legally from accepting it, because the proposal was to supply dilapidated houses, and not land; and, lastly, that unnecessary delay was occasioned by not submitting an alternative offer of houses and land until the Bill was before a Committee of the House of Commons. What had been the result of all this? The result was that the Board of Guardians had been put to an expense nearly amounting to £200, whilst the entire rateable value of the division was only about £3,800; so that the House would

therefore see that the action of Lord Dunally had put the ratepayers to the expense of nearly 1s. in the pound upon the rateable value. And with what result? Now, 1s. in the pound was the maximum which the Guardians had the right or were able to expend in the erection of cottages; so that, as a matter of fact, Lord Dunally had actually put a burden upon the Guardians of expenses for needless litigation, which he was afraid would make it extremely difficult to carry out the scheme at all in this division; because the expenses already incurred were very nearly equal to the full maximum the Board of Guardians were entitled to spend in the erection of these cottages. He believed he had proved that the conduct of Lord Dunally had been most unreasonable and most unfair—that he had interposed unreasonable delay, and brought forward frivolous objections, and had put the Board of Guardians to large and unnecessary expense. He felt bound to tell the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle that, in the face of all these facts, it would, he believed, be most unjust to compel the Guardians to pay one single penny of the costs. Lord Dunally ought to be called upon to pay the whole of them. It was for the purpose of calling attention to these facts that he had put the Amendment which he now moved upon the Notice Paper; and he begged to move the insertion of words which would have the effect of reinstating the three cottages which had received the approval of the Local Government Board, and which he thought the Select Committee had unreasonably and unfairly excluded.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, line 20, to insert the words, “3 | Cooleen | 10, 11, and 12.”—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said, there were two or three legal points raised by the hon. Gentleman opposite, which he had no doubt the Solicitor General for Ireland would be able to deal with better than he could. But as he had acted as Chairman of the Committee to whom the Bill was referred, it was necessary that he should make a short statement before any of those legal matters were gone into. He was very much obliged to the hon. Member for having given

him formal Notice that he intended to raise a discussion, so that an opportunity might be afforded to him of explaining. He could assure the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) that he and his fellow Members of the Committee had entered upon the inquiry with a full desire that equal justice should be done to all parties. As regarded himself, he might add that he was always ready to act justly towards Lord Dunally, or the Egyptians, or the Irish, or anyone else. He had treated the question entirely upon its merits. Perhaps his best course in dealing with the remarks of the hon. Member would be to read a short statement of what really did occur before the Committee which he had drawn up, and which was an answer to the speech of the hon. Member. It gave a complete account of the whole thing as far as he understood it. The hon. Member had moved what virtually amounted to a reversal of the decision of the Committee, who were unanimous. The object of the Provisional Order was to take compulsorily, for the erection of three labourers' cottages, land belonging to Lord Dunally. Lord Dunally opposed it on the ground of irreparable damage to his property by severance and otherwise, and of there being on his property already three cottages, unoccupied and available, which he had offered for sale to the sanitary authority. At the conclusion of the promoter's case, Lord Dunally's counsel, on behalf of his client, proposed to give an undertaking again to offer these sites, to put the cottages in repair, and to add further land not exceeding half an acre to each, provided the sites to be taken by the Order were abandoned. The promoters had not proved their case to the satisfaction of the Committee, in the face of what appeared to them, and probably would also appear to most people, so reasonable an offer. The Committee, therefore, decided for the Petitioner—Lord Dunally—on the understanding that he should, on the application of the sanitary authority, provide other sites to be approved by the Local Government Board. The authorized agents for the Order—Messrs. Holmes and Co.—were in no way parties to the motion. In the opinion of the Committee, the objects of the Labourers' (Ireland) Act, 1883, would be as effectively carried out by agreement between

the parties, under the above-mentioned undertaking, as it would have been by the compulsory taking of the Petitioner's land under the Order. That was exactly the state of the case. He had told the House that the Committee had endeavoured to settle the question on its merits, and he believed they had done so. What they had heard from the hon. Member was only one side of the case; the Committee heard both sides. His hon. Friend talked about popular rights, and about his having always been in favour of them, and so forth. His hon. Friend added that he did not know what it was that took place in the Committee which had induced him to alter those opinions. He would tell his hon. Friend, as a matter of fact, the Committee were perfectly unanimous in their decision. There was one other point which he would refer to. The hon. Member said that the Board of Guardians would have to draw up another scheme, which might occasion a further delay of 12 months, in providing these labourers' cottages. Of course, he saw that there would be a difficulty in the matter; but he should be very sorry if that were the case, and he hoped his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland would be able to inform the House that that would not be the case. The Committee had done all they could in the matter, and he hoped Lord Dunally would now proceed to carry out his undertaking for the benefit of the cottagers.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR inquired what would be done with regard to the costs?

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said, he would not go into the question of costs. He presumed that the costs would follow the decision of the Committee in the matter, and they had given their verdict strictly in accordance with the evidence laid before them. If the House were of opinion that they deserved a Vote of Censure, it was quite right that they should pass one. Personally, he had no very ardent desire to act as Chairman of one of these Committees again.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER) said, he merely wished to explain to the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) the action of the Local Government Board in the matter. That there was ample necessity for the erection of these cottages had been proved at the inquiry; and, therefore, the Provisional

Order was made. Lord Dunally had opposed this Provisional Order before the Committee, and he had succeeded in having three cottages struck out. He was not going into the question, as between Lord Dunally and the Nenagh Board of Guardians, whether Lord Dunally was right or not; but, merely looking at the facts of the case as stated by the hon. Member for Galway, it certainly appeared that the noble Lord was a little late in his proceedings. But, as far as the House were concerned, they must now deal with the existing facts of the case. The first question was as to whether they should reverse or support the action of the Committee. He apprehended that it would be unusual, if not altogether contrary to all precedent, to interfere with the decision of the Committee, and it would have the effect of delaying the Bill, which would have to be recommitted, and would practically prevent it from passing this year, having regard to the Standing Orders of the House of Lords. The Committee appeared to have been unanimous in their decision, and they were presided over by the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), in whom, at all events, the hon. Member appeared to place great confidence. He did not think the future confidence of the hon. Member in the hon. Baronet would be at all shaken by anything which had occurred in the Committee. He was perfectly sure that they had acted with complete impartiality, and that they had devoted careful attention to the evidence submitted to them. He was, therefore, unable to support the Motion of the hon. Member; first, on account of the delay it would involve in the carrying out of any scheme; and, secondly, because it would endanger the passing of the Bill altogether; and there were other parts of the scheme of the Local Government Board which were not objected to. As to the costs of promoting the Bill, he felt sure that they would be made as light as possible.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the Standing Orders of the House of Lords insisted on the passing of the Bill by a particular date?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER) replied that, to the best of his recollection, the Bill must be read a second time by the 27th of June; but he was informed that

sometimes the Standing Orders were dispensed with. But, with the opposition of Lord Dunally, if the Bill were recommitted, it was most improbable that anything further would be done in the matter this year. So far as Lord Dunally was concerned, he had undertaken to provide other sites which were to receive the approval of the Local Government Board. That undertaking had been formally given, and there was no danger that it would not be observed. As to the mode in which it was to be carried out, this was a case in which the sites for cottages were to be taken, not by compulsory powers, but by agreement. The 16th section of the Labourers' Act enabled the sanitary authority to purchase land for the erection of cottages by agreement. It was quite true that there were existing cottages on the land proposed to be given; but the Board of Guardians could not be in any worse position in consequence of finding cottages there already. They would be taken as sites, and positive benefit would be derived from the fact that there were cottages on them, seeing that the Guardians would have so much more material available at hand. Therefore, under the circumstances of the case, he could not support the Motion of the hon. Member; and he would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that he ought to be satisfied with the discussion which had taken place. So far as Lord Dunally was concerned, he did not believe that he would fail to carry out the undertaking, and thereby incur the responsibility of forcing legal action under the compulsory powers of the Act. He was further convinced that the work would be carried out in the cheapest possible form, and that the Local Government Board would give every aid they could to the Board of Guardians, both by legal machinery and otherwise.

MR. BERESFORD, as a Member of the Committee, desired to say a few words. In this case there was submitted to the Committee a Petition of Lord Dunally against the decision of the Nenagh Board of Guardians to select certain sites to which he entertained a particular objection. Lord Dunally showed to the Committee that the sites which were proposed by the Nenagh Board of Guardians were sites that would be most inconvenient to him, while, on the other hand, there were

sites he was perfectly ready to give. Objection was, however, taken to them by the Board of Guardians because there were some old houses upon them. One of the principal witnesses—Mr. Joseph Ryan, a Poor Law Guardian for Kilmore—said the reason why the site now proposed was not originally selected was that the land attached to it was demesne land, and they considered that it might be disadvantageous to Lord Dunally's demesne to select it; yet Lord Dunally had himself offered that very site, and surely the opinion of so good a judge as Mr. Joseph Ryan as to the convenience of it might wisely be taken. Then, again, the convenience of the House of Lords in considering the Bill should also be consulted. On the other hand, it was proposed to take the necessary land from Lord Dunally's stock farm, and Lord Dunally was of opinion that the stock farm would be irreparably injured by the erection of these labourers' cottages. As to the insinuation that pressure had been put either upon the Chairman or the Committee, he was in a position to deny it absolutely; and he would confirm the statement of the Chairman that the decision of the Committee was perfectly unanimous.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, that, notwithstanding the remarks which had just been made by the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. Beresford) in justification of the conduct of Lord Dunally, he did not think there was much to be said in defence of the extraordinary course pursued by the Committee in rejecting these three cottages from the scheme which had received the sanction of the Local Government Board. Moreover, they had rejected them upon an undertaking from Lord Dunally to do that which the Board of Guardians repeatedly gave him the opportunity of doing, but which he had persistently declined to do. Though Lord Dunally had deceived the Board of Guardians, and refused to give them assistance in carrying out the scheme, and had declined until the last moment to give notice, yet the Committee of the House of Commons had not thrown on him any part of the burden of the cost. That, he thought, was a most extraordinary confession to have to make in the House. He did not mean to say that the hon. Baronet and the Committee had not arrived at their conclusion to the best of their judgment; but

judgment was usually founded on reasons, and the hon. Baronet had not specified the reason in this case. It was very unfortunate, considering all the difficulties with which the Labourers' Act was surrounded, considering the many defects in the Act itself, and the recent refusal of the House to remedy them, that a Committee of this House, knowing very well the strength of the landowners and the weakness of the representation of the labourers in the House, should have taken the course they had taken. He would put it to the common sense of the House whether, if plain Joseph Ryan had come before the Committee offering such evidence as that of Lord Dunally, the same course would have been taken with regard to him? Some people were all their lives fond of the aristocracy. He did not know how far the accusation might lie against the hon. Baronet; but it was evident that some Members of his Committee dearly loved a Lord. The Solicitor General for Ireland had said the cottages were on the land, but that the Guardians would be in no worse position for the offer made to them by Lord Dunally. That was not the case. The Guardians would be in a worse position than they would have been if their scheme had been approved of by the Committee. Lord Dunally offered them cottages which were on the land at the present time; but they would not accept those cottages, as it would have been necessary to build them up anew, in order that they might come within the provisions of the Act. He would draw the attention of hon. Gentlemen to this fact. If they were treating for the purchase of a plot of land, would it not make a difference in the price whether cottages were on it or not? Of course; therefore the Board of Guardians was in a worse position than it should be. Lord Dunally simply wanted to get compensation for cottages which were lying idle on the land—cottages from which he had turned away labourers without giving them compensation. He desired the Nenagh Union to pay compensation for the cottages instead of building additional ones, and so to remove the eyesore from the land. He would invite the attention of his hon. Friend (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) to the fact that it was better, now that the scheme was brought forward, and it was necessary

to make a protest against it, that they should altogether oppose this stage of the Bill, so that the measure might be re-committed. The Committee should be shown that in giving their decisions they had had a right to consult justice. Lord Dunally had done everything in his power to thwart the working of the Labourers' Act. He had opposed the erection of four labourers' cottages on his land, and the Local Government Board had given way to him. The three under discussion he had not opposed at first. It was not until two months after the Local Government Board made their inquiry that he gave notice of his opposition. He had made no alternative offer to the Guardians as to the selection of other sites. The Guardians had shown by their evidence that he had made no alternative offer. If he had, and it had been reasonable, they would have agreed to it. But the opportunity of agreeing to anything of the kind had not been offered to them. It was only when great expense had been heaped on the Guardians, and they had been dragged before the Committee, that Lord Dunally had offered them this alternative scheme, and yet the Committee arranged that no portion of the expense of the proceeding would be cast on him. The Irish Members had a right to complain, not alone of the action of the Committee in this respect, but of the inaction of the Government. He thought the Irish Party, seeing that they were so deeply interested in this question, should have been represented on the Committee. He trusted his hon. Friend would persevere in his opposition, because he would rather see the scheme thrown out altogether than see it set up as a precedent that a noble Lord in Ireland could offer all the opposition he liked to the carrying out of a scheme, could take unfair advantage of the Act, and, at the last moment, get a Select Committee to accept an alternative scheme, which was to give him compensation for worthless property. The noble Lord had made an excellent bargain, for which the Board of Guardians would have to pay dearly.

Mr. EVANS WILLIAMS rose to say that the Committee was absolutely unanimous. They listened to the matters brought before them carefully, and for a long time, and, after taking a great

deal of evidence, came not only to the conclusion set forth in the Bill, but that the promoters and Lord Dunally should each pay their own costs.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR wished to say just one word to explain the course he was about to take. He was placed in a difficulty. The Solicitor General for Ireland told him that even if he succeeded—which he had not the slightest chance of doing—in carrying his proposal, the only effect would be to seriously imperil the success of the entire Bill. Under the entire scheme there were 79 cottages altogether. If he persisted, therefore, in his endeavour to obtain the three which had been disallowed—the success of which endeavour was extremely doubtful—he should be imperilling the 76 which had been allowed. He did not wish to do that. He had not had an opportunity of consulting the Board of Guardians in question, as it would not meet until to-morrow. On his own responsibility, therefore, he would withdraw his Amendment, leaving with the Guardians, who met to-morrow, the opportunity of pressing opposition to the matter in another place if they thought proper.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Bill to be read the third time *To-morrow*.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

—o—

EGYPT (TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—VOTE OF CENSURE.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: In the absence of my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Mr. T. Bruce), and on his behalf, I desire to give this Notice—that he will on the earliest opportunity he can obtain move the following Resolution:—

“That the terms of the agreement between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France, as indicated in the Correspondence recently presented to Parliament, are not such as, in the opinion of this House, would lead to the establishment of tranquillity and good government in Egypt or justify the assumption by this country of any responsibility by way of loan or guarantee in the settlement of Egyptian finances.”

Mr. Harrington

I also beg to give Notice that I will to-morrow ask the Prime Minister what arrangement he can make to give an opportunity for the discussion of this matter?

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I beg to give Notice that on the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth I shall move, as an Amendment, to leave out all the words after the word "That," in order to add these words—

"This House withholds its opinion upon the result of negotiations with France until it has been placed in possession of the proposals to be submitted to the Conference of the Powers of Europe upon the financial affairs of Egypt."

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

CEMETERIES BILL.—[BILL 21.]

(Mr. Richard, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Caine, Mr. Woodall.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. RICHARD: This is the same Bill as I brought forward last Session of Parliament. It was then received, at least in the first instance, with considerable favour by the House. The Home Secretary approved of the principle of the Bill, and supported the second reading. It was also discussed in a friendly spirit by some hon. Members on the other side—the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), and the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley). But when it was on the eve of passing the second reading, there was a sudden invasion of hon. Members on the other side; and, after an unsuccessful attempt to adjourn the debate, it was talked out by the allied forces of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope), and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell). I was not without hope, from a reply I received to a Question I asked of my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary towards the end of last Session, that the Government would take up the matter, for undoubtedly it is a question that urgently demands legislation, and is likely, while it remains unsettled, to occasion serious and increasing embarrassments to the Home Office itself. The Bill deals mainly with two points. One

relates to certain obligations which now rest upon Burial Boards, in providing new cemeteries. These obligations are to divide cemeteries into consecrated and unconsecrated parts, to erect a chapel for each, to apply to the Bishop for consecration, and to pay the cost; and, in the event of the refusal of the Bishop to consecrate, to apply to the Archbishop for a licence in lieu thereof. It cannot be denied that there is in the country a great and growing opposition to this system. It adds greatly to the costs of cemeteries, and ratepayers object to what they deem a waste of public money. It imposes on burial authorities needless trouble, and sometimes involves them in great perplexity, and often leads to controversies and conflicts of a very undesirable character in various localities. It proclaims, as it were, by outward visible symbols, differences which separate men in life, but might surely be forgotten at the grave. Many members of the Church of England share the repugnance to perpetuate these distinctions after death. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) has repeatedly and strongly expressed in this House his feelings on the subject. Last year I quoted the words of the late Archbishop of Canterbury to the same effect. The Bishop of Ely has again and again declared his opinion on the subject in his charges and in speeches at Diocesan Conferences. "I do not recede," he said on one of those occasions—

"From the opinion that in our future cemeteries there should be no division of ground into consecrated and unconsecrated, but that the whole cemetery having been legally secured in perpetuity for burial purposes, the Church should be content to adopt the principle that the grave, in whatsoever part it may be dug, is sufficiently consecrated by the words of prayer said beside it."

The Bishop of Manchester, speaking at Royton in 1879, said—

"The Chairman of the Local Board has expressed a hope to me that the time might come when it will not be necessary to have lines of demarcation in the cemeteries—one plot of land being set apart for the Church of England, another for the Nonconformists, and another for the Roman Catholics, and it will not be necessary to build on each plot a special chapel. I entirely agree with that hope, and have never concealed my feelings upon the subject. I am certain that the Church of England becomes stronger, and more in the confidence and affection of the people by being tolerant and large-hearted, and comprehensive and open-handed,

than by being exclusive and narrow, and bigoted and anathematizing. Therefore, I do hope the day will come when Churchmen, Nonconformists, and Roman Catholics may at last agree to use the same building set apart for the holy purpose of reading a service over the dead."

The Bishop of Exeter, in his visitation charge in 1882, referring to the probability of further alteration in the Burial Laws, said—

"It would be necessary, in providing for the future, to do away with the distinction between consecrated and unconsecrated ground. It would not be possible in the future to compel the erection in cemeteries of separate chapels for the service of the Church of England. Nor could he say it would be desirable. The very existence of the two chapels in a cemetery was a scandal and a reproach."

It affords me great pleasure to cite these liberal sentiments from Bishops of the Church of England—sentiments which, in my opinion, reflect infinite credit on their Christian spirit. I should like to say a few words on the question of consecration. I do not wish to speak disrespectfully, far less in scorn, of any form or observance around which, in the estimation of any body of my countrymen, a religious sentiment gathers. To me, and to many others who have been brought up in a different school, though I hope not less earnest in our religious convictions, the meaning and value of the ceremony are somewhat inexplicable. No mortal man surely believes that the destiny of the departed spirit depends, in any manner or degree, upon the kind of ground in which his body has been interred. In that case, what becomes of the thousands that are drowned at sea, and what became of the noble army of martyrs, many of whom perished at the stake? But, undoubtedly, there are many excellent men, earnest and devout Christians, who do, in some way, derive comfort from the thought that the bodies of themselves and their friends should be deposited in ground over which a certain religious form has been recited. Far be it from me to speak with levity or ridicule of such feelings. All we ask is that those who believe in consecration should have it performed on their own initiative, and at their own expense; that it should be simply an ecclesiastical proceeding, and carry with it no legal consequences. There is, therefore, power given in my Bill to consecrate a cemetery, or part of a cemetery, if there are those who wish it, only that it should

confer upon them no privileges, and impose upon others no disqualification. The other point dealt with in the Bill relates to the rights now possessed and exercised by the clergy and other officials to receive in the consecrated parts of cemeteries the same fees as they had in churchyards before those were closed. I dare say there are many Members of this House who are not aware of this extraordinary arrangement. I will, therefore, briefly explain its character and origin. It is now some 50 years ago since attention began to be called to the over-crowded condition of churchyards in London and other towns, as a matter that very nearly concerned the health of the population. Acts were passed authorizing the formation of cemeteries in the neighbourhood of large towns. But during the discussion on this question there was a great outcry as to the loss that would be sustained by clergymen by this cessation of the fees they had been accustomed to receive for burials, and for the right to erect stones and monuments. And it was found necessary, as a condition of passing the Acts, to insert a clause giving compensation to the clergy for the loss of their fees. I am told by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) that in a Bill introduced by the Conservative Government in 1852, for the creation of parochial cemeteries, there was no such provision in the Bill in its original form, but was inserted as it passed through Parliament. The compensation varies in different cemeteries, from 1*s.* 6*d.* in Kensal Green to 10*s.* in Brompton. The Cemeteries Company provide the ground, the labour, and the service required, and are wholly independent of the parochial clergy. Before the formation of cemeteries, parishioners were sometimes buried elsewhere than in the parish churchyard; but it had never occurred to clergymen to claim a fee for the body so interred. But when the cemeteries were formed they succeeded in getting their claim recognized. At Brompton this principle seems to be carried to an extreme, for the fees of 10*s.* are payable to every clergyman within 10 miles round the cemetery, and this for no service performed; for the Company, or, I believe, in this case, the Government, provide two chaplains at £250 a-year each to perform the service. And I am told that many in-

Mr. Richard

cumbents now receive those fees who minister in churches which have never had any burial-grounds attached to them; district churches built since burial within the Metropolitan area has been prohibited; so that they are receiving compensation for the loss of fees which they never received. These fees are, moreover, in perpetuity. We have often known instances where obsolete or useless offices have been abolished, and the existing occupants of those offices have received compensation. But who ever heard of that compensation being continued to their heirs or successors in perpetuity? My Bill proposes to abolish these compensation fees, except as regards the present incumbents. I think it is impossible to justify the retention of these fees, and I venture respectfully to appeal to members of the Church of England whether they think it really can serve the interests of that Church to retain these invidious and unjust privileges for the clergy? Will not the inevitable effect be to fret and irritate men's minds at a moment when their feelings are peculiarly susceptible, and so to create a prejudice, not only against the individual clergymen who compel them to pay what they cannot but feel to be an unjust, and sometimes an extortionate exaction, but against the whole class to which they belong? I really hardly know, even now, what are the objections to this Bill, though I had the advantage of listening to a long debate on the subject when I brought my Bill in last year. There were some 20 speeches, great and small, made against the measure during that discussion. I have read the report lately; but, on careful examination of those speeches, I am bound to say that the proportion of argument to words in them is very much like Sir John Falstaff's proportion of bread to sack. One of the reasons assigned for opposing the Bill was that it had been sprung upon the House by surprise. That it had come on unexpectedly on that day was true enough, for there were two other Bills before it on the Paper. But to say that the Bill itself was a surprise was too absurd. It had been before the House during the whole Session of 1882; but I had been so unfortunate at the ballot at the commencement of the Session that I failed to secure a day. Then it was introduced on the first day of the

Session of 1883, and was in the hands of Members almost immediately afterwards. One of the strongest objections arose from an unguarded concession, or semi-concession, which I had made to my hon. Friend the Member for Kendal (Mr. Cropper), that I would be willing to reconsider and modify one or two minor points in the Bill to which he referred. I have heard this done a hundred times in this House on the introduction of a Bill, without its being made a ground for the rejection of the whole measure. But in stress of argument of a more forcible or plausible kind, this was turned to account against me, and then I was told that the Bill was a different Bill. Well, I shall not fall into that snare to-day. I will not listen to the siren voice of my hon. Friend the Member for Kendal. The Bill must stand on its merits, and any objections of detail must be discussed in Committee. But the real gist of the opposition seemed to consist in the cry of "The Church in Danger." Now, I should not like to belong to a Church which is always in danger. Several hon. Gentlemen intimated that by my Bill I was making an attack upon the Church. I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite will accept a disclaimer from me. But I can give them a positive and very sincere assurance that nothing was further from my thought in introducing this measure than to injure the Church of England. And my strong conviction is that if it were passed, far from injuring, it would benefit the Church. Everything that helps to remove invidious preferences, and privileges calculated to provoke resentment and hostility among classes not otherwise ill-disposed to the Church, must tend, not to weaken, but to strengthen the Church. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

MR. RATHBONE, in seconding the Motion, said, it would almost seem as if the Bill ought to come from the Church of England, and not from the Nonconformists. One of the great weaknesses of the Church of England had been the maintenance of this injurious subject of dispute between the Church and Nonconformity. That was especially the case in Wales. The people of Wales had a very strong reverence for precedent, and everything that was historical in their nation; and it was owing to the mistakes

of the Church of England that Nonconformity had become so powerful in Wales. What he would say to the Church was, that two things were perfectly clear: first, that the Church of England and all other sects had quite enough to do in this generation in fighting their avowed enemies; and, secondly, that if they expected to work together for the common good, they ought to banish every irritating injustice which separated the different sections of the religious Bodies. Some hon. Members were often referred to as political Nonconformists. A greater benefit could not be conferred on political Nonconformists if such existed, than by maintaining this injustice. It gave them the greatest lever power they had, and if the Church of England was wise it would not leave them a single injustice or grievance to bless themselves with.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Richard.*)

MR. BERESFORD HOPE: Mr. Speaker, in rising to move that this Bill be read a second time this day three months, I must present my especial thanks to my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire (*Mr. Rathbone*) for his services in seconding the Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Merthyr (*Mr. Richard*). I own that if I had only to follow my hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr I should have found the Bill—I will not say a difficult Bill to grapple with—but one of those which take a little trouble to thrash out and reduce to specimens. The speech of the hon. Mover belongs to that style of Parliamentary eloquence of which he is a very good master, one which wraps up a very stern and determined purpose and intention in some rambling language of flabby kindness. That is a difficult form of speech to deal with. But my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire, with the cool chivalry of his character, breaks through constraint, and tells us bluntly that we Churchmen ought to have brought in this Bill ourselves, because it removes one of the injurious subjects of dispute. Why, everything that any man wants to get from anybody else is demanded as an injurious subject of dispute. A cottage to an Irish labourer, or a piece of land to a dynamiter, or the concession of a loan to a speculator—

Mr. Rathbone

everything that a man wants to get and does not get, and does not quite see his way to get, is an injurious subject of dispute. I thank the hon. Gentleman for so neatly summing up the policy of the Party which he and the hon. Member for Merthyr so very ably and so very loyally to their cause represent. The hon. Member for Merthyr has told us that this is an illustration of the Church always being in danger. The Church, I believe, is not, and never was and never will be, in danger through its own action; but I believe that the Church, like every other institution, may be endangered by the fussiness, wrong-headedness, and insincerity of sham friends, lukewarm supporters, and concealed enemies. Now this policy—I mean the injurious subject of dispute policy—is the policy of the Liberation Society, a Society which is engaged in an ingenious and mealy-mouthed conspiracy against the Church of England, and which calls itself a Society to liberate religion from State control. As to this Liberation Society, I am going to say a thing which I am afraid may be rude and un-Parliamentary. The hon. Member for Merthyr would not refuse to be compared with the lion, and the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire would not object to be compared with the antelope; but there is a certain animal of such marvellous and pronounced intellect, that an article in a former number of *The Quarterly Review* was devoted to the glorification of that intellect. That animal is a rodent of small size, given to live in cellars, and fond of cheese, and that sort of thing. It is a monosyllabic animal, and it represents very accurately the policy of the Liberation Society. The Liberation Party for years have been banded and pledged together to destroy the Church of England by perpetual nibbling. They coyly plead that they only want to tackle it in its Establishmentarian aspect; but when I see that those who are leagued against the Established Church of England represent Calvinists, Agnostics, and all sorts of forms and shades of belief, or the absence of belief, I do not believe they are only banded together against the establishment of the Church of England, and not against its doctrine also. This Liberation Society, following the instincts and line of operation of that most intelligent rodent, is always nibbling away at something or

other, and then it makes up its pious mouth, and it tells us—"We are only striking at an injurious subject of dispute. Get rid of that and all will be peace and happiness and prosperity hereafter." But as soon as one injurious subject of dispute is got rid of another, punctual to time, springs up for the benefit of the Liberation Society. Some years ago we heard that compulsory church rates were the stone of offence. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, if you are so very ungrateful for their abolition, I am heartily sorry they were abolished. We made you a present of compulsory church rates. I myself scandalized some of my Church friends by my readiness to do so. But the result was that the Liberation Society came forward the very year after with still more inflated and malignant charges against the Church. Mr. Spurgeon, Dr. Landels, Dr. R. W. Dale, and others entered into a kind of competitive slanging match against the Church of England; and the charges they made were not only unfounded, but abusive and vindictive. Well, as I have said, the compulsory church rates were got rid of, and yet the crop of injurious subjects of dispute remained. The Universities were thrown open, the Irish Church was thrown to the monsters of the deep, and, ultimately, in the year 1880, the present Government, by the agency of my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Osborne Morgan), who had himself, after he had been crying in the wilderness, with very uncertain support from his friends, and fighting the battle year after year, carried the repeal of the existing Burial Laws as the mouthpiece of the Government; and then we heard that at last the great grievance was removed—["No!"]—and that hereafter Church and Dissent might work together in peace and in harmony. And I must call my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Osborne Morgan), and every other candid man, to witness that after our great defeat and collapse—it was a defeat and collapse, and I should be foolish to deny it—we Churchmen, both laymen in Parliament and clergymen in the country, did submit with great good humour and great political candour to the new and, of course to us, unpleasant state of things. Of course, there were exceptions. Amongst the 15,000 clergymen of the Church of England there must be some unpolitic, unwise, and hot-

headed men; but the number of cases in which anything like a grievance could be brought up was simply infinitesimal. Such as it was, however, it enabled the Liberation Society to pose themselves like ancient Christian martyrs. But the ink of the Royal Assent was hardly dry on the Burials Bill before the Liberation Party came forward with its new injurious subject of dispute; and in spite of all that we Churchmen had yielded, in spite of our admirable behaviour on the occasion, they tried to tear up the understanding and sow again the seeds of ill-will.

But what, Sir, was the real state of the case? We know very well that the burials grievance was a very simple one, and that the actual law or custom—it was partly law and partly custom—was one of those old things that existed in England, and in which, happily, a tradition far older and more sacred than the mere letter of the law prevailed. The old law and custom only saw one possible class of persons in the land; those who, being citizens, were also Churchmen; and as everyone who was a citizen and a Churchman must belong to some parish or other, he had a right to be buried in the churchyard of the parish. Well, but how was he to be buried there? The old custom of England recognized a National Church, both before and after the Reformation. Various as may have been the changes at the Reformation, this was one point on which the continuity was rigidly kept up. The old custom, besides recognizing a National Church, recognized a national form of burial, and that form of burial was at the disposal of the representatives of any deceased parishioner. The deceased parishioner might have been a man who had in life repudiated that form; in which case that form of burial was not enforced over him. The Church said—"We are very sorry for you; here is the form, there is the grave; the grave is yours, the form may be yours; if not, you must be buried without the form." That was the old state of things. The grievance grew up with the growth and toleration of other forms of religion. Alongside of the old churchyards a new series of graveyards have been created by the legislation, I may say, mainly during the present century, which witnessed the recognition of a variety of sects in the land. In these cemeteries

a portion was laid out for that which was still the national religion and still the religion of the majority of the people, and other portions were laid out for the interment of those who belonged to other forms of religion. That was the state of things recognized in 1880, and I must say that the temper of men who, after such a concession, after such a change, after such a revolution as that of 1880, and after the way in which the Church bore itself, now try to tear up the compact, is one for which I have no respect, or sympathy, or understanding. What is the present Bill before the House? My hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr, whose goodness and candour no man can doubt, has just assured us that it is not his wish to injure the Church. All I can say is, I am very sorry my hon. Friend has fallen into such bad company; his goodness and his candour have been dreadfully played on. He comes here to-day, he tells us, as the advocate of those who do not wish to do harm to the Church. My hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire is a judicious bottle holder, for he says all we wish to do is to get rid of an injurious subject of dispute. I was reading one of the evening papers last night, and I came across a very amusing article in it, by a gentleman who I think calls himself "An Apostle of St. Giles." The writer was speaking of burglars, one of whom said—"Any man of our confraternity who tries to do injury or harm is not a brother—is not one of us." Now these burglars are like the Liberation Party, who have been distilling their leprous ointment into the ears of the hon. Member for Merthyr, for they are gentlemen who will come up to us smiling, take our jewellery and loose cash out of our pockets, and say they are only removing an injurious subject of dispute.

My hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr has given us a Bill which I must say has a gleam of sunlight about it. There is one extremely amusing provision in it; there is a stroke of audacious wit in it which I think the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) would hardly be guilty of. It is this. The cemeteries are not to be consecrated compulsorily; but nothing in this Act shall prevent, and no cemetery authority shall prevent, the consecration of a ceme-

tery, or any part thereof, or any building therein, by the Bishop of the diocese after everything which makes consecration valuable, everything that makes it real, has been swept away. I have heard many odd permissions in my life; but I never heard a permission so absolutely grotesque as this, unless it be the permission given this Session to General Gordon to leave Khartoum. This question of consecration is one which it is so easy to make a mock of that I must say a little about it. The hon. Member for Merthyr talks of the toleration and large-heartedness of certain Bishops, and he says he knows that some people do attach great importance to the act of consecration. Yet he follows this up by a sneer which he must know to be baseless; he does not, forsooth, suppose consecration affects the destinies of the departed spirit. He would more wisely have refrained from making such a remark. An imputation of that sort, though dressed up as a sham negation, is only one of those jests that return to the author. The more modern great Christian Bodies, of which that to which the hon. Member for Merthyr belongs is one, perhaps attach a more literal value to the Mosaic Code than either the Church of England or the Church of Rome, and in their eyes the first day of the week is hedged in by even stricter provisions than it is with those Churches. Our Dissenting friends' reverence for the Sabbath is a feeling which others may think exaggerated in certain details. But yet they would have a real grievance if Parliament trampled on their feelings. The same considerations hold good as to the older Churches and consecration. May not a man, whatever be his belief as to Orders, to succession, to ceremonies, to liturgies, claim that his belief in the efficacy of consecration ought to be as much respected as a Dissenter's reverence for the Sabbath? I contend, therefore, that we ought not to be deprived of consecration, neither ought our Roman Catholic fellow-Christians, who value consecration just as much as we do. The Church of Rome being less elastic in various arrangements than the Church of England, would feel the hardship resulting from the abolition of consecration as one which would operate upon them even more hardly than we might feel it. Last year the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr.

O'Donnell) made an admirable speech on this subject. It is not always I agree with the hon. Member for Dungarvan; but I did agree with the speech to which I refer, and I trust that to-day he or some other Roman Catholic will see fit to show that the grievance we have in this matter is also the grievance of Roman Catholics. I will not go into the burial fees part of my hon. Friend's Bill. I may have a good deal to say about that at some future time; but I am so convinced that the Bill breaks down in its early part, breaks down on its broad principle, that I oppose it, irrespective of its monetary arrangements. I think it is a mischievous, a provocative, and an aggressive violation of the concordat of four years ago, it only tends to irreverence, it is only one more contribution to the cause of anti-religion and anti-Christianity, and, taught as I have been by the various dodges of the Liberation rodents during the last 20 years, I do not think it will dispose of the injurious subjects of dispute. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

MR. DAVENPORT seconded the Amendment. He objected to the Bill because it was of a mischievous character and entirely unnecessary. They had been assured that the Act of 1880 settled the whole question; and he submitted that the Conservatives and the clergy had a right to complain of any Bill which re-opened it. Unfortunately, the assurances of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House upon that point were worthless. The Bill now before the House would have the effect of imposing a new, and, he thought, unnecessary rate upon the country parishes. They all knew that when a country churchyard became overcrowded, two or three wealthy parishioners or a landowner gave a portion of land to be added to the churchyard. In that way the wants of the parish were supplied without cost to the parishioners, or without any charge being made upon the rates. If, however, this Bill became law, there would be an end to anything of that sort, and some body would have to be created to impose a rate whenever a churchyard needed extending. He thought that, this being an unnecessary rate, it was a rate that was wrong and ought not to be

levied. The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) had pointed out that the existence of this grievance against the Church of England was a weapon that could be used against the Conservative candidates at the next Election. He would venture to suggest to him that the Conservatives felt that the passing of a measure which imposed an unnecessary rate, and a rate which was wrong in principle, would be putting a powerful and useful weapon in the hands of the Conservatives. As to consecration, whatever might be thought about that, this was not a proper time for going into the question; and he merely wished to make the one practical remark that it had the effect of preserving for large towns many open spaces which would not otherwise be preserved. That was, no doubt, one of the smallest considerations; but he thought the House would do well to consider it. He opposed the measure, therefore, because it was a violation of the understanding entered into between the Nonconformists and Churchmen, and accepted by the country generally at the time of the passing of the Burials Act of 1880; because, from the operation of that Act, any legislation was now entirely unnecessary; because it disregarded the feelings of a vast number of the people of the country in regard to the consecration of cemeteries, and because it increased unnecessarily the rates and burdens of the people.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months." — (*Mr. Beresford Hope.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he would congratulate the House on the fact that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had approached the subject-matter before the House in a different strain from that adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (*Mr. Beresford Hope.*) He had heard many extraordinary speeches in that House, but none that could rival that of the right hon. Gentleman. The language of the right hon. Gentleman had permitted himself to indulge in in respect to the Nonconformist Party and their leaders was such that

he would not submit to it without raising a very strong protest. The language which the right hon. Gentleman had used was language that ought not to have been applied to any religious Body. He would only say that he knew nothing which so imperilled the Church, which so aggravated the unfortunate differences and distinctions that existed, as speeches of that class and description, which trampled on the dearest and most sacred feelings of those who were opposed to the right hon. Gentleman, and which created a feeling between Non-conformists and the Church of England which would not otherwise be provoked. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of this Bill as a violation of the compact of 1880. The Bill of 1880 was not a compact. The Conservative Party fought on that occasion to the very last. It was a fair-fought political fight; the Conservatives were fairly beaten by the sense of the House of Commons and the country, and it was no more a concession or a concordat than the repeal of the Corn Laws. He contended that this Bill was a natural, legitimate, and logical consequence of the Act of 1880, and in no way interfered with or disturbed that Act. The principle of the latter Act was that every parishioner had a right to be interred in the churchyard of his parish, and that his friends should have a right to indicate the service in which they wished his burial to be conducted. It was simply proposed to extend that principle to cemeteries. The Bill did not prohibit the consecration of cemeteries, or of any part of them, or of chapels. It was always assumed that the Dissenters wanted to do something very wicked against the Church and against consecration. He had no such sentiment or feeling. He much respected the sacred setting apart of a piece of land for such a purpose; and whether it was done in the manner adopted by the Church of England or in that adopted by the Church of Rome, the principle was one which every Christian and right-minded man would appreciate and respect. There was nothing in that Bill to interfere with consecration. All that it said was that it should not be the absolute duty of the cemetery authority administering the public funds in the control of a cemetery, to divide it into two portions, one consecrated and the other unconsecrated. But that was really

a small part of the matter. The real gist of the complaint was that great scandal to their Christianity, the erection of two chapels in each cemetery ground; and the main object of the Bill was to prohibit the absolute necessity at present existing for the erection of those two buildings, and that, too, at the public expense. The law was as unfair to Non-conformists as it well could be. The law was that the public authority was compelled to build a chapel on the consecrated ground at the public expense; but it was not compelled to build a chapel on the unconsecrated ground, unless three-fourths of a vestry meeting and the Home Secretary otherwise determined; and, although it provided that the clergy of the Church of England might use the unconsecrated chapel, Dissenting ministers might not use the consecrated chapel, and were therefore left to perform their services in the rain and snow, without there being any provision made for them at the public expense. The Bill would do away with that invidious and unhappy state of things, and enact that the building should be available for the Church of England, the Church of Rome, Dissenters, and all who came to the cemetery to perform the religious service which they wished to associate with the burial of the dead. The part of the Bill referring to fees raised a question of a fiscal character. The rights of living incumbents would not be interfered with; but it was proposed that in future Burial Boards should be enabled to revise the fees. The Bill was a simple development of the Act of 1880, and he asked hon. Members to deal with the grievance which it sought to remedy. Did they defend the two chapels in the cemeteries? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] He said that was a relic of barbarism and a scandal to Christianity. But the question raised a clear and definite issue which they should decide in the Lobby. He had great pleasure in supporting the second reading of that measure.

MR. ELTON said, he thought that after the discussion which took place last year there was little new that could be said on that measure. The hon. Member who spoke last had given a Roland for the Oliver which had come from the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope); but beyond that there was little that

was new in his speech. When they made a cemetery by Act of Parliament he admitted that Parliament was the proper authority to decide whether there should be one chapel or two; and he agreed that in regard to cemeteries which existed and were regulated only by Act of Parliament it was undesirable that there should be two chapels; and he did not think there would be anything necessarily injurious to the Church by the use of one building for different religious services. For a long time past, and perhaps now in the Crypt of St. Paul's, and certainly in the Crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, a Dissenting community, the French Huguenots, had been allowed to hold their services. Therefore, on broad principle, he thought the two chapels part of the arrangement might be given up. But he objected to the Bill because it applied not only to new cemeteries, but also to every new churchyard in a new district parish. Apparently, if the Bishop did come, he was to have the appearance of passing accidentally that way. He had no doubt that this part of the Bill was brought forward perfectly seriously now; but it must have arisen out of a joke. As to the 5th section, providing that in default of consecration the ground should become the parish burying ground, that would be all very well as a clause in a Bill for the disestablishment of the Church; but that was a question which ought to be fairly fought out on its own merits. As to the question of fees, he considered that the cases which had been brought forward were exceptional ones. It was well known that the Common Law did not allow the exaction of burial fees, and the exceptions were only certain parishes which were allowed to charge them by ancient custom, which ancient custom had to be proved. These parishes were not so common as hon. Members might suppose. The fees, as a rule, which could be imposed were not more than 5s. or 6s.; and it should be remembered that they, in all probability, formed part of the income of the clergyman, or part of the value of the advowson. If, therefore, the House wished to abolish these fees, it must take care to compensate everybody affected by their abolition. As to the chapels in statutory cemeteries, he thought that some agreement might be come to; but

he hoped that the scheme of confusing and degrading the rite of consecration would fail entirely.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, it was his intention to vote for the second reading of the Bill. His only regret was that it did not go far enough, inasmuch as it only dealt with burials in parochial cemeteries near large towns, where public opinion was beginning to have effect in controlling the abuses which had gone on for two or three centuries. The Bill ignored altogether the rural parishes of the country, where the greatest abuses prevailed; for inasmuch as they were far removed from the centres of population the local clergyman often took everything upon himself. He hoped, if the Government intended to legislate on this question, that they would bring in a complete measure, applicable to the whole country, and not merely to the parochial cemeteries. He also hoped that the Government would not forget to deal with the question of mortuary fees. These mortuary fees had existed since the time of Henry VIII. Every person dying in the parish had to pay a certain sum to the rector. Strange to say, that law was still in force now in many parts of England, and in many instances created great hardship. The Government should do away with these fees entirely, as it had done in fees for baptism, which were now prohibited. Baptism was optional, but burial was not; and there was, therefore, more reason for prohibiting fees in the latter case. If the Government would only bring in a Bill to abolish these fees, and nothing else, it would be a step in the right direction. As to consecration, that was a modern innovation altogether. In early times there was nothing known of consecration, and even after the Act of Uniformity was passed it was not recognized as an authentic part of the ritual of the Church of England; and in proof of that he would point out that there was no form in the Prayer Book for the consecration of churchyards or cemeteries. Nothing was known of consecration in Scotland. In the vestry of the parish of Kensington, with which he was connected, it had been decided to remove the remnants of separation between consecrated and unconsecrated ground. Nonconformists treated consecration as a perfect nonentity; but they objected to separation of any kind be-

tween themselves and other religious denominations. In his country a new burial ground was established in a parish where one or two members of the Parochial Board were Episcopalians, and attached importance to consecration. The Board did not wish consecration; but these gentlemen thought they would have their way, and so they got a Bishop to go to the burial ground one morning without anybody knowing anything about it. The Bishop walked round the ground, and said what he had to say. The Episcopalians thought the Board would be annoyed; but the Board said they did not care the least about it, the Bishop could come and do the same thing again next week. He believed that would be a way of dealing with this question. Let the Bishop consecrate the burial ground to any extent; but let it not affect in any way the fees of the clergy. This was really the history of consecration. It had been encouraged, because it brought money to the clergy. Hon. Gentlemen opposite who were so keen to maintain an inner and an outer circle should remember that it was quite possible that hereafter there might be other circles, and they might find themselves on the outside of their inner circle. No man dared to say on which side of the line he would lie, and the less they spoke now of such divisions the better. In old days they knew of the Cave of Machpelah, in which the friend of God was buried; and they knew of the Cave of Golgotha, wherein was laid the Son of God; but they heard nothing of consecration; and should they now pretend that the soil of the earth, as it came from the Maker's hand, was not fit to receive their poor bodies without being consecrated by the hand of man?

Mr. A. F. EGERTON wished to see everything done to conciliate the members of the Nonconformist Body that was not inconsistent with the principles upon which the Church Establishment was founded. The question of the two chapels was not new to him, for very lately it led to something like a public uproar in a neighbouring parish. It was a question he would gladly see removed from the sphere of contention; but there were other points in respect to which he objected to the Bill, and he would not be able to support it. In the first place, notwithstanding what had been said by Gentlemen opposite, it did throw obsta-

cles in the way of consecration, and this would prevent landlords from giving land. He thought the country generally would object to the provision that the cemetery authority should not be empowered in any sense to divide a cemetery into unconsecrated ground. But he thought the prohibition to any cemetery authority to apply to the Bishop to consecrate any portion of the ground was really grotesque.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN said, in the absence of the Home Secretary, it devolved upon him to express the views of the Government upon this Bill. The word "concordat" applied to the settlement of 1880 by his right hon. Friend who moved the rejection of this Bill was a most extraordinary term to apply to the termination of one of the fiercest struggles the House was ever engaged in, and a struggle conducted to the bitter end. They might as well call Waterloo a "concordat." The Bills introduced by him in 1870 and succeeding years never touched the question of cemeteries, which was the only question the Bill now before the House dealt with. His Bills dealt entirely with churchyards, and he had purposely kept the two questions distinct. There was a great difference between churchyards and cemeteries. The former were generally given by some benefactor of the Church, and were maintained at the expense of the clergy, whereas the latter were provided at the cost of the ratepayers, and were maintained at their expense. He had, therefore, held that the proper way would be to deal with churchyards and with cemeteries in two different measures. But when the Bill of 1880 was under discussion great pressure was put on the Government to remove the impassable barrier which at that time separated the consecrated and unconsecrated ground. The way, however, in which the Bill dealt with that question was not altogether satisfactory, as it gave the clergyman an unqualified right to perform his service in any part of the unconsecrated ground; but, in the case of the consecrated ground, limited the right of the Nonconformist to perform his service at the grave side. In addition to that, it required the Nonconformist when a burial took place in the consecrated ground to pay exactly the same fee as if the clergyman had performed the service, and, consequently,

he had to pay twice over. He maintained, and nobody had denied, that the Burials Act of 1880, which dealt with churchyards, had been a most satisfactory piece of legislation. As to the prophecies of outrages and scandals that would take place, they had proved utterly false; and the services performed by Nonconformist ministers had been as decent, as solemn, and as reverent as those performed by clergymen of the Church of England. The only scandals that had occurred had been where clergymen had committed breaches of the law. As to the question of duplicate chapels, he would like to read to the House an extract from a speech of the Dean of Chester, delivered in the Convocation of York, on July 6, 1880. The reverend gentleman said—

“Duplicate chapels were conspicuous everywhere about the country. Travellers from the Continent of Europe, and especially from America, were struck with them, and asked what was the reason, and the answer was—‘It is the principle of the English, a principle that even in death we are to be visibly divided.’ Our children were brought up in the sight of these duplicate chapels, and when they asked what was the meaning of these circumstances, their answer was—‘It is the existing principle of the English that even the wounds which have been felt during lifetime cannot be healed in death.’ A gentleman once said to him—‘These divided cemetery chapels are the very petrification of Dissent.’ If we wanted to weaken the Church of England and strengthen Nonconformity, he should say—‘Perpetuate this system of burial chapels and divided cemeteries.’”

The principle of the present Bill, as he understood it, was to leave to consecration its full effect and consequence as an ecclesiastical or religious ceremony; but, at the same time, to take away from it any force as a legal instrument. He maintained that that was the true way to solve the difficulty. More than that, he was certain that the problem could not be solved in any other way. The Government were prepared, therefore, to support the principle of the Bill. They, at the same time, held themselves free to discuss in Committee the various questions which would arise. There was the question whether the Bill should be retrospective or only prospective. He did not himself like retrospective legislation. Then there was the question of clergymen's fees, and Churchmen would agree that a more unsatisfactory way of paying the clergy of the Church of England could not be devised. The

Select Committee already referred to went into this subject, and the conclusion they came to was that there was no legal way of enforcing the fees if payment of them were refused. Moreover these fees were a matter, not of law, but of custom; and they differed widely, not only in different dioceses, but even in different parishes. He was informed they did not exist at all in the diocese of Salisbury. The present mode of remunerating the clergy by fees, unsatisfactory as it was, was especially unsatisfactory where the service was performed by a Nonconformist minister and the clergyman stepped in and took a fee for work which he had never done. There were other questions—such as the application of the Bill to churchyards—which might be dealt with in Committee. He earnestly hoped the Bill would not be talked out, which was a most unsatisfactory way of disposing of questions, and was becoming a perfect scandal; but that the House would decide aye or no whether the Bill should be read a second time. There was a strong feeling, indeed, in favour of the Bill, which was by no means confined to Dissenters; but was, on the contrary, shared by ratepayers, who resented the providing of these double chapels, and this division of consecrated and unconsecrated ground, as a needless and wanton charge on their pockets.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM also trusted that a Division would be taken on the Bill. As a member of the Rochester Diocesan Conference, he wished to explain why he should vote against the second reading. It was said there was a considerable demand for the Bill; but no evidence had been afforded of that demand. He believed that most people were under the impression that the Burials Act was a final measure, and were it not for the discussions which had taken place in reference to this Bill, those in whose interest it was introduced would have had little knowledge of the disadvantages under which they were now supposed to be labouring. As to the abolition of fees, he did not think that was a vital point of contention; but there were other provisions of the Bill which appeared to him to stamp it as one that should be opposed. He had presented a Petition from the Rochester Diocesan Conference against the Bill. The Bill was objectionable in principle, and the 3rd clause, by which additions

to churchyards were to be made subject to the Burial Board, and not to the parish clergyman, was specially unjust. Gentlemen who might be disposed to grant land for the enlargement of burial grounds would be discouraged from doing so by a provision such as this. He thought the plans of tombs and monuments should be, in the first instance, submitted to the approval of the Bishop. There was no general demand for the Bill, and he hoped the House would that afternoon reject it.

MR. CROPPER said, he was convinced that the Burials Act had resulted in producing harmony and getting rid, to a great extent, of those scandals which were so frequently before reported in the newspapers. That Act might be said to have settled the question of principle, and the present Bill proceeded upon the smaller ground of economy. The three great requirements in burial were—first, that it should be sanitary; secondly, economical; and, thirdly, in accordance with the sentiments of respect and reverence which we all entertained towards our dead relatives and friends. The Bill really only dealt with the economical aspect. It disposed of the questions of the division of the ground, the two chapels, the payment for consecration, and the fees payable to the clergy. There was really no question of principle involved. He was in favour of the Bill in the main; but, like the noble Lord opposite, he objected to Clause 3. He had always objected to the two chapels; but that and other questions could be dealt with in Committee. In the meantime, he hoped that the House would give the measure a second reading.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, it was impossible to look upon the measure except as one which attacked the Established Church, and was by piecemeal action sapping her foundations. He agreed in the objections which had been expressed to fees, and thought it injurious to the interests of the Church that the clergy should be paid in that way for any of the services which they rendered to the living or the dead. With respect to consecrated ground, the suggested concession that the clergy should be entitled to use unconsecrated ground, in return for the use by Dissenters of that which is consecrated, amounted to nothing at all. The Church,

which was a Divine institution owning no head but its founder, and bound by no laws which that or any other similar Assembly attempted to impose upon it, had always maintained the custom of consecration. None could deny that consecration had been of immense benefit in preserving places free from the associations of secular life for the religious purposes of the living and for the reception of the dead. Even if the Church attached no special value to the ceremony of consecration in itself, it, at any rate, prevented the perpetration of such scandals as happened some time since in the burial ground attached to Whitfield's Chapel in Tottenham Court Road, when the bones of dead Dissenters were dug up and sold to market gardeners for potting their geraniums. He therefore appealed to his Dissenting friends, as well as to those belonging to the Church, not to allow this ceremony to be interfered with. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had said that this was a sentiment that ought to be respected. The Bill, in its earlier and most important sections, went distinctly against the principle of consecration; and, this being so, it ought not to be adopted. So long as there was a religious Body with whom the Sovereign must be in communion it was impossible that they could have what they might call religious equality. With regard to the fees, he did not wish to impose or perpetuate upon Dissenters from the Church of England the slightest pecuniary or civil disadvantage. He was in favour of removing any and every disability which rested upon Dissenters consistently with maintaining the National Church as a part of the Constitution in harmony with the religious profession of the country. He was, however, under the impression, by reading Nonconformist publications, that there were no grievances to redress—[“No, no!”]—at any rate, several eminent Nonconformist divines had so expressed themselves. The question of consecration was one upon which, in virtue of the constitution of the Church, it set a high value, and it could not be surrendered. A Bill dealing with that question, therefore, was one which they could not possibly entertain.

MR. WOODALL said, he felt that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman

opposite (Mr. J. G. Hubbard), like so many of those which had preceded it, dealt rather with points of detail which might very properly be considered in Committee. The fact of the matter was that this Bill must in fairness be looked upon as the very natural corollary of, and accompaniment to, the Act of 1880. He had heard the economical argument urged by the hon. Member for North Staffordshire (Mr. Davenport); but he thought that he would have some difficulty in making an appeal to the constituencies against this measure on the ground of its adding any cost to the ratepayers. With reference to the double chapels, he said it was rather a hard circumstance that Burial Boards, Corporations, and other Bodies dealing with the public funds should have to erect a chapel, not only at the ratepayers' cost, but which must be in accordance with the plans submitted to the Bishop. It was satisfactory to know, in respect to this question of chapels, and as indicating the growth of public sympathy, that there had been a practical agreement with regard to the impropriety and non-necessity of the second chapel. Much had been said with regard to the importance of consecration, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hubbard) had spoken very warmly on that subject. But he (Mr. Woodall) wished to point out that the Bill had been framed in a spirit of fairness, liberality, and sympathy with those who attached importance to that ceremony. Nothing which the Bill contained prevented it; on the contrary, there was a practical invitation to come and consecrate any portion of the ground. What the Bill did was this. After satisfying life interests, it did away with the vested interest which had been so long enjoyed, and which they thought had been so unjustly enforced, which gave fees to the clergy for services which they did not necessarily render, which gave them a right of veto upon monuments in the erection or cost of which they had not been consulted. It was, therefore, asked that the Bill should be allowed to pass, in order that those subjects might be divested of their ecclesiastical bearing, and in order that they should be treated in a spirit of common sense, and with regard to the general convenience and sanitary considerations of the day.

MR. GREGORY said, the supporters of the Church of England were willing to go a considerable way in meeting the promoters of this Bill. They were willing to give up the dual chapels, and to give up anything like an invidious distinction between the consecrated and the unconsecrated portion of the ground. He had, however, a very strong objection to the provision that the cemetery authorities, whatever they might be, should not have the power of calling upon the Bishop to consecrate the ground as the Bill stood. If the Bishop entered the ground, he would be an intruder, as the proper persons to put him in motion were the cemetery authorities; nor, indeed, were there any others who could do so. He believed that there was a strong feeling amongst the people generally in favour of burials in consecrated ground, and that any measure tending to limit consecration was uncalled for, and antagonistic to the wishes and habits of all classes of the community. If the Bill was altered in this and one or two other respects he should have no objection to it.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he objected to a chapel of any kind being maintained. He held that it was the business of the State to provide for the decent interment on sanitary grounds of the people of the country; but they had no business, as ratepayers, to set up chapels, whether belonging to one religious denomination or another. He objected to any chapel being set up to be used at the cost of the ratepayers. Nonconformists had no right to the chapel; all they had a right to was the shelter of a shed for the purpose of conducting the burial ceremony. He protested against the principle that the ratepayer was to be compelled to provide for either one or two chapels for the purpose of permitting religious worship connected with the burial of the dead. It was the erection of those chapels which made the cemeteries so costly to the public. He considered that the proposal to appropriate the consecrated chapel at cemeteries was merely a gratuitous insult, inserted for the purpose of enabling the promoters of the measure to say that, after having obtained redress of all their grievances, they had at last succeeded in invading the Church itself. He opposed the Bill in its entirety.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he disagreed with the contention that the Bill was one designed in favour of the Church of England, because, on looking at the names of those who promoted the Bill, he found them to be those of the oligarchy of the Liberation Society. He regarded the measure not so much in the character of a Bill as the battle cry of those who advocated Disestablishment. With reference to the question of dual chapels, he said that although he was willing to see them abolished, yet as long as the present difference of opinion existed between the Church of England and the Nonconformist Body, he thought, as a matter of necessity, those chapels should be in the cemeteries if they were to exist at all. He protested against the admission of Dissenting funerals to consecrated chapels, inasmuch as those places were *de facto* portions of the Church of England. He regarded the 4th clause of the Bill as a most objectionable one. If it were to become law, they would see that take place which was repudiated in 1880; having obtained the right by law to enter churches in cemeteries, the right would be claimed to enter churches which were otherwise situated. The question of fees was by no means personal to the clergymen, as the Bill appeared to make it, but they were attached to the office; and in some parishes the burial fees enabled the vicar to keep a third curate. While giving the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) credit for honesty of motive in making his proposals, he could by no means support the second reading of the Bill; for, in his opinion, it was intended as an attack on the Church.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, he thought it was very desirable to come to a Division; but there were one or two points upon which he would wish to say a few words. As to the Bill being a necessary corollary to the Act of 1880, he would observe that if it were so, it ought to be brought in by the same people. What he objected to was this nibbling kind of legislation; and he looked upon this Bill as a most uncalled-for attempt on the part of a private Member to deal with a subject which the Government were strong enough, if they chose, to carry out themselves. With regard to the dual chapel, he had no objection to have unconsecrated buildings open

to the services of all sorts and conditions of men; but what he did object to was the infliction of unauthorized ministers and services upon buildings set apart for the worship of the Church of England. It was openly stated by the members of the Liberation Society that they wanted to take the buildings of the Church of England for this sort of use. That was a thing which Churchmen could never consent to. They never could consent to have their churches used for services other than those of the Church of England. It was not members of the Church, but it was Nonconformists, the clients of hon. Gentlemen opposite, who set up the dual chapel and rival places of worship to those of the Church of England; and then they asked Churchmen to give up all the principles they held dear.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 176; Noes 154: Majority 22.—(Div. List, No. 134.)

Main Question again proposed.

It being after a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 26th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) * (155); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11) * (156).
Second Reading—National Debt (Conversion of Stock) * (145).
Committee—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4) * (127); Secretary for Scotland (79-157).
Committee—Report—Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) * (128); Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) * (126); School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) * (129).
Report—Benefices (Tiverton Portions) Consolidation Amendment * (72-154); Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) * (103-153).
Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) * (119); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9) * (120); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10) * (121); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) *

(122); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) * (123); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Waterworks) * (124), and *passed*.

THE SUEZ CANAL.

EXPLANATION.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, with the permission of your Lordships, I wish to make an explanation as to a slight mistake which has arisen probably from a misreport; but much more probably from my not having expressed myself quite clearly. It is with regard to the Suez Canal. The other day I stated that a very strong Committee had been appointed to consider the subject, and that it had come unanimously to the conclusion that the neutralization of the Suez Canal would be contrary to the interests of this country. According to the report, it is made to appear that I went on to say that Her Majesty's Cabinet had sanctioned the plan which had been condemned by the Committee. Exactly the contrary was the case, because Her Majesty's Government entirely agree in the resolution arrived at by the Committee, and they sanctioned the thing recommended by the Committee, which was subsequently embodied in a Circular dated January 3rd, 1883, which would make the Canal free, instead of its being neutralized, and so would have rendered it impossible for men-of-war to use it in time of war. I find, however, that I must entirely acquit the reporters of the mistake. My noble Friend behind me (the Earl of Cork) reminds me that I did make the mistake, and I apologize to your Lordships for having done so.

EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE) — VOTE OF CENSURE.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I beg to give Notice that, on Tuesday next, I shall move to resolve—

“That the terms of the agreement between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France, as indicated in the correspondence recently presented to Parliament, are such as in the opinion of this House will not lead to the establishment of tranquillity and good government in Egypt, and will fail to produce results adequately corresponding to the sacrifices which England has made, and may be called upon to make, in that country.”

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 79.) COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

Moved, “That this House do now resolve itself into a Committee on the said Bill.”—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

THE EARL OF MINTO said, the Bill was proposed with the intention of meeting complaints of very long standing. It had been commonly thought in Scotland, for many years, that if a Member of that House, or of the House of Commons, cognizant with Scotch affairs, and, if possible, of Cabinet rank, were appointed to supervise the Business and legislation appertaining to Scotland, it would be of advantage to Scotland. So far as this Bill was calculated to effect that object, it was one that deserved every support. But there were provisions in the Bill about which he was not enthusiastic; and he was somewhat at a loss to ascertain upon what principle of selection the subjects to be entrusted to him had been assigned to the Office. The Bill proposed to make some considerable changes in matters of the executive and administrative Government. In the Schedule to the Bill about 50 Acts of Parliament were enumerated, which were now administered by the Treasury, the Home Office, the Privy Council, and the Local Government Board, which were henceforth to be placed under the control of the new Secretary. But though the Schedule contained many trivial Acts, it omitted some important ones. It omitted the Education Act, the administration of which was not to be transferred to the new Secretary. He did not wish to say one word to discourage the Government from proceeding with legislation of this kind; but he asked their Lordships to consider why, above all things, the one most distinctively Scottish institution should be omitted from the scope of the Bill. There was another subject—the Department of the Register Office. That was also a distinctively Scottish Department; and he did not see why these two, which he considered of a most important character as affecting Scotland, should be excluded from the scope of the measure. He wished to take that opportunity of expressing his opinion that, as

regarded the Education Act, at all events, this omission from the Schedule of the Bill constituted a grievous blot upon the Bill, and that the measure would not be complete unless it were made to include the education enactments relating to Scotland. He had been requested by some of his noble Friends not to rest satisfied with merely stating his own views on the subject, but to bring forward a distinct Resolution in regard to it. He therefore begged to propose the following Resolution:—

“That, in the opinion of this House, the supervision of education in Scotland should be intrusted to any department charged with the distinctive administration of Scotch affairs.”

THE EARL OF FIFE said, that when the Bill was read a second time, a few weeks ago, the practical unanimity that then prevailed as to its general principles was so refreshing that he had not ventured to trouble their Lordships with any remarks of his own, more especially as, three years ago, he had had the privilege of raising the question of the appointment of a Minister for Scotland in their Lordships' House. He was glad to see that the few remarks which he then so feebly made had received such ample recognition as they did in the Bill now before their Lordships. As it was now agreed that Scotland was to have a Minister of her own, he hoped he might be allowed to say a word in support of what had fallen from his noble Friend on his left (the Earl of Minto). He begged Her Majesty's Government not to allow this graceful concession which they were making to the wishes and the wants of the Scottish people to be marred by the omission of what, in the opinion of some of them, would be a most valuable part of the measure—namely, that of not including the Education Acts among those to be administered by the new Secretary. The arguments which were urged against his proposal to include education appeared to him to be partly of a technical, and partly of a red-tape character, which, if good at all, might be applied with equal force to every function which it was proposed to transfer to the new Office. If there was one thing about which Scotland had every reason to be proud, it was the superiority of her educational system, which, although only finally established in 1870, was the outcome of three centuries. Long before the Education Act or Whitehall

Department were ever thought of, the education of the people of Scotland was far in advance of the other parts of the country; and the question now was, were they in Scotland maintaining their old supremacy in these matters? Thoughtful people connected with Scotland had told him that they had very grave doubts on the point whether, relatively, we were maintaining our old position in this respect. That was hardly to be wondered at, when it was remembered that it must be the aim of a Whitehall Department to level up the other parts of the country to the Scottish level, rather than energetically to push forward Scottish education, and to make it in every way more effectual. To Scottish eyes, that looked very like levelling down; and, in practice, he greatly feared it would be found to be so. As was well known, the education of Scotland was not under the same Act as that of England; it was not regulated by the same Code; and it was not managed at the present moment by the same officials. It was notorious that the two systems were essentially different. If there was one thing that was thoroughly and purely Scottish it was their educational system; and when it was found that education was not to be included in the functions of this new Secretary, great disappointment and surprise were expressed in Scotland; for it was felt that the inclusion of that subject would tend to maintain their old educational supremacy, which was the envy and admiration of England. He should certainly support his noble Friend, even if he found it necessary to put the House to the trouble of a Division.

On Question?

Resolved in the affirmative.

House in Committee accordingly.

Clause 1 (Short title).

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he wished to make some observations with reference to a subject to which he had directed attention on the second reading. He stated on that occasion that he was not prepared to oppose the Bill.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I rise to Order. I understood the noble Earl behind me (the Earl of Minto) to move a Resolution; but that Resolution was not put by the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am sorry that there should be any misunderstanding; but I certainly did not hear the noble Earl make any Motion. I was not aware of his having done so; and I put the Question as to going into Committee, being entirely unaware that there was any Motion proposed.

THE EARL OF MINTO: I moved a Resolution distinctly.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I repeat that I am very sorry there has been any misunderstanding, for which I am partly responsible; though I confess I did not hear the Motion proposed, and it was not on the Paper. What is to be done? Shall I go back again?

EARL GRANVILLE said, he was of opinion that such a course would be very irregular.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he thought that it would save some time in discussing the different Amendments on the Paper if the discussion on his noble Friend's Resolution were taken on the first Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he did not see how any alteration of the position could be made. It appeared to him that it would be necessary for the House to resume, and then to go into Committee again. The irregularity or neglect seemed to him to be on both sides; because if the noble Earl, who was interested in this matter, had stopped the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, when he put the Question, the misunderstanding would not have arisen.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he was really very sorry; but there were two things which ought to induce the Committee to excuse his mistake. One was, that no Notice was given on the Paper of any Amendment to the Motion to go into Committee. And the other was, that the construction of the House was such that noble Lords speaking from a particular part of the House, unless they had very excellent voices, or exerted them to the fullest extent, were not easily heard on the Woolsack.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I rejoice extremely at this slight discussion, because it justifies so entirely the Motion that I had the honour to submit the other day. I do not think it is a matter of very great moment, if my noble Friend will permit me to say so, whether the discussion takes place now, or later, on the Amendment of the noble Marquess

(the Marquess of Huntly) to the Schedule; but as it appears to me that the constitution of the House will be shaken to its foundation if the noble and learned Earl resumes the Woolsack, I hope the matter will not be pressed.

THE EARL OF MINTO said, he was sorry that he had failed to make himself heard by the Lord Chancellor; but he distinctly moved a Resolution, which was seconded by Lord Fife, and in so doing he had acted quite in Order.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that as the Resolution of the noble Earl related to the subject of the first Amendment on the Paper, the inconvenience of checking the discussion upon it was merely a formal inconvenience. The discussion could be carried on the first Amendment.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2 (Appointment of a Secretary for Scotland. Assistant Secretary).

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he wished to refer to the 3rd paragraph of the clause, which said—

“The Secretary may appoint a permanent Assistant Secretary and such other officers as the Treasury may determine.”

He had called attention to this point on the second reading of the Bill; but could not say that the answer which was given to him at the time removed his objection to the words. It seemed to him, from the way the paragraph was drawn, that upon any one Government following another, there would be a different Secretary for Scotland appointed; and that he would be empowered, if he got the sanction of the Treasury, to remove the officers under him at the moment, without any word being said. He thought it would have been better if, instead of using the words “the Secretary may appoint,” the phrase simply were “the Crown may appoint.” He would not have made this suggestion, if he had not had some conference with gentlemen whose opinion was worth something on the subject, and who before now had taken a leading part in the matter. He did not wish to move an Amendment at present; but threw out the suggestion, in the hope that, before Report was brought forward, Government would give him an assurance that it would not be necessary to do so. He believed his suggestion would carry out the object of

the Government and remove any dubiety on the point.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that the clause was worded strictly in accordance with precedents, and was very similar to that in the Bill relating to the Local Government Board for England. He might say that the Assistant Secretary was never appointed by the Crown, but by the Head of the Department.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 3 (Secretary may sit in Parliament, 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102 (England), 31 & 32 Vict. c. 48 (Scotland), 31 & 32 Vict. c. 49 (Ireland); and Clause 4 (Seal, style, and acts of the Secretary) severally *agreed to*.

Clause 5 (Powers and duties of the Secretary).

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, in rising to move an Amendment, to leave out from the second paragraph the following words:—

“Other than offices and appointments pertaining to law and justice,”

said, he ventured to think it was a great mistake to omit from this new Office, if it was to be a substantial Office, the power of making appointments relating to law and justice in Scotland. His reasons were these—the present appointment to offices pertaining to law and justice was vested in the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and it seemed to him it should now pass to the new Department under the same conditions as other business which was passing from the Home Department to the new Scottish Department; and he would further say, with regard to all that business, that, wherever it was possible, the endeavour of the House and the Government should be to put the new Scottish Secretary, relatively to Scotland, in as nearly as possible the same position as the Secretary of State for the Home Department had hitherto stood to that country. He did not think it would be a good thing for the Secretary of State to continue his relations with Scotland purely through the connection of patronage. If this Bill was to pass, the sole relation of the Secretary of State to Scotland would be purely the recommendation of the grace of the Crown to persons under capital sentence; then he would have anatomy and vivisection and the exercise of the legal

patronage of Scotland. He did not see the slightest connection between anatomy and vivisection and the right to pardon persons under capital sentence, and the exercise of the legal patronage of Scotland. It seemed to him that it would be more desirable, more logical, and more satisfactory in every way, both as regarded the new Scottish Secretary and as regarded the Secretary of State himself, if this connection were entirely cut off, and the new Secretary were placed in the same position as the Secretary of State in regard to this question. In regard to the question, another reason he would venture to urge was that he thought the great danger this office laboured under, and the great apprehension he had respecting it, was that it would not have sufficient weight and sufficient strength imparted to it by the Government; and it was for that reason he brought forward this proposition, and that he should support any proposition the object of which was to extend the weight and the influence of this new official. It was quite certain, if this new Minister was to start his Office under discouraging conditions, his Office would be a failure; and he ventured to say nothing could more contribute to that result than the fact that the whole of the patronage of Scotland—which, in fact, was mainly legal and judicial—should be outside the scope of the new Minister's Office. While the Minister might perform his duties as well as it was possible to do, those who wished for the reward of public service would be looking, not to him, but to an official in London. That was not the case in Ireland, where similar conditions of local administration prevailed; and, therefore, he thought if they were to give a fair start to this Office, and not make it a mere paper Office, they would have to do something in the way he had indicated. One word as to the position of the Lord Advocate. Under this Amendment that position would be distinctly what it had always been, except that his guidance, and advice, and recommendation—always powerful, and necessarily sometimes absolute—would be given to the new Secretary, and not to the Secretary of State. There was a widely-spread impression that the Lord Advocate exercised the legal and judicial patronage of Scotland; but that was not so. It had always remained in

the hands of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and it had never been a theory of the Constitution that the Lord Advocate, who was a practising barrister, should appoint the Judges before whom he practised. From the Judges of the Supreme Court down to the macers who walked before the Judges, the whole of that patronage was in the hands of the Secretary of State; and though he quite admitted that the Secretary of State must be under the guidance of the Lord Advocate in circumstances of this kind, all he wished was that the lay person guided by the Lord Advocate should be, not the Secretary of State, but the new Scottish Minister. Another advantage connected with his Amendment was that it would associate the Lord Advocate more closely with the new Office than he would otherwise have been. He thought the position of the Lord Advocate, if care were not taken by the Government, would resemble Mahomet's coffin—suspended between heaven and earth. He would not know exactly whether his principal relations were with the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to whom he paid £60 a-year for lodging at the Home Office; or whether they were to be with the administrator of the rest of Scottish business, and closely connected with that official. If they wanted to make Scottish administration homogeneous, if they were to give it proper scope and a wide basis, they would have to link the Lord Advocate and the new official as closely as possible together, and dissociate the Lord Advocate as much as possible from the Secretary of State for the Home Department. These were the reasons he would give at present in support of his Amendment, and he ventured to hope their Lordships would take a wide view of the whole subject, and be inclined to give their assent to that Amendment.

Amendment *moved*, in page 2, line 16, leave out from ("State") to the end of the sub-section.—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, the Amendment of his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery) was an important one, though he was sorry to have to say Her Majesty's Government could not now accept it; but what view the House might take on the matter would, of course, naturally have great weight

with the Government. His noble Friend said the Bill was more likely to fail from not being big enough than from any other cause. That might be true. The question as to what length the Government would go in this Bill had been under consideration for a very long time, and the Amendment of his noble Friend went to the very root of the scheme of the Bill; because under the Bill it had always been intended that the Secretary of State for the Home Department should remain as he was now, the head of the Department of Justice in Scotland. To that Department was retained the Prerogative of mercy; for, in the opinion of the Government, the Prerogative of mercy ought not to be exercised by an official less in rank than a Secretary of State.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Amendment has nothing to do with the Prerogative of mercy.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that to the head of the Department of Justice the exercise of the Prerogative of mercy naturally belonged; and by the noble Earl's Amendment the Secretary for Scotland would become the head of the Department of Justice.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Do I understand the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie) to say the Secretary of State exercises the Prerogative of mercy? That is quite new to me.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, the Crown, upon the advice of the Secretary of State, exercised that Prerogative, which came practically to the same thing. The Secretary of State, in exercising the legal patronage for Scotland, depended for advice from the Lord Advocate. It had always been the custom that the Secretary of State for the Home Department consulted the Lord Advocate in making any appointment of that kind that was to be made, and it was only natural that he should do so, considering that the Lord Advocate knew more about the legal luminaries of Scotland than any other person; but to hand over the appointment of Judges to the Secretary for Scotland would be, in the opinion of the Government, to detract from the dignity of the Lord Advocate, because the Lord Advocate, though he had no absolute right now of being consulted by the Secretary of State, still it had always been the custom that he should be consulted; and he might almost

say that he had acquired a customary right to be consulted; while in the new Department which the Bill constructed there would be no provision in it which would compel the new Secretary to consult the Lord Advocate, and there could be no custom which would insure that the Lord Advocate should be consulted. Consequently, the dignity of the Lord Advocate would suffer if the Amendment were carried. He did not think his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery) was quite correct in what he stated as to Ireland. He (the Earl of Dalhousie) believed the judicial appointments in Ireland were not made by the Viceroy, but by the Crown, or the Prime Minister, acting on the advice of the Viceroy. However that might be, the reason the Government could not accept the Amendment was because it involved a very considerable enlargement of the Bill. They constructed their Bill keeping in view certain landmarks, if he might so speak, and they were without any evidence of Scottish opinion in favour of the enlargement proposed.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he did not think the noble Earl (the Earl of Dalhousie) quite understood the effect of the Amendment of his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery). He (the Marquess of Huntly) certainly did not understand that its effect would be to take away or derogate from the power or duties of the Lord Advocate. It would simply transfer his power of recommendation from the Secretary of State to the new Secretary, allowing the Lord Advocate to remain in the same position that he was in before. He should support the Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he was sorry that he was not able to be present at the second reading of the Bill; but he would take this, the first opportunity he had of expressing his acknowledgments to the Government for acceding to the general opinion of the Scottish people by the introduction of this measure. He confessed, however, that he was very much disappointed, both with the character of the measure itself, and with the reply of the noble Earl representing the Government (the Earl of Dalhousie) to this Amendment. This Amendment seemed to him to touch the whole root of the matter. Unless the new Office was really an efficient one, it would not meet the wishes of the

people of Scotland, and it would become an object of ridicule more than anything else. The answer of the Government to the Amendment was simply that the Office of the new Secretary for Scotland would not be of sufficient importance to justify its carrying with it judicial patronage. But if the Government consented to the creation of a Secretary for Scotland at all, surely he was the proper person to exercise that patronage. The Government had brought forward this measure, not because they themselves thought it necessary or desirable, and he complained that they did not throw their whole heart into the matter. He preferred to have no Bill at all rather than a Bill creating an official under the dignified appellation of the Secretary for Scotland, whom they declined to invest with all the functions which seemed appropriate to such a position, while, at the same time, hedging it round with restrictions that would make the Office ridiculous. He wished simply to express his disappointment with the Bill as it stood. He agreed with every word that had fallen from the noble Earl opposite who had moved the Amendment, and he would certainly support him.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he regretted very much that the officer to be appointed under the Bill would not be a Secretary of State; but under the circumstances, as the Bill in its present form had been accepted as a sort of instalment, and as he thought the reasons were distinctly in favour of the Amendment, he would support it.

LORD BALFOUR said, he ventured to think that they should not, at a moment's notice, so largely extend the scope of the Bill as to include so important a matter as advising Her Majesty as to the Prerogative of mercy.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: There is no question whatever of the Prerogative of mercy.

LORD BALFOUR said, he must apologise to the noble Earl for having misunderstood him. He regretted that Notice of the Amendment was not given a little sooner, in order that they might have had more time to consider it. He never heard it suggested that this particular function should be entrusted to the new Secretary, until he saw the Petition presented to that effect in their Lordships' House, and until he saw the

Amendment on the Paper that afternoon. He should be largely guided in his vote by the opinion of the noble and learned Lord on the Front Bench below the Gangway (Lord Watson), because he had held high office in Scotland, and knew what would be the effect of this Amendment if carried.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, he had been intrusted to present a Petition which emanated from a body who were entitled to speak with some weight—namely, the Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland. That Petition strongly urged that an Amendment in the sense of that proposed by his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery) should be inserted in the Bill. He quite sympathized with his noble Friend opposite (Lord Balfour) that they were asked to decide this question on somewhat short Notice; but, as his noble Relative was intimately acquainted with Scottish affairs, he could not have much doubt as to the reception which this Amendment would meet with in Scotland. He was reminded of an interesting incident. On one occasion during the Administration of Lord Melbourne, a deputation waited upon him and urged the abolition of the church rates. Lord Melbourne listened attentively to the views of the deputation for some time, and then asked them if they were prepared to say that they had the country with them in their views? The deputation replied that they had not. Then Lord Melbourne asked them if they had a majority of the people with them? The deputation admitted that they were not prepared even to say that. Lord Melbourne then advised them to go home; but he had no difficulty in assuring them that, if they returned with the support of the country behind them, no Government could refuse them what they asked. This was not a new question in Scotland; but recently the demand and desire had taken form and shape, and had assumed a fresh intensity. He admitted that the Government could refuse such extensions in the Bill as were now asked for; but he hardly thought they would, if they considered the large extent to which the country was looking for a practical measure.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, there were some considerations connected with the Amendment which it was well for their Lordships to keep in view. He did not know whether the Amendment

was meant to extend to the highest judicial offices. If that was the intention, he was not sure that the words of the Amendment would cover such appointments. The highest judicial offices were in the direct appointment and patronage of the Crown, and the Crown made the appointments on the advice of a responsible Minister. There might be strong reasons for saying that some of the minor offices, such as officers of ceremony who walked before the Judges, might not require the intervention of the Secretary of State; and it might be a matter deserving of consideration whether the new Secretary for Scotland might not be intrusted with some of those minor appointments. But if it was really intended that the new Secretary should be the person to advise the Crown as to the highest judicial appointments in Scotland, he did not think noble Lords connected with that country would be prepared to contend that offices of that immense importance should be filled in Scotland in a different manner to that in which they were filled in other parts of the United Kingdom. In England, all these higher judicial offices were filled by the Crown on the recommendation either of the Prime Minister or of the holder of the Great Seal. In Ireland, these appointments were made by the Crown on the recommendation of the Lord Lieutenant and the Prime Minister. Now, if it was intended by the Amendment to include these high judicial offices, he could quite conceive that the arguments of the noble Lord might be sound, if the Secretary for Scotland was always to be a Minister of Cabinet rank. There would be no disparagement to the dignity of these great judicial offices in Scotland if a Minister of Cabinet rank recommended such appointments to the Crown; but he did not think those high offices should be in the gift of any subordinate Department, the head of which was below Cabinet rank. He could not but fear that, after some experience, complaints would arise in Scotland if the great judicial appointments of that country were made by a Department of the Government, the head of which was of decidedly inferior rank to those Ministers who advised the Crown in regard to the highest judicial appointments in other parts of the United Kingdom. He thought, however, it

might be further considered whether there were any minor legal appointments which might well be intrusted to the new Secretary, without absolutely placing all judicial appointments in his hands; and, therefore, noble Lords might leave the matter over in order to give time for further consideration.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he believed the Office which it was proposed to create was wholly unnecessary for the proper conduct of Scottish Business. He could quite understand that it was necessary to have a Cabinet Minister who should give his attention to Scottish Business; but he believed the measure, as it now stood, was wholly unnecessary, as it would not expedite Scottish Business; and, moreover, the less they gave a supernumerary to do the better.

LORD BALFOUR said, the Bill of last year had been condemned over and over again in Scotland as an unworkable and unsatisfactory measure. In speaking on that Bill last year, he did not say a syllable against its principle; but he only complained of the time at which it was brought forward. He did not think, therefore, that any noble Lord should saddle a charge of inconsistency upon him.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he welcomed the speech of the noble and learned Earl (the Lord Chancellor), as it was the first time he had thought it necessary to address their Lordships on this subject. The noble and learned Earl said he was not sure that the Amendment would include the highest judicial offices. His (the Earl of Rosebery's) answer to that was, that he was quite satisfied to take the Amendment as it stood, and to chance the highest judicial offices being included in the Bill. If they were not included in the Amendment, they would very shortly follow its adoption. He was somewhat surprised at the remark of the noble and learned Earl that the people of Scotland would not put confidence in Judges who were not appointed by a Minister of Cabinet rank; but that argument came with strange force from the noble and learned Earl, who had expressed his high appreciation of the judicial qualities of the Judges in Scotland. He was inclined to think, if the new Secretary was not to be a man of straw—if, on the contrary, he was to be a man of worth—that, under the guidance of the Lord

Advocate, he would have just as good opportunities of recommending fit persons to hold the highest judicial offices in Scotland as a Cabinet Minister who might not have the slightest possible acquaintance with Scottish affairs. He was not one of those who wished for a Secretary of State for Scotland; but he wished for a substantial Minister for Scotland, and for that reason he should ask their Lordships to divide on the Amendment.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that, with regard to the observations of his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery), he wished to say that he had, not only upon all occasions on which he had an opportunity since he filled his present Office, expressed his very strong sense of the eminent services rendered by the Judges in Scotland, and of the admirable manner in which they administered the excellent system of law in Scotland, but for many years before he filled any judicial position, having had much experience at the Bar of their Lordships' House in the argument of Scotch cases, he had uniformly formed and expressed the same opinion as to the high judicial qualities of Scotch Judges.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he desired to explain the vote he was going to give. He gathered from the discussion that had taken place that it was evidently the general wish of the people of Scotland that the new Secretary should be a man of some importance; while it was equally evident that the Government, in deciding upon the subject, would not comply with that desire. The way to get such an Officer was to give him considerable functions to perform, and the only way to secure that the appointment should be exercised with judgment, was to confer upon him such functions as would make the position an object of desire to the able men who would compete for it. The arguments upon the question itself were very nearly balanced on the subject; and, therefore, the consideration that it was desirable, *ceteris paribus*, to confer as much power and dignity on this Office as they conveniently could, would induce him to vote for the Amendment.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that, considering the tone of the debate, and the united opinion of all Peers coming from Scotland and of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of

Salisbury), the Government, although not accepting the Amendment of his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery), would not put the House to the trouble of a Division.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 6 (Reservation of rights of Lord Advocate).

SCHEDULE.

PART I.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF SECRETARY OF STATE.

LORD BALFOUR, in moving, as an Amendment, to include—

“The general Register of Sasines and other offices mentioned in Section 8 of 42 & 43 Vict. cap. 44,”

said, this was regarded as a great and very important matter in Scotland. There was no institution in Scotland which was looked upon just now with so much discontent as the management of the Register of Sasines, and the Keeper of the Records. The system of registry and transfer of land in Scotland was of very ancient date—namely, 1599. In 1617 an Act was passed by the Scottish Parliament, enjoining that there should be a general Register in Edinburgh and local Registers throughout the country. For many years the Department was in close connection with the Secretary of State for Scotland; but, on the abolition of that functionary, it passed very largely under the control of the Court of Session, and, for nearly 200 years, it was managed as entirely a Scottish Office. It was only in recent times that any control on the part of the Treasury had been felt in Scotland in regard to this Department. In 1817 certain powers were given to the Treasury, and it was enacted that the officers should be paid by salary and that the Treasury should receive the fees; but the Act did not come into effect until the death of the Chief Keeper in 1845. In 1853 the Treasury appointed a number of what were called “Official Searchers;” and he thought it was agreed on all hands that the system had broken down, because a very large proportion of the searches were conducted not by the official searchers, but by non-official members of what was now a regular profession. After 1853 there was

a good deal of discontent as to the arrangement of this Department, and a Commission was appointed in 1861 to inquire into the whole of the matter. Their Report, which was issued in 1863, contained two recommendations—first, that local Registers should be abolished; and, secondly, that the fees should be so regulated as to cover only the expenses of the Department. A Bill embodying these recommendations, and providing that, in the event of there being any surplus, it should be applied to the reduction of the fees, was prepared and introduced in 1866, and considered by a Select Committee, but was never passed into law. In the next year nothing was done, because of the Reform Bill occupying the attention of Parliament at the time; but, in 1868, an Act was passed, called the Land Register Act, which, among other things, abolished all the local Registers, and centralized the Department in Edinburgh. It appointed the Lord Clerk Register to be a paid official, to manage the whole Department, and have considerable powers of patronage; the Treasury was to fix the fees, but only so high as to cover the expenses of the Department—that provision being very distinct. The new position of the Lord Clerk Register, however, was found inconvenient; and, in 1879, an Act was passed, restoring the Office as one of the great unpaid Offices of State for Scotland, and appointing a Deputy Clerk Register to fulfil the functions which the Act of 1868 had laid on the Lord Clerk Register, the patronage being transferred to the Treasury, subject to the control and advice of Her Majesty’s principal Secretary of State. The Treasury, from the time they had first begun to have anything to do with this Department, had been continually usurping more and more power in regard to it; and he did not believe there would be a single dissentient voice in Scotland when he said that the interference of the Treasury, which had gone on increasingly year by year, had been disastrous and productive of a great deal of mischief, and that there was no Department which was at the present time so badly managed or gave rise to greater dissatisfaction, especially among the Profession, than the Register House in Edinburgh. When this Bill was being read a second time, he had made a casual remark, that he

thought it would be well to include this Department in the Bill. He had then no intention of moving an Amendment such as that he was now about to propose; but that remark had brought upon him such a flood of correspondence from Edinburgh and Glasgow that he had resolved to take the matter up, and look further into it. He would give an instance of the sort of treatment that the Treasury had been extending towards Scotland in the matter of fees. The 25th section of the Land Register Act of 1868 distinctly laid down the proposition that the amount of fees should be so regulated as to pay only the working expenses of the Department. Let them see how the Treasury had read that provision. He held in his hand a Return which was moved for in the House of Commons in 1877 by Mr. Mackintosh, and he found that, in the previous eight years to that date, the fees drawn amounted to £219,531. The total expenditure for salaries and other expenses for the same period was £178,951, and the balance had been appropriated by the Treasury. In other words, in those eight years, the Treasury had taken as a tax, from those who transferred land and lent money upon land in Scotland, no less than £40,580, or £5,000 a-year. But the grievance did not stop there. The Act allowed the Treasury, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, to pay compensation to the keepers of those district Registers which were done away with; but the Treasury had been quietly paying this compensation all the time out of the fees of the Department, and not out of moneys provided by Parliament. He was fortified in bringing this matter before the House by an opinion which was obtained at the instance of the Faculty of Procurators in Glasgow, and the Society of Writers there, in the year 1871. They resolved to take the opinion of counsel as to whether it was right that these compensations should be paid out of the fees of the Department, and they selected as the counsel to whom they should go, Sir Roundell Palmer, who had become well known to their Lordships under another name, and Mr. James Anderson, Q.C. The point put to them was, whether the Act empowered the Government to pay that compensation out of the surplus fees, or whether the fees must be reduced to an

amount sufficient to defray expenses of the Department? The opinion they received was, that the Act empowered the Treasury to pay the compensation from funds provided by Parliament, without reference to the surplus fees of the Register House, and that these compensations should be included in the Estimates annually voted by Parliament; and counsel were of opinion that it was not in the power of the Treasury to impose fees for raising funds to meet these compensations. But, in spite of this, the Treasury, during these eight years, had paid no less than £56,000 in the form of compensation, or, together with the other sum, had quietly taken out of the pockets of those who were transferring land in Scotland and lending money on land, a sum of £11,000 a-year. He did not ask their Lordships to take this matter into consideration as a money question. He was also perfectly aware of the questions of Privilege that might arise between this and the other House of Parliament in that respect, and would therefore do nothing to raise anything of that kind; and he merely used this as an illustration of the sort of treatment a Scottish Department would receive at the hands of the Treasury, if it were not sufficiently controlled, and to show that the control which was supposed to be vested in the Secretary of State for the Home Department, was entirely delusive because the right hon. Gentleman had so much to do, that he had never been able to pay proper attention to the matter. The object of his Amendment was simply to place the Department under the new Secretary for Scotland. He did not propose that the new Secretary should have any power to fix salaries or alter fees; but he would have power to appoint officers and to control the Treasury, which was at present vested in the Secretary of State, but which had only been vested in him in 1879. There was also a great number of other details connected with the Register House as regarded its routine which might be brought before their Lordships, and which required looking into, and which might be very much improved by someone on the spot. But, meanwhile, he would only say that he believed that a great deal of money was at present wasted by the system that prevailed, and that if his Amendment were agreed to, a great saving would be effected,

and, certainly, the cost of transferring land would be greatly cheapened. The new Secretary ought, at all events, to have an opportunity of trying what he could do in this direction; and he hoped their Lordships would also avail themselves of it in order to see what could be done with a Department which, he believed, was at present the cause of very grave and well-founded complaint. The noble Lord concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Schedule, Part I., page 3, line 15, after ("Fishery Board"), *moved*, to insert ("General Register of Sasine and other offices mentioned in Section 8, of 42 & 43 Vict. c. 44").—(*The Lord Balfour.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE, in opposing the Amendment, said, that in regard to the mismanagement of the Department he would not pronounce any opinion. The Register House had now, for many years, been more or less under the control of the Court of Session. In England, he believed that the analogous matters were controlled by the Master of the Rolls. The view of the Government with regard to the Register House was that it ought rather to be placed more directly under the control of the Court of Session than it was at present. The authority which the Court of Session had over the Department was very vague and undefined, and had at times been disputed. The control of the Register House required a great deal of legal knowledge, which the Secretary created by the Bill would not necessarily possess; and, therefore, in the view of the Government, such reforms as might be required would be more effectually carried out by placing the Department more directly under the control of the Court of Session.

LORD BALFOUR said, he did not intend by the Amendment to interfere with the privileges of the Court of Session, or the Lord Advocate. All he asked was, that the powers conferred on the Secretary of State for the Home Department should be transferred to the new Officer.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 38; Not-Contents 34: Majority 4.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Words inserted accordingly.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY, in proposing an Amendment bringing the Elementary Education of Scotland under the control of the new Secretary, said, he considered that those who framed the measure had dealt with the question in what he might call rather a "funking" manner. The question whether education should be included under the new Office was one which the Government ought not to have shirked, as he thought they had done. At the meeting which was held at Edinburgh in the beginning of the present year, and which represented all shades of opinion on the subject, the resolution which was passed, embodying the almost unanimous opinion of Scotland, included education among the subjects that ought to come under the control of such a Department as the Bill created. His noble Friend opposite (Lord Balfour), who now, he understood, opposed the proposal, was present at that meeting; and if he still held to his Amendment that education should not be included, he (the Marquess of Huntly) should like to know why he (Lord Balfour) had not entered his protest against that resolution when it was carried unanimously in Edinburgh? He had made inquiries into the subject, and he believed those who, at the present moment, were taking the greatest interest in education, were strongly of opinion that, under the Scottish Minister to be created by the Bill, education would be further developed. There was one point in connection with the history of education he should like to call attention to. By the Act of 1872, which a great many Englishmen shook their heads at, School Boards and compulsory education were established in Scotland, and a Board was constituted for a certain number of years, for the purpose of carrying out the Act. In 1878-9 a large and most influential deputation, headed by the late Duke of Buccleuch, came to London, and urgently represented that the Board should be made permanent. He (the Marquess of Huntly), however, at that time thought the Government were wise in placing the Department of Scottish Education under the Privy Council. The reason why that was done was, at that time, there was no Minister attached to Scotland specially attending to the Scottish Business, and who could specially undertake the duties of this

Office. But, under this Bill, they were going to appoint a responsible Minister, with the object of placing under his control all the peculiarly distinctive Scottish matters; and they intended to invest him with authority to conduct all Scottish Business. What he would like to ask was, what was, and what was not, Scottish? Because, of all things Scottish, the system of education was the most Scottish. He (the Marquess of Huntly) had presented Petitions from every large town in Scotland, but one, in favour of his Amendment, and he understood that the only Body which really was opposing it was a Body called the Educational Institute. He was informed that that Body consisted mostly of teachers, and it was one which might be considered wishful to conciliate the powers that be. Therefore, he did not think it should be put in the balance against the vast number of Petitions and the expressions of opinion on the other side. The only other Body, he believed, against the proposal was the Edinburgh School Board, which, however, did not really vote against it, but only carried the "Previous Question" by a vote of five to three, out of eight persons. He endorsed what his noble Friend (the Earl of Fife) had lately said—that education in Scotland was not on such a satisfactory footing as some people thought. He would allow that statistics showed a vast leveling-up of the masses; and he believed, in the towns, the effect of the Education Act of 1872 had been very good and beneficial; but, in the rural districts, he believed the Act had not kept pace with the wishes of those responsible for it; and, certainly, there was a very strong feeling that, in these districts, some greater encouragement must be given towards providing for the bringing on of efficient pupils. Their system in Scotland was dissimilar to any other; and in that country their ideas on the subject of education were rather advanced, and they contended that they should have a man born North of the Border who should be head of the Department dealing with that subject. If they left his proposal out of the Bill, they would leave out the kernel of the whole matter. He submitted that the Bill would be valueless, unless they gave the new Secretary the duties of the Education Department for Scotland. This was a Bill which was not announced by dyna-

mite, or accompanied by agitation, but had been introduced in response to the national feeling of Scotland; and, therefore, it would be a grievous error on the part of their Lordships if they did not include the administration of education among the duties of the new Secretary. As to the objections raised to his proposal, there were only two or three worth consideration. One was, that this was not the right time to do it; and another, that it would give the Minister too much to do. In his opinion, there was nothing in either of those objections, and he hoped their Lordships would not be swayed by them. He looked upon them as side winds by which it was hoped to dish those in its favour. If their Lordships thought that education should be placed under the new Minister, why should it not be done now? Another objection was, that perhaps the new Secretary might be a Member of their Lordships' House, and then there would be some difficulty as to who should represent the new Secretary in the House of Commons, and move the Estimates. That he did not consider a valid objection. Certainly, he had no fear, if the new Secretary were a Peer—for instance, the noble Earl who now so efficiently represented the Home Office in that House—that the Department could not, under a somewhat similar arrangement, be efficiently represented in the House of Commons; and as to the allegation of increase in the expenditure, there were at present officials in the Education Department who had entire charge of Scottish Business, and he did not want to interfere with the present arrangements in that respect. The noble Marquess concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Schedule, Part II., page 4, after line 4, *moved to insert—*

"Education	35 & 36 Vict. c. 62.
	41 & 42 Vict. c. 78.
	45 & 46 Vict. c. 18.
	46 & 47 Vict. c. 56."

—(*The Marquess of Huntly.*)

LORD BALFOUR said, he must ask their Lordships not to consent to the Amendment. He would not deny that opinions in Scotland were divided at the date of the meeting to which the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Huntly) referred, and at which he (Lord Balfour) was present. But he had an advantage

over his noble Friend in having been present at the preliminary meeting, at which the terms of the resolutions to be laid before the subsequent meeting as a whole were discussed. With reference to the first resolution, it was suggested, on the part of some of those who disapproved of the transfer, that, if it were passed, it would commit everyone attending the meeting to support the idea that the educational affairs of Scotland should be transferred to the new Secretary; but it was not amended, only, he believed, on the ground that a majority of those who were there disclaimed the idea of committing those who openly disapproved of the matter; and he had never ceased, either before that time, or subsequently, and up to the time of the deputation to the Prime Minister on the subject, to guard himself against being committed to the transference of education to the new Secretary. Therefore, he did not think that owing to the terms of the resolution he was in any way precluded from bringing forward his view of the matter on this occasion. He did not think the noble Marquess would find any of those in Scotland who had charge of the administration of the Education Acts who desired the transference to the new Department. The noble Marquess had brought forward a large number of Petitions which he had got from Town Councils and similar bodies; but none of those who were actively engaged in the practical work of education had, so far as he knew, committed themselves very much on one side or the other. Those who thought with the noble Marquess had a great advantage in this respect over those who thought the other way; because when, on the second reading, the noble Marquess intimated his intention of moving his Amendment in Committee, he (Lord Balfour) objected to it, and the Government said they would not consent to the inclusion of education in the Bill; and the result had been to stir up those who wanted it into a state of preternatural activity to send up Petitions, whilst those who were opposed to it had been lulled into a sense of false security by the declaration of the Government. There had been a certain amount of discussion and agitation about this question, having a substratum of popular opinion at work, which had been largely stimulated by a newspaper in Edinburgh, and he might say by the exer-

tions of the noble Marquess himself. By means of a circular signed "Huntly," which had been widely circulated in Scotland, Petitions were invited in support of the noble Marquess's proposal. He ventured to think it was a somewhat new departure for noble Lords in this House to, if he might use the expression, "tout" for Petitions about the country in reference to a matter before their Lordships' House. However, he did not know, judging by the Journals of the House, that the noble Marquess had met with any great amount of success.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY: Petitions have been presented by me from every town and city in Scotland, except Glasgow.

LORD BALFOUR said, that, in his opinion, Glasgow was a very important place, and certainly not the least important of all the large towns, especially in the matter of education. But the circular he held in his hand was addressed to the Convener of a county, and he did not think a single county had petitioned in favour of the proposal; and therefore it appeared that the noble Marquess had not been equally successful in the counties; neither had he, as he asserted, received an overwhelming amount of support in favour of his proposal. His objection to the transfer was that it was a bad thing to do, and he did not admit as a reason for it that the new Secretary would not have enough to do. In fact, his impression was that the new Secretary would have enough to do, if he did what was proposed to be laid on him by the Bill as it now stood, without the new duties which it was proposed to impose upon him. But if the administration of education ever was to be transferred to that Official, the present was not an opportune moment for the change; for a Committee of the House of Commons, presided over by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was now considering whether there should not be one Education Department for the whole of the country. The Report of the Committee ought to be seen before any change in the present system was made. He should himself much prefer that there should be an Education Department for the whole country, which would only have education to attend to; but if they laid these duties with respect to Scotland on the new Secretary, they would, in all time to come, prevent the

possibility of such a Department being created. He asked their Lordships to pause and consider what might be the outcome of a transfer such as was proposed. The point which the noble Marquess seemed chiefly to rely on was, that the educational system of Scotland had been, and was now, wholly different from that of England. He admitted that it was different, and differently administered; but he would ask noble Lords who urged that objection to point out in what way Scottish education had suffered from its administration by the Committee of the Privy Council. He did not know any way in which it had suffered. Scotland had got its own Code; and he believed it had been very nearly satisfactory to the people of Scotland, if not entirely so, and that it was, in all respects, a very good Code. Neither was it the opinion of those who administered the Code that it had suffered. Another grave objection which he entertained to the Amendment was, that if they had two separate educational systems—if Scottish education was to be separated from English education, the grants would also have to be separated—two grants would have to be proposed separately in Parliament, and they would, in all probability, be settled at so much a head of the population. The present average grant per head in Scotland was 17s. 8d., and in England 16s. 2d. If they multiplied that by the number of children whom it concerned it would be found that, at that moment, the Scottish people were spoiling the Saxon to the extent of about £35,000 a-year; but if educational matters were transferred in the manner proposed, and the purposes were made separate, that would not continue to be the case, because the superior efficiency of Scottish schools would no longer tell in the race for grants. It was quite true that the Scottish national system of education had always been much more a system which gave higher education than that of England; but were noble Lords aware that, for the last few years, it had been the Scottish Education Department that had been urging the School Boards of Scotland to do more for higher education? A Commission, of which he was a Member, in 1880, recommended to Parliament that more money should be expended for higher education in Scotland. More than one Circular had been issued by the De-

partment to School Boards in Scotland to take up the matter; but he was sorry that, through a poor and paltry spirit of economy, there had been no proper response. The fault did not lie with the Scottish Education Department, but with the School Boards in populous centres, who had the power, but did not exercise it, because they were afraid of the rates. If they got this £35,000 taken off their Education Vote, they would make the matter much worse. One reason why he should like to have education referred to a Committee of the Privy Council rather than to the new Secretary, was because, at present, they had a Scottish Committee of the Privy Council, composed of eminent men belonging to Scotland, thoroughly imbued with Scottish ideas, who might be trusted well to look after education; and if they gave it to the new Secretary, they would leave him to act alone without the Committee, who were well qualified to advise him. He might be told that this Committee was a sham, and was not called together. He would admit there was something in that objection. The Committee should be more often called together; but it was a mistake to say it met as seldom as was generally supposed. Whenever any points of policy had to be discussed, it was very frequently called together. There were many other reasons why the proposal of the noble Marquess should be rejected. It would lead to great inconvenience in several ways. For instance, if they transferred education, he was convinced they would have a great deal of difficulty with the Treasury in money matters in the future. At present, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a Member of the Committee of Council on Education, and heard himself the views of his Colleagues, instead of their being filtered to him through Departmental officials. It would also be extremely inconvenient in respect of teachers, if that change were made. At present, certificates of teachers trained in England were recognized in Scotland, and Scottish certificates were recognized in England, and that interchange was of great advantage to both countries; but, he was bound to say, more especially to Scotland, because there were far more Scottish teachers came South, than English teachers going North. On the one hand, there was no Roman Catholic Training College for teachers in the North, and all the teachers for Ro-

man Catholic Denominational Schools had to be trained in the Colleges of that Body in the South; while, again, many teachers belonging to Dissenting Bodies in England, such as Wesleyans and others, could not get admission to the Denominational Training Colleges there, and they came to Scotland. Therefore, it would be seen that any change in the present condition of things in this respect would entail a great deal of unnecessary expense, and it would be a matter for great regret if the existing practice were discontinued. If the expense of training teachers for England and Scotland was to be defrayed out of different purses, great inconvenience must be caused. It had been suggested that if the change were made, it would make it more difficult for the new Official to be a Member of the House of Lords. He did not think that was an objection to which either he or their Lordships should say much; but of this he was satisfied—that it was to the interest of Scotland, and the wish of Scotland, that the most efficient man for the time being, whether he was in the House of Commons or the House of Lords, should be chosen as the Minister for Scotland. That point was clearly brought out at the great meeting held in Edinburgh in the winter. The second resolution was to the effect that the Department should be presided over by a person of eminence, and be joined to the Office of the Lord Privy Seal. It was represented that by the resolution, as it stood, they were asking for a Peer to be their Minister; but that interpretation was disclaimed. The latter condition was deleted from the resolution; and no part of the proceedings was more enthusiastic than the declaration that the best man should have the appointment, whether he was a Member of the House of Commons or a Peer. He was encouraged, therefore, to say that he believed that if the change were made, as proposed in the Amendment, it would create a considerable amount of difficulty in the future administration of this Department, for if the Member who had to move the Education Votes, or who was responsible for a large educational expenditure, had a seat in their Lordships' House, the Votes would then have to be moved by a subordinate in the other House. Great fear had been expressed on all sides lest they should do anything prejudicial to the Lord Ad-

vocate. He could imagine nothing more prejudicial to the Lord Advocate than declaring then that the Minister was to be more generally in the House of Commons than the House of Lords. If he were to be always in the House of Commons it would make it almost unnecessary for the Lord Advocate to have a seat in that House, and that would be a change which would not be welcomed by the people of Scotland. He hoped the reasons he had given would induce their Lordships to suspend their judgment until they saw how the new Department would work, and whether it was really the case that there was such a strong feeling in favour of the transference as was represented by the noble Marquess opposite.

LORD REAY said, the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour) had stated that at the present moment the Education Department allowed 17*s.* 8*d.* per head for Scottish children, and in England they only allowed 16*s.* 2*d.*

LORD BALFOUR: What I stated was, that the Scottish children won that amount. The conditions were equal; but the superior efficiency of the Scottish schools enabled the children taught in them to win 17*s.* 8*d.* against 16*s.* 2*d.* in England.

LORD REAY said, he believed if they transferred the educational arrangements of Scotland to the new Secretary, that it was more likely the difference in favour of Scotland would be increased. He thought the suggested prospect of a Minister for Education for the United Kingdom was very remote indeed; but his appearance would probably tend to equalise the grants and to unify the codes—now separate—on which the grants were made. In England, problems of a different order had to be solved from those which they had to deal with in Scotland and in Ireland. There was the English problem, the Scotch problem, and the Irish problem. As regarded Ireland, the matter was not doubtful. The Privy Council had been warned off by the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The former declared before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Education—"I certainly think it would be a great misfortune to put Irish education under an English Minister." And the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in reply to a Question put to him, said—

"I regard myself as Minister of Education for Ireland. The difficulties of communicating Irish feeling to London in certain points appear to be quite enormous, and the kind of questions connected with education have so much bearing upon the general state of content and discontent in the country that the Irish Government, which is responsible for the general condition of the country, would be willing to make almost any sacrifice of labour in order to keep it in its own hands."

The same difficulty existed with reference to Scottish feeling, and that was why the Bill was brought in. Mr. Cumin, the Assistant Secretary to the Education Department, in his evidence before the same Select Committee, said that he was not sure whether it was a wise thing to have abolished the Scottish Board; and that, though, on the whole, there was no difficulty in the joint administration of English and Scottish education, there was a good deal of difference between the two systems. He (Lord Reay) could not conceive that the Government, for one instant, could have thought it would be possible to have a Scotch Educational Staff at the Privy Council while there was a Scotch Secretary elsewhere. The Scotch Secretary being the retriever from the Treasury, they could not exclude him from the most important duty of securing to Scotland a high educational grant, to which her educational proficiency and her contributions to the Imperial Exchequer undoubtedly entitled her. But, in addition, he could not deny that the object of Scotchmen in reconquering their administrative independence was to remain ahead. They considered that to their education they owed the place they had won in the British Empire, and they wished to keep that education up to the highest possible level. They stood to the Empire in the same progressive position as Baden stood to the German Empire. The Baden schools and the Prussian schools had a different organization. If there was a country from which in this matter we could learn something it was Germany. The House would perhaps allow him to quote the opinion of one of the most eminent men in Germany, given in a recent eulogistic article on the University of Edinburgh:—

"What we, on the Continent, have to guard against most in the future, is the danger that, to the inevitable military legions and to the peaceful but also organized legions of the working classes, we should add legions of scholars, drilled, examined, and ruled on a hard-and-fast line. More pernicious than any other undertakings would be that species of administrative educational fanaticism which centralizes and

levels down, failing to grasp the fact that the ultimate object of all public educational institutions must be to create independent, energetic individualities."

Scotland did not wish its schools to be transformed into so many incubators of the Education Department. It wished to give to the Empire, as heretofore, hard-headed, loyal citizens. Was it in the interests of the Empire to centralize? Was it not much more in the interests of the consolidation of our Empire to give to its various component and loyal parts as much self-government as was compatible with the preservation of the unity of that Empire for which Scotchmen were at all times ready to make any sacrifice? The Scottish problem was how to promote secondary education. As the Government had put in the Scheme the administration of Scotch secondary education, which would, he had no doubt, be improved by the Royal Commission over which the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour) presided so ably, and as they were told it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to separate secondary education from primary education, he would vote for the Amendment of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Huntly) to remove a distinct omission from the Schedule. If the Amendment of the noble Marquess was rejected, they would undoubtedly have gone a step further in the direction of centralization. As he had said, they did not want their schools in Scotland transferred to a Central Educational Department, such as that sketched by the noble Lord. What they did want was to give an education on national and historic lines to develop logical faculties of observation, to obtain results at a minimum of cost, and to retain that practical turn of mind which it had been the great good fortune of Scotland to possess. He did not believe that by a centralizing and levelling system these results would be obtained, and he would certainly vote for the Amendment of the noble Marquess, because he did not wish primary education in Scotland to be taken from the high pedestal on which John Knox had placed it.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he thought, if any portion of the educational arrangements of Scotland was transferred to the new Department, it would be expedient to transfer the whole system; but he held that it would be a great misfortune if they were to transfer

any portion of the education of Scotland to the new Office. He should vote against the Amendment, because, although he was perfectly prepared to create an Officer of State a Secretary for Scotland, and place him in the position of a Secretary of State for the Home Department, he was not prepared to place any one Officer in the position both of Secretary of State for the Home Department and President of the Education Department. He thought to join these two functions was too much for any single Minister. His second objection was this, that such a proposal would narrow very much the whole educational system in Scotland. If they agreed to the Amendment, they, in effect, reversed the whole policy of the Scottish Act of 1872. The principle upon which that Act was founded was, that education should be managed locally by the rate-payers; and that such supervision and control as was necessary should be furnished, not by a Board in Edinburgh, but by a body of men possessed of the greatest educational knowledge and authority, and who were far removed from all the petty jealousies which he was afraid were only too prevalent in Edinburgh. It was for that reason specially that, in the Act of 1872, provision was made for the establishment of a Board for three years only, and when that period expired, the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) was of opinion that it was desirable that the Board should cease. Since that time, the supervision and control of education in Scotland had been conducted to great advantage by the Committee of the Privy Council, which numbered among its Members several of the most distinguished of Scotchmen. If the Amendment was agreed to, the Secretary for Scotland would have the business of the Home Office as well as the business of the Education Office to attend to, and it would be absolutely necessary and indispensable that a permanent Board should be established in Edinburgh, and the result would be that the Board would become the Education Minister. In Scotland, with all their many virtues, they also had some failings, and such things had occurred before now as jealousies between Edinburgh, Glasgow, and many other towns. The notion of an Edinburgh Board was strongly opposed to the wishes of a large number of Members of the other House, and

especially by many supporters of Her Majesty's Government.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he did not propose to establish any Board.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked whether he was to understand that it was not intended to establish any Office connected with Education in Edinburgh?

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he had made no proposal to establish a Board.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, in that case, he should like to know what was the object of transferring the administration of Scotch Education to the new Secretary, and why the business could not be transacted by the Department which carried it on so ably at the present time? He should vote against the Amendment.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, he believed there was a tendency to level down rather than to level up in the matter of education in Scotland. He should support the Amendment in the interests of Scotch Education, and hoped their Lordships would agree to it. It was said by some that it would be a mistake to adopt the Amendment, because they would lose that useful rivalry which existed under the present system. He ventured to think that, under the new arrangement, that rivalry would be greatly increased.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he was in favour of the Amendment, because he thought that if they created a new Office, they ought to place every confidence in the man who held it. He would vote for any proposal such as this which had for its object decentralization.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that the ground on which the Government opposed the Amendment was a sound ground. It was, in the first place, that the people of Scotland were not unanimous in favour of the proposal of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Huntly, which would involve a very great change, transferring to the hands of the Scottish Secretary a larger amount of work than would be given by the Acts mentioned in the Schedule. The Government were of opinion that such a change as was thus involved ought not to be made until the people of Scotland had fully considered the matter. The arguments of the noble Marquess who moved the Amendment were to the effect that Scottish education would largely benefit, if it were transferred to the

hands of the Scottish Secretary. Even if it were quite certain that the change would be a great benefit to education in Scotland, he (the Earl of Dalhousie) thought they should hesitate to make such a change so long as public opinion in Scotland was uncertain, and had not been pronounced in an unmistakeable manner. But there were considerations pointing in the opposite direction, and he believed it was very doubtful whether Scottish education would benefit by being handed over to the Secretary for Scotland. The duties of the Education Department were now carried on by the Lord President of the Council, who was invariably a Cabinet Minister, and by the Vice President of the Council, who was solely concerned with Education. Consequently, it might fairly be argued that the handing over of Scotch education to a Scotch Secretary who had other duties to perform, and who was not necessarily in the Cabinet, would not benefit education in Scotland, but would rather place that country in an inferior position to England and Ireland. Another point in the question was with regard to the matter of expense; for if they made the proposed change, Scotch Estimates would be very much greater than they now were, while the English Estimates would not be very much reduced. There would be all the difference between keeping one household and keeping two. And in regard to the Government grant, so long as the Scottish education was under the same Department as the English, no objection was made to the larger grants given to Scotland; but if the Scottish education was transferred to the new Department, it was not improbable that English and Irish Members might object to pay the larger grants to Scotland. He did not know that it could be alleged that the Scotch Code did not meet the wants of the Scottish people. It was drawn up and administered by the Scottish Education Department, which was entirely separate from the English, though its Parliamentary Chiefs were the same. So far as he was informed, the Department kept touch with the Scottish people through the Inspectors and the School Boards. The Commission of 1867, too, was unanimous in the opinion that the jurisdiction of the Privy Council ought not to be disturbed. Another reason why the transfer, even if it were ex-

pedient, should not be made now, was that a Select Committee was considering whether there ought to be a Minister for Education for Great Britain. If it could be shown that the Scottish people were in favour of the change proposed by the Amendment, it might be expedient to accept it, even although education should suffer at first. But the Government did not think there was sufficient ground for imposing the charge of Scottish education on the new Secretary. The objection of the Government to such a course was not an objection of principle; it was not based so much on the belief that Scottish education would probably suffer by such a change, as upon the ground that they did not think they would be justified in making so large a change without some much more strong expression of opinion on the part of the people of Scotland than any that had hitherto been made.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 18; Not-Contents 37: Majority 19.

Resolved in the negative.

LORD BALFOUR, in moving an Amendment to omit the educational endowments of Scotland from among the subjects to be placed under the control of the new Office, said, he felt justified in doing so on the ground that the Amendment was the natural corollary of the decision just arrived at by their Lordships with respect to elementary education. He could not imagine any reason on the other side, and he hoped the two things would not be separated. He could understand the policy of including all education, or that of excluding education altogether; but he could not understand the policy of dividing the charge of education. As many schools that had endowments were also in part elementary schools, one practical result that would ensue by placing the management of educational endowments under the new Secretary, if the Amendment were not adopted, would be that, in future, the elementary schools and the endowed schools would have to be inspected either by two different Inspectors, or by the same Inspector reporting to two different authorities. That was only one of many other anomalies that would arise. He was perfectly certain that, whatever the people of Scotland might feel about having education transferred to the new Department, there

would in no quarter be any difference of opinion that the two matters must be dealt with by the same authority; and it was for that reason he would now move the Amendment.

Schedule, Part II., page 4, line 5, moved to leave out ("Educational Endowments, 45 & 46 Vict. c. 59, except section 32").—(*The Lord Balfour*.)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was very sorry that he could not accept the Amendment. Until 1882 the educational endowments of Scotland were under the Secretary of State, just as the Universities were; and if a Scottish Department had existed at that time, it was perfectly certain that the control of the endowed institutions would have been transferred to it, and not to the Privy Council. So far as he knew, no one objected to handing over the Universities to the new Office. Indeed, it would be departing from the principle of the Bill if they were not included. Now, it might be said that there were three grades of education in Scotland—on the one hand, they had the Universities, which were now under the Home Office, and which no one objected to have under the new Secretary; on the other hand, they had the Board schools, which the Government and this House had decided to allow to remain as they were; and, thirdly, they had the endowed schools, which might be said to occupy a position midway between the Universities and the Board schools, although, no doubt, it was part of the scheme of many of those institutions that primary education should be given in them. Were they to go with the Universities, or were they to be treated on the same footing as Board schools? That was the question. After carefully considering the arguments *pro* and *con*, the Government had decided that the endowed schools should go with the Universities, and the Government adhered to their original intention in this matter. This measure was of a somewhat tentative character; and it was important that an experiment of this kind should be made, which, by transferring a part of the educational machinery to the new Office, would bring the question of transferring the whole more prominently before the Scottish people than it had ever hitherto been.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that they had had several remarkable

speeches that night from the Government Bench; but he must say that the speech which had just been made was the most extraordinary. He very much doubted whether the provision was ever intended to be in the Bill at all in the outset; at least, he had been unable to ascertain how, in the first instance, it had got into the Bill. If it had been determined that the whole of the educational system of Scotland should be brought under the new Office, he would have been perfectly prepared to acquiesce in that finding; but was it not absolutely ridiculous to determine that primary education was to remain subject to the control of the Privy Council, while the Universities were to go to the new Secretary, and secondary education was to go with the Universities? He submitted that that state of things was thoroughly unsatisfactory. He would suggest that, having regard to the present empty state of the House, his noble Friend (Lord Balfour) should withdraw his Amendment, and bring it up again on Report.

LORD BALFOUR said, he had no hesitation in accepting the suggestion of his noble Friend (the Earl of Camperdown). He would, therefore, withdraw his Amendment, in order to raise the question again on Report.

THE EARL OF ROSEBURY said, he hoped the Government would not take the two noble Lords who had spoken as representing the opinion of Scotland, and that they would not stultify themselves in any way by withdrawing from the position they had taken up on this question. Only the other day the noble Lord who moved the Amendment (Lord Balfour) circulated a very voluminous Report from the Endowed Schools Commission, of which he was Chairman. That Report was issued by the Education Department; and, by a curious mistake, only the evidence was given, the Report being omitted; so that the Department had, in fact, issued the Report without the Report. He did not know whether that might be taken as a specimen of the manner in which the endowed schools would be administered by the Department; but he did not think that proceeding was calculated to inspire confidence in its method of conducting business, or that it had shown any claim to have its control over the Scotch endowed schools continued.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn*.

On the Motion of The Lord BALFOUR, the following Amendment made:—Schedule, Part III., page 4, after line 20, insert—

("General Register of Sasines and other offices mentioned in section 8 of 42 & 43 Vict. c. 44, except the power to fix the salaries and emoluments attached to any of the said offices.")

Schedule, as amended, *agreed to*.

The Report of the Amendments to be received on *Monday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 157.)

House adjourned at a quarter before
Eight o'clock, till To-morrow,
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 26th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Third Reading*—London, Chatham, and Dover Railway (Further Powers)*; Plymouth, Devonport, and District Tramways*.

Considered as amended—Lea Bridge, Leyton, and Walthamstow Tramways Extensions*; Uxbridge and Rickmansworth Railway.*

Second Reading—Manchester Ship Canal.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Personal Estate (Scotland)* [262]; Naval Discipline Act (1866) Amendment* [263].

Second Reading—Medical Act Amendment [207]; Criminal Lunatics [256]; Colonial Prisoners Removal [257]; Public Health Acts Amendment* [113]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) [109], *debate further adjourned*.

Select Committee—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3)* [211], Mr. George Elliot, *disch.*; Viscount Folkestone, *added*.

Committee—Report—Elections (Hours of Poll) (*on re-comm.*) [97-261]; Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) [124]; Colonial Attorneys Relief Act Amendment* [228].

Third Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 4)* [202]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers' Act) (No. 7)* [235]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4)* [212]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7)* [241]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8)* [242]; Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 14)* [243]; Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 15)* [246]; Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order* [233]; Representation of the People [260], *nem. con.*; Licensing Act (1872) Amendment,* [248], and *passed*.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL

(*Lords*) (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster*.)

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I must ask the permission of the House to make a few remarks on this very important Bill at the present stage. I feel it incumbent on me to give expression to the feeling of alarm which it has excited in the great constituency I represent, and whose interests are materially connected with the Bill. I must apologize to the House for raising the question at this somewhat unusual time; but that is no fault of ours. We entertain the strongest feeling in the matter; and we have either to use the present opportunity of giving expression to that strong feeling or to forfeit entirely all opportunities in the House itself. I trust, therefore, that the House will bear with me while I go over some of the grounds why I feel extremely anxious that this Bill should not be passed. I wish the House to understand that this is not a question of competition in the matter of trade as between one town and another. We have no jealousy or feeling of rivalry with Manchester or any town in Lancashire, and I will not trouble the House on this occasion with any question of competition. The question is much deeper and more vital to Liverpool and the vast population living on the banks of the Mersey. It is the opinion of the best authorities in our town and neighbourhood, who have studied the navigation of the Mersey for a lifetime, that the works proposed to be laid down by the Canal Company, in the Upper Estuary of the Mersey, will probably lead to the silting up of the river and the destruction of its navigation. That is the sole reason why we now ask the House to give its attention to the Bill before assenting to the second reading. Perhaps the House will allow me to explain the character of the Estuary of the Mersey, and how it may be affected by the present Bill as a navigable river. The Mersey, after passing Liverpool,

expands into a sort of inland bay or gulf—a large sheet of water, 10 miles long by three wide, with shallows and sandbanks over the greater part of it. This bay is filled by an enormous tidal wave and emptied out again, twice daily the result being an immense scour, which keeps open the deep channel in front of Liverpool right down to the sea, notwithstanding the existence of sandbanks, extending for 10 miles or so, at the mouth of the harbour. The very existence of our port depends on this scour, which keeps open the navigable channel; and anything which seriously diminishes it must result in the gradual silting up of the Mersey and the destruction of the port, which is the only great harbour in the North-West of England, with a deep water approach from the sea. All along the North-West Coast there is a line of sandbanks, and the Mersey is the only river which has sufficient power to drive through those sandbanks so as to make a deep channel to the sea, and that power depends on the large mass of water in the upper estuary that passes in and out at every tide. We believe that the effect of putting down the training walls in the upper estuary of the Mersey, which this Company proposes to do, will sooner or later lead to the silting up of that large bay or gulf, whose waters produce the scour which keeps open the channel. This is not only the unanimous opinion of all competent observers who live on the banks of the Mersey, and whose business it has been to watch the navigation of the Mersey, but of the ablest engineers both in England and America; and perhaps the House will allow me to give the opinion of two of the ablest engineers living. Mr. Eades, a great American engineer, says—

“I am certain, if the proposed works in the Upper Estuary are carried out, very serious and injurious results would follow both to the entrance over the bar and the entrance to the Liverpool Docks.”

Another engineer, one of the greatest authorities in England as a river engineer, Mr. Thomas Stevenson, says—

“I have no doubt whatever that the whole Estuary of the Mersey would be silted up and be covered by grass. Upon no account should walls be put up in the estuary. I say that it would be most costly; and decidedly I think it would lead to something like a national calamity.”

The leading engineers, on behalf of the promoters, do not dispute that view, but

say it lies with Liverpool to keep open her passage to the Atlantic. We have great reason for suspecting that if these works, in the Upper Estuary of the Mersey, which are now projected, are carried out, what has happened at Chester will happen at Liverpool. Chester, at one time, had a navigable channel, which is now closed up; and, with that and like experiences elsewhere, we have too much reason to fear that when the ultimate consequences of these works come to be realized, we shall see the same result at Liverpool—the gradual and steady closing up of the passage. I think I have now put before the House sufficient reason for asking it to regard with great caution, and even aversion, any measure that would seriously tamper with the navigability of the Mersey. Has the House realized to itself what the closing of the Mersey means? Should the views of the best authorities, to whom I have referred, be correct, it would be a sentence of banishment to the 800,000 people who live within five miles of the Liverpool Exchange. They would have to disperse, and seek their living elsewhere; and all the immense capital expended on the banks of the Mersey would be rendered valueless. Will the House allow me to remind them that the Liverpool Docks have been constructed at an enormous cost; that the management of the Dock Trust is a national affair; and that everything which imperils the future action of the Dock Board must be most disastrous. No less than £16,000,000 have been borrowed on the security of our Docks; Liverpool Dock Bonds form one of the favourite investments of the country; and if anything is done to obstruct the channel of the Mersey, the whole of that £16,000,000 may be lost. But I say that is a small and a trifling matter compared with the ultimate consequences, for you would not only destroy Liverpool and all the surrounding towns, but you would destroy the prosperity of all the Lancashire towns whose outlet is by the Mersey. It is impossible to realize the financial and commercial consequences of any action which will put an end to the navigable channel of the Mersey. There would be a loss to this country of of little less than the amount of the National Debt. In my opinion, it is a more important matter than the Channel Tunnel, or than any other question that has ever come before the House in a

Private Bill; and it would be wrong indeed if the utmost attention of the House and the country were not given to this Bill before it passes into law. Let me ask what are the advantages that would be gained by the proposed Ship Canal to counterbalance these great risks? They are extremely slight and problematical even to the trade of Manchester itself. Many of us do not believe that under any circumstances will the Canal be a success. Even on their own showing, the gain will be only 4s. a-ton on a fraction of the goods passing through Liverpool. Even in Manchester itself, to my own personal knowledge, there is a large body of public opinion—the most intelligent opinion I know of—opposed to this Canal, regarding it as a dangerous scheme; and, I repeat, Manchester itself, speaking through its most representative commercial men, is very much divided in opinion on this subject. It will be said, in reply, that there are other engineers to be found in the country who think differently from those I have mentioned, and who imagine that, by means of dredging, and training walls, and one plan or another, it will be possible to keep open the Mersey. The answer I give is, is it right to stake a matter of such immense importance on the conflicting testimony of experts? Everyone knows that professional men, on almost every subject, can be got to give diametrically opposite opinions. I say, then, is it fair that works which involve the existence of the greatest seaport in the world, and the greatest trade and commerce in the world, should depend on the mere opinions of experts? I say it is monstrous that such dangerous works should be undertaken unless there is a moral certainty that they will be successful. I will just say, in conclusion, that the Canal Company have it in their power to release us from this immense anxiety. They have it in their own power to effect their scheme by carrying the proposed Canal to deep sea water. If they choose to change the route by 10 or 15 miles along either shore of the Estuary, they would escape from the necessity of tampering with the navigation of the Mersey; and I trust the House, before sanctioning the Bill, will make it an absolute condition that this rectification should be carried out, and that on no other condition will they sanction this dangerous work.

Mr. Samuel Smith

I will not ask the House to reject the Bill; but on behalf of the enormous interests involved—interests which may be calculated by hundreds of millions sterling—I ask that the strongest Committee possible should be appointed, a Committee containing the best engineering talent that can be found in this House; and I will further ask that the House itself should follow the evidence given before this Committee with much care, because we are determined to fight the Bill to the last, should it unhappily pass another stage in this House. We regard the matter simply as one of life or death, and fraught with the deepest interest to the national welfare, and we should not be discharging our duty, either to our constituents or to the country at large, if we did not use every opportunity of throwing out the Bill, unless such changes are made in it as will deprive it of its terrible risks to the navigation of the Mersey. I will not occupy the time of hon. Members further, and I thank the House for the attention with which it has listened to me.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT: I think my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith) has been well advised when he determined not to divide the House on this question. It would be an extraordinary thing if any obstruction were to be placed in the way of the Bill at this stage, seeing that a Committee of the House of Commons, last year, presided over by the hon. Member for Herefordshire (Sir Thomas Bailey), passed the Bill unanimously; and seeing that a very strong Committee, and one of the most Conservative Committees it was possible to appoint, in the House of Lords, passed the Bill this year. Under these circumstances, it would be unprecedented if any obstruction took place at this stage. I shall not be tempted at this moment—indeed, it is quite unnecessary that I should—to reply to the expressions of alarm of my hon. Friend, or to what he says with regard to engineering matters. He has quoted two or three engineers. I could, if I chose, quote a dozen on the other side, and men of much greater practical experience in these questions than those he has mentioned. But, surely, if the alarm felt by my hon. Friend was not entertained by the Committee of this House last year, and was held to be groundless this year by the House of

Lords, it is clear that neither House of Parliament apprehends the risk of any damage to the Port of Liverpool. Now, all over Lancashire—in Manchester and Salford, and elsewhere—we have precisely the same interest in the security of the Mersey as those have who are represented by my hon. Friend; and we have come to the conclusion that the Mersey is not secure so long as it is in the hands of Liverpool alone. I will mention one fact to the House. Within living memory there were 17 feet of water on the bar at Liverpool during low water; there are now only nine feet at low water. The Port of Liverpool might be made a much more available port than it is; and we believe that, with the concurrence of Manchester, that bar might be removed, and that you might have a good harbour of refuge at Liverpool, instead of having large vessels lying outside, in all weathers, unable to enter the Mersey. With regard to the docks of Liverpool, the whole system there is of the most antiquated character possible. It will scarcely be believed that we have no railway communication with those docks, and that there is only one of the many Liverpool docks that has railway communication with the town of Liverpool. Mr. Moon, Chairman of the London and North-Western Railway, has publicly stated that Liverpool is the dearest port in this country, and that she adopts none of those modern means that ought to be adopted for handling goods and facilitating the transaction of business. The feeling in Manchester, Salford, Oldham, Ashton, Stockport, and all the neighbouring towns is wide, deep, and strong in favour of this scheme. It has not been taken up suddenly. It is an opinion which it has taken two or three years to form; and only last Saturday there was a gathering of 50,000 men in the neighbourhood of Manchester, not with a view of impressing the Committee of this House, but of simply expressing their appreciation of the efforts of the Provisional Committee who have been actively promoting this Bill. I agree entirely with my hon. Friend in his desire to have a strong Committee, for the more intelligent and the more able it is the better we shall like it. We have complete confidence that the more able the Committee the more certain it will be that the Bill will be accepted.

MR. HOULDSWORTH: After the very strong language used by the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith), I was rather surprised at the very lame conclusion at which he deemed it prudent to arrive; for I agree with my hon. Colleague who sits on the other side of the House in the conviction that it is the desire of those who are promoting this canal, and who sympathize with that movement, that there should be a thorough and sifting investigation by Parliament into all the merits of the case. But we have to consider, on the second reading, whether there is such a *prima facie* case for the Bill that it should be allowed to go to a Committee upstairs. I venture to think that I have only to state to the House one fact to prove that proposition, that there is a strong *prima facie* case. Hon. Members will be astonished, I think, when I tell them that of the charges which are imposed in order to carry goods from Manchester to Calcutta, one-half, or not less than 60 per cent, is involved in carrying the goods from Manchester and placing them on board ship at Liverpool. I think that fact is quite sufficient to show that there is a strong *prima facie* case for the inhabitants of Manchester, and those other districts in Lancashire whose business is bound up with those of Manchester. Parliament ought to encourage rather than discourage any efforts that may be made to alter such a state of things, which the House will see must affect injuriously the large commerce not only of this country, but of all the world. I recognize fully the right of Liverpool, placed as it has been on the Mersey, that they should look jealously at this proposal, and ask Parliament to look carefully into the effect the proposed works would have upon the navigation of the Mersey. That is not only their right. It is their duty. But I would venture to remind the House that this is not the first time this Bill has come into Parliament. It has already passed through the sifting of two very important and large Committees. It seems to me that the questions raised by the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith) are questions which the House, as a whole, cannot deal with, and that they are eminently questions which should be dealt with by a Committee upstairs. The hon. Member has said

that experts may be found to give an opinion on any side whatever. But I would ask whether, if that be so, it is for us to give a verdict upon the subjects on which these experts have been called to give evidence. I ask the House to allow this Bill to go upstairs, where it may be thoroughly sifted. It is a question in which the people of Manchester, and not only of Manchester, but all those commercial towns of which Manchester is the centre, take a very deep interest. I believe myself that in the success of this scheme—and there are difficulties connected with it with which Parliament has nothing to do—but I believe that in the success of this scheme the future of the commercial interests and welfare of this country is very much bound up.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I will only detain the House for one or two minutes; but there is a community which I have the honour to represent which is proportionately even more interested in this Bill than the City of Manchester. I beg leave to say one word as to the course which the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith) has taken—for it is a most extraordinary course—upon this occasion. He had laid before the House some portion of the evidence taken before the Committee of the House, and he has, therefore, invited us to follow his example, and to bring forward evidence on the other side. That invitation I shall decline. I shall not follow the bad example of bringing forward evidence on the other side. My hon. Friend has acted in a most unfortunate manner for the interests of those he represents. He has called attention to the fact that this Bill has already received the approval not only of a Committee of this House, but of a Committee of the House of Lords, and he has confessed that he is either unable or unwilling to proceed to a Division. I may remind the hon. Member and his constituents that this House is situated upon a river equally famous with the Mersey, and from the windows of this House anyone may see that the Thames has been embanked within training walls, and the estuary of the Thames has received in consequence no damage, but rather advantage from the greater scour of the river. I think the hon. Member has no right to offer to the House expressions of undying opposition to the Bill,

unless he is prepared to proceed to a Division. I challenge him to take a Division on this question, in order to mark his thorough opposition to the measure. I know he is a sincere man. I hope he will on this occasion give effect to his sincerity, and I challenge him now to divide the House against the second reading of the Bill.

MR. RATHBONE: I will not detain the House long. I wish only to make a remark in regard to what has been said—that this Bill has passed a Committee of this House, and has also passed a Committee of the House of Lords. With regard to the Committee of this House, my hon. Friends have not stated that the Bill was passed with a very stringent provision as to the carrying out successfully of a very large part of the work. The Committee of the House of Lords debated the matter for two hours before they allowed it to pass. Therefore, I do not think that this reference to the Committees at all settles the question. I wish, however, to put the matter before the House on its right footing. Liverpool has never objected to a ship canal, if a ship canal could be got which would not interfere with the estuary of the Mersey, and which would, at the same time, reduce the charges of the Railway Companies. It is quite possible that a ship canal, which would have that result, would benefit Liverpool as well as Manchester. I am not surprised that this is a popular question in Manchester. But my hon. Friend knows that a very large proportion of those interested in the Port of Liverpool consider that this Bill is a dangerous one, and that among the capitalists of Manchester there are many who consider with us that this Bill is a dangerous one. I have been in business on the Mersey for 40 years; and during the whole of that time the effect of natural causes has kept free for us the entrance to the Mersey, so that ships of the largest burden can cross the bar. What we fear is, that if these natural causes are disturbed and interfered with there will be much reason to dread that the freedom of the channel may be jeopardized. If that should happen, the interests of Liverpool and Manchester will be damaged alike. Anyone who will take the trouble to read the evidence, as it has been given before the two Committees, will see that it is most contradictory, and that the preponderance and

balance of evidence is that you will be incurring a tremendous danger by passing this Bill of creating fresh sandbanks; and certainly the simple assertion of my hon. Friends that there will be no danger does not prove their case. The great difficulty is the creation of these fresh sandbanks; and it ought to be proved unmistakably that there is no risk of the Mersey being silted up by the passing of this measure, before so dangerous a measure receives the sanction either of the House of Commons or of the House of Lords. We do hope, as my hon. Friend has said, that the House will not only give us a very strong Committee, but will watch the evidence given before that Committee.

MR. SLAGG: My hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) has reminded the House that when this Bill was before the Committee of the House of Commons last year some very stringent restrictions were imposed with regard to the estuary. I may remind my hon. Friend and the House that in the Bill before the House last year the question of the estuary was not included. It was, in fact, a very imperfect Bill. It was on account of the imperfections of the Bill, and that it entirely failed to deal with the estuary of the Mersey, that the restrictions referred to by my hon. Friend were imposed. I may notice that the present Bill is a totally different Bill in that respect. It is very much more complete, and deals fully with the estuary question. My hon. Friend has declared that this is not a matter which has evoked much popular enthusiasm. I beg to say that he is entirely mistaken. The enthusiasm of the popular sentiment with regard to this Canal Bill in Lancashire is more intense than it has been as respects any measure I ever remember. I cordially concur with the hon. Gentleman in his desire that we should have a very strong Committee to investigate the whole matter, and I have no fear whatever as to the result.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY: I do not rise for the purpose of prolonging this discussion, but rather to ask the House whether it is necessary that it should be prolonged? The hon. Member who opened the debate, and who entered very largely into details upon the question, has not asked the House to refuse a second reading to the Bill. In my opinion, it

would be quite impossible, with any regard and propriety, to decline to read the Bill a second time. The question has been so thoroughly investigated and passed by those who are so well adapted to inquire into these matters—and it has also been examined by a very strong Committee in “another place”—that we cannot stop the progress of the Bill. The Bill occupied the Committee of the other House in examining evidence 41 days, and that Committee gave their decision that the measure was a right and proper one to pass that House. It then came down here. Under these circumstances, and because the hon. Member has announced his intention not to divide the House, I think it is a pity that we should further waste the time of the House by discussing most important questions which can only be settled by a Committee upstairs. I admit that it is desirable to appoint a very strong Committee in order to hold the balance even between the apprehensions of Liverpool and the aspirations of Manchester. What I hope is, that when this Bill emerges from the Committee some of the fears which are now entertained by some hon. Members may have been dispelled. What I think both Liverpool and Manchester have a right to expect is that the Committee to be appointed to investigate this matter should be one in which the House can place entire confidence. Upon that subject I am not sure that the Committee of Selection should not go beyond the ordinary Panel in selecting the Committee. No doubt, whether the Members for Manchester or the Members for Liverpool are right—whether the American engineers are right, or the English engineers are right, in their view—the Bill involves questions of the greatest magnitude, for Liverpool and Manchester have a right to an assurance that the Bill, before it passes into law, should have the sanction of the most powerful Committee which can be obtained, and one which will have the entire confidence of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Though it is perfectly true that the hon. Gentleman who initiated this discussion does not propose to divide upon this Bill, it is obvious that he does intend to influence public opinion by the debate he has raised in this House. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that a reply should

be made to the remarks which he and the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) have made on this subject. The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire said it was a matter of notoriety that this Bill was only passed by the House of Lords Committee after considerable wavering on the part of two Members. I think, perhaps, the hon. Member was not in Order in making this statement; but since it has been made, I may be at liberty to make the further statement that it is equally a matter of notoriety that those two Members of the Committee did not hesitate upon a question of engineering, but only on the question whether the capital could be raised. The only question raised by the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire is, therefore, perfectly irrelevant to the issue now before us. The hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith) is afraid that the Mersey will be, or may be, silted up, if this Bill is carried. Does he imagine that the whole of the rest of Lancashire are so suicidal in their tendencies that they actually desire such a result, or wish to destroy a port which is as necessary to their trade and to their prosperity as it is to the prosperity of Liverpool itself? The hon. Member for Liverpool may be wise in his generation; but it is too much to ask the House to believe that the rest of Lancashire are so ignorant of their own interests, or so grossly blind to them, that they actually desire to destroy the whole trade and Port of Liverpool under an illusory idea that the interests of Manchester may be served by so doing.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY: I do not intend to say a word as to the controversy between Manchester and Liverpool; but after the appeal which has been made to me by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means, and others, I beg to assure the House that, in consideration of the importance of this Bill both to Liverpool and Manchester, from the day that it passed through the Committee of the House of Lords, the Committee of Selection has been devoting its attention to the great object of forming the strongest possible tribunal to try this great question. I may say that the selection of Members will not be confined to any particular Panel or any particular side of the House. I communicated with the Chairman of the Committee on Railway

and Canal Bills, with the idea of seeing whether they would object to giving us one of their strongest Members to take the chair. I hoped that a right hon. Gentleman who had been a Cabinet Minister would kindly undertake to act as Chairman. He has, unfortunately, been unable to do so; but I believe I have got another right hon. Gentleman who has filled a very high Office in a previous Government, and who commands the confidence of the House, to accept the post. The other Members will be Gentlemen of experience. The House will remember that we are now approaching the first week in July, and that it is not possible to press any Member whom we might think qualified to serve, too hard. At the same time, we shall do our best to find the strongest Committee, both in regard to Chairman and Members, that can be found.

MR. WHITLEY: I have been absent from the House for the last few days, and I was not aware of the course my hon. Colleague proposed to take in regard to this Bill. As far as I gather from my hon. Colleague, he does not wish to divide the House, because he does not wish the question to be prejudged. What he is anxious to secure is what my right hon. Friend behind me says will be secured—namely, a strong Committee. I am very sorry, and the whole of Liverpool will be very sorry, that this question should be discussed, as it seems likely it will be discussed, as a question between Liverpool and Manchester. There is no jealousy in Liverpool as regards Manchester; but our difficulty is simply that, which has been pointed out by my hon. Colleague, in regard to the estuary of the Mersey. We do entertain a very strong apprehension that the engineering works proposed may ultimately be injurious to the interests both of Liverpool and of the country generally. It must be borne in mind that the conservators of the river—the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board—have no pecuniary interest in this matter, except as it affects the welfare of Liverpool and the whole county of Lancashire. The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board are a National Board for conserving the National property, and all we desire is to have this question thoroughly sifted by a strong Committee. I must correct the statement of my hon. Friend below the Gangway (Mr. A. J. Balfour) upon

one point. I believe that the engineering difficulties did enter into the consideration of the noble Lords who dissented from the general finding of the Lords Committee, and it was the main difficulty. Be that as it may, we feel that our case is a good one, and that it ought to be considered by a strong Committee. I think the object of my hon. Colleague has been secured in having obtained from my hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means, and my right hon. Friend behind me (Sir John R. Mowbray), an assurance that there shall be a strong Committee.

MR. MAC IVER, who was received with cries of "Divide!" said: I shall not be deterred from what I have to say, and what I think it is right to say, about this Bill by cries of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House. One half of the Port of Liverpool is within my constituency, and therefore I claim a right to speak. I cannot help saying that I somewhat regret the course which my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith) has taken upon this occasion. We all know how important it is that there should be a strong Committee to consider this Bill. We all know that a question of this kind, with such vast and important interests involved, must receive the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Sir John R. Mowbray); but I cannot help feeling that the case of those who intend to oppose the Bill, as I do, has been somewhat prejudiced by the way in which it has been introduced by the hon. Member. The hon. Member has done something, however unintentionally, to prejudice the case of Liverpool by rousing afresh local jealousies between Liverpool and Manchester, and the district surrounding Manchester. Speaking for myself, and I believe for my constituents also, we should welcome a good water communication between Liverpool and Manchester. I as fully believe, as those who are in favour of the Bill, that if a ship canal to Manchester could be successfully made, it would be a benefit to the whole district, not excepting my own constituents at Birkenhead; and I believe that those who suppose such a canal would bring a disadvantage to Liverpool, are making a great mistake. But I want to say some-

thing of my own knowledge. I know something—perhaps there are not many Members of the House, and certainly none on the other side of the House, who have had any opportunities of learning something—about the estuary of the Mersey. The way in which I have become acquainted with the channels there is this—all my life I have been connected with the shipping of the Port of Liverpool, and for many years I have been associated with the racing which takes place upon the river. I therefore know the channels of the Mersey well, and I am able to appreciate much of the scientific evidence which has been placed before the Committee. The hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) is labouring under an entire mistake when he says that there are only nine feet of water on the bar of the Mersey at low water. It would be impossible to hold our regattas, such as that which was held last week, if that were so. At the same time, I know that the channel of the Mersey requires the most careful attention, and must not be trifled with. In my yachting days there were 14 feet of water on the bar of the Mersey at low water. It is about that now. I have known it more, and I have known it less. When I was a boy I have known parts of the Mersey, now dry, which were then navigable. I have seen the sea close to where I live changing year by year; and I do not believe that it is safe to try experiments with the great Port of Liverpool. On physical grounds I strongly oppose the Bill. Any possible advantage is most doubtful and so remote that it does not deserve consideration for one moment in comparison with the great question of the real dangers to the Port of Liverpool involved in the proposals of the Bill. Now, what does this Bill propose? It proposes, among other things, to put several million tons of stone into the Mersey. [*Cries of "Agreed!"*]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. MAC IVER: I am perfectly in Order, Sir; and I shall say what I have a right to say, in spite of the interruptions from hon. Gentlemen opposite, and whether they like it or not. Hon. Members opposite, and their friends who are promoting this Bill, propose to put several million tons of stone into the Mersey; and no person in the world, whe-

ther he be an engineer or anybody else, knows what the effect will be. The common sense of hon. Members of this House—I am not referring to Gentlemen below the Gangway—but the common sense of hon. Members of this House will, I think, teach them this—that if it should so happen that the putting of all this stone into the Mersey should turn out to be a mistake, we could do nothing to remedy it. We could not take them out again. It is for reasons of this nature that I am as keen an opponent of the Bill as it is possible for any man to be. At the same time, I think my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. S. Smith) has made a mistake in bringing the question before the House; because the remarks he has made may have a tendency to arouse feelings of jealousy between Manchester and Liverpool which, perhaps, do exist in some quarters, but which ought not to exist; because I believe that Manchester, and Lancashire generally, as well as Liverpool and Birkenhead, have the same interest in maintaining the channel of the Mersey in a navigable condition.

MR. HICKS: I do not wish, on this occasion, to raise a question on the view put forward by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means, as to the power of this House to refuse the second reading of this Bill. But, having sat on a Committee last year, for the purpose of inquiring into the canal system of the country, and the way in which that system has been interfered with by recent legislation, I wish to express a hope that if the Committee to be appointed to consider the Bill should pass the Preamble of it, they will consider not merely the benefit which may be likely to accrue to the City of Manchester and the neighbourhood, but also the advantage which may be conferred on the country at large. I hope, further, that clauses will be introduced into the Bill for the purpose of securing a full and free interchange of traffic, upon fair terms, between this new canal and that system of railway which reaches from Manchester, by means of the parent of canals and other canals, into the Midland and the North-East districts of England. I certainly think that without some such provisions the canal, however beneficial it may be to Manchester,

will not be a work of any great National importance.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

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PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND)—WATER SUPPLY—SWINEFORD UNION.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a sworn inquiry was held into the state of the existing supply of water at Urlaur, in the Swineford Union, county Mayo, before replying to a question upon this subject about six weeks ago; whether the written statement of the sanitary officer, that “water is inconvenient” was credited; and, whether the Local Government Board are now prepared to recommend the matter to the serious consideration of the present Sanitary Board; or, what steps they intend to make in order to secure a proper supply of water at Urlaur?

MR. TREVELYAN: A sworn inquiry was not held in regard to the application for the erection of a pump at Urlaur, and there were not sufficient grounds for deeming such an inquiry necessary. There is no reason to question the accuracy of the Report of the Medical Officer of Health that the supply of water was inconvenient for some of the inhabitants; but he also reported that the water was pure. There is nothing before the Local Government Board to show that the health of the inhabitants is endangered by the want of pure water; and the Board do not consider it necessary to interfere with the discretion of the Sanitary Authority in the matter.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—COMBER DISPENSARY, NEWTOWNARDS UNION.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the position of Medical Officer to the Comber Dispensary, Newtownards Union, has a salary of £100 a-year attached to it; whether, on its becoming vacant by the death of Doctor France, the Dispensary Committee proposed to reduce this salary to £60 per annum; whether the action of the Committee was supported by the Newtownards Board of Guardians; whether there were three

candidates for the situation, each of them willing to accept it at £60; whether one of these candidates acted as Medical Officer during the period between the death of Doctor France and the appointment of his successor; whether the right of appointment in cases of this kind rests with the Local Government Board or the Board of Guardians; and, whether he will inform the House on what authority the Local Government Board decided not to permit the reduction?

MR. TREVELYAN: The hon. Member appears to have been misinformed as to the ultimate decision of the Local Government Board in this matter. The Local Government Board, after due inquiry, and some hesitation, decided not to oppose the wishes of the Board of Guardians, but gave their consent to the salary being fixed at £60 a-year.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—
DEFALCATIONS OF MR. JAMES
GARDINER, SOLICITOR, EDINBURGH.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Lord Advocate, If he has seen the report of a meeting of creditors of Mr. James Gardiner, S.S.C., Edinburgh, in *The Scotsman* of the 4th instant; and, whether he has made, or intends to make, any inquiries regarding the way in which Mr. Gardiner is alleged to have dealt with the trust funds of clients which they had committed to his charge?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I did observe the report of this meeting in *The Scotsman* of the 4th instant. Although no criminal charge has been made, the Procurator Fiscal, as soon as the report appeared, properly proceeded to investigate the case. I understand that Mr. Gardiner had left the country before the meeting, and that it is not known where he is.

ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC—
SAMOA.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the case of the Samoan woman, Manaema, whose lands in Samoa were seized of Messrs. W. M'Arthur and Co. of Auckland and London, has yet been fully considered and decided upon by the Imperial Government, to whom it was submitted by Sir G. D. De Veaux, High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, in January 1884; whether it is a fact that Messrs. W. M'Arthur

and Co. in realising a claim against their agent, Mr. Frank Cornwall, entered on and took possession of Samoan lands and plantations which are still legally vested in the Samoan people, and sequestered or destroyed the produce of several plantations; whether they put these lands, 250,000 acres in all, and including several plantations in full working order, up to sale and bought them in themselves at a price of £1,500, although some of the lands were legally settled in February 1879 by deed and by consent of the Samoan people on the Native woman Manaema; whether, on attempting to take possession, they were resisted by the Native Governor, who declared the lands belonged to the Samoan people and were free from British control; whether the Native owners offered to satisfy Messrs. W. M'Arthur and Co.'s claims, but their offer was refused, as the firm preferred the land; whether the agents of Messrs. W. M'Arthur and Co., in taking forcible possession of the said lands, maltreated the Native woman Manaema and others, drove them from their houses, and seized their furniture and clothing; whether the British authorities in Samoa supported the action of Messrs. W. M'Arthur and Co. and threatened to burn the villages if the Natives did not yield up their lands peaceably; whether the Government intend to redress the grievance of Manaema and the people of Samoa; and, whether the Messrs. W. M'Arthur and Co. of Auckland and London in question are the same firm whose agent in Samoa, according to a Despatch of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 18th October 1878, had practised cruelties in conducting the labour trade of the firm, and had been responsible for outrages upon Polynesian labourers upon their Samoan estates?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The hon. Member's Questions seem to have been taken from a certain Petition drawn up by Mr. Cornwall, to which Her Majesty's Government has replied that there is no case for their interference. I may say, however, that most of the allegations of the Petition have proved on inquiry to be inaccurate as far as Cornwall is concerned, and the matter, put shortly, resolved itself into this. Cornwall, being a debtor to the firm of M'Arthur and Co. to a large amount, and being pressed for some payment, mortgaged his land

to them, and when a foreclosure took place turned round and said that the lands did not belong to him at all but to his Native concubine, named Manaema, and that they were Native Lands. He stirred up the Natives to take this view, and to dispossess by violence the representative of his creditor. The High Commissioner, on his visit to Samoa in 1882, imposed a fine for these acts of violence, but without in any way deciding on the title to the lands in question. Messrs. M'Arthur are the firm referred to in the despatch of 1878, and their so-called agent, owner of the estate on which the labourers were employed, was this same Mr. Frank Cornwall.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Might I ask the hon. Gentleman further, whether the decision of the Government was given upon the question, and whether it was communicated by them to the people interested? With his permission, I will say that the reason I ask it is, that a letter was despatched on the 11th January, 1884, stating that the matter was still under the decision of the Imperial Government.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I can make no reply, except that our decision has been forwarded about a couple of months ago. I may say that the hon. Member was inaccurate about the date.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Might I ask the hon. Gentleman if this letter has been brought under his attention—

“Government House, Melbourne,
11th Jan., 1884.

“Sir,—I am directed by his Excellency the Acting High Commissioner to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th December, and beg to inform you in reply that the question of the action taken in the case referred to was one involving a decision of great importance to the whole Colonies. For this reason his Excellency has referred the matter to Her Majesty's Government for their decision, and is unable to take action until their decision has been received.

(Signed) W. HARTINGTON.”

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The date is 1883.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR: I very much regret having to trouble the House about a personal matter in which hon. Members can feel little or no interest. But as the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Redmond) has in his Question indirectly made serious charges against my brother, who is unavoidably absent to-day, myself, and the members of a

firm in Auckland with which we are connected, but in the management of which we have not personally taken any part, I hope the House will permit me to make a personal explanation, and I will engage not to occupy more than a few minutes of its time. Allow me to say, in the first place, that if the hon. Member had had the courtesy to speak to me on the subject I could have given him information which would have saved him the trouble of putting such a Question on the Paper, and saved me from the unpleasant necessity of making this explanation. For I hold in my hands documents proving unmistakably the incorrectness, not to use a stronger word, which I believe I would be perfectly justified in using—of the accusations contained in the Question against W. M'Arthur and Co., of Auckland. These papers are too voluminous to trouble the House with; but they can be seen by the hon. Member if he wishes to see them, or by any other hon. Member of the House. With regard to the purely commercial portion of the Question, it is sufficient to say that the case has been three times decided by competent tribunals—first in the Consular Court, afterwards in the Supreme Court of Fiji, and finally by the Governor and High Commissioner, and in each case decided in favour of W. M'Arthur and Co. The hon. Member's Question is intended to produce an impression that land was bought very much below its value, that resistance was offered by the Natives, who offered to satisfy the claims of M'Arthur and Co., but that this offer was refused by the firm, who preferred the land. We are informed, and the documents in my hands prove, that the reverse is the fact, that the King of Samoa sent one of his chiefs with instructions to the native governor to render all necessary assistance to the agent of W. M'Arthur and Co. in obtaining the deeds of the land, and that, so far from the firm preferring to seize the land, they offered long after they had taken possession of it in self-defence to return it to Cornwall for £3,500, which was only equal to a composition of about 10s. in the pound on the amount due by him. This liberal offer he refused, leaving no option but to retain the land. Every business man in this House will perfectly understand that the locking up of capital in land,

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however cheap, is a drawback from a business point of view, and the firm would have been much more inclined to take even a composition in cash than have the land on their hands. The most serious imputation, however, contained in the hon. Member's Question is that referring to the mal-treatment of the native woman Manaema, and to cruelties in conducting the labour trade. With regard to the native woman Manaema, I hold in my hand copies of depositions sworn before the Acting British Consul showing that the statements made respecting the harsh and improper treatment of Manaema are utterly false; that she was kindly treated and made no complaint till some months after, when she did so presumably at Cornwall's instigation; and that she herself a fortnight after the alleged mal-treatment thanked W. M'Arthur and Co.'s agent for his kindness to her in this matter. And lest the hon. Member should feel it necessary to take the trouble to put a Question on the Paper insinuating that these copies are forgeries, I may inform him that their authenticity is guaranteed by a notary public in Auckland, and that the Acting-Consul certifies that the men who made the depositions are well known to him as persons of good repute and worthy of credit. There is, also, not the slightest foundation for the charge of ill-treatment of Polynesian natives. One of M'Arthur and Co.'s vessels certainly made one, and only one, voyage with natives from the Line Islands down to the plantation. But this voyage was undertaken long before any dispute with Cornwall, and while he was the sole owner of the land; and the correspondence of the firm shows conclusively that M'Arthur and Co. had no control whatever over the Natives after landing them on Cornwall's property. Some months afterwards complaint was made that the Natives were not well treated; and M'Arthur and Co. at once wrote to Cornwall remonstrating in the strongest terms. Finally, Cornwall left the Islands for Europe, without making any provision whatever for these Natives, and M'Arthur and Co. advanced nearly £500 to feed and send them back to their homes. In the matter of bringing these people down, they acted entirely at Cornwall's request and as his agents, and after landing them had no further con-

trol over them or him whatever. The hon. Member has treated me with scant courtesy; but I will not do him the injustice to insinuate that he has given publicity to these calumnies knowing them to be untrue. On the contrary, I believe he has been grossly deceived by vindictive and unscrupulous men, respecting whom I will only say that, had their character and conduct been as well known by him as by the majority of the people of Auckland, he would not, I believe, have troubled the House with such a Question. I think, however, I have a right to complain that the hon. Member, instead of endeavouring to ascertain the truth, followed a practice which has recently become too common—under the guise of a Question, to bring charges injurious to the reputation of Members of this House, and frequently of innocent persons who have not an opportunity of defending themselves against imputations either totally untrue, or so highly exaggerated as to be nearly so—a practice which I do not think I use too strong language in describing as a breach of the Privileges of this House.

MR. SPEAKER, interposing, said, it was sufficient for the hon. Member to make a disclaimer upon the Question. Perhaps he would content himself with having done so in the most public manner possible.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will ask the indulgence of the House to make a personal explanation. It will not be a tenth part as long as that of the hon. Member. I wish to say that I did not bring these charges without sufficient justification. The hon. Member says he has documents to prove his case. Well, I am also in possession of documents to prove my side of the case. I suppose it would be out of Order to go into them now in the House. As, however, I am not justified in bringing these charges, and then not reading them, I am quite willing to move an Adjournment in order to go into them. Otherwise, I shall take the earliest opportunity of showing my justification by going into the whole of this matter. I shall then show the hon. Member that I was not guilty of bringing forward recklessly charges which had no justification. I have an affidavit from the Native people themselves. I have statements from the official despatches of the Colonial Office; I

have affidavits from gentlemen interested in the matter; and I have the legal opinion of some of the best-known legal firms in the whole of New Zealand. Fortified, therefore, by the whole of these proofs, I am not in a position to withdraw one of the accusations which I have made.

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can now give the House any information as to the present state of negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and that of the King of Portugal relative to the Congo River Territory?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have already stated in the House that on March 15 and June 1, 1883, Lord Granville informed the Portuguese Government that the Anglo-Portuguese agreement, if not accepted by the other Powers principally interested, would be futile, and that in consequence negotiations had commenced in order to ascertain the views of those Powers. Her Majesty's Government has now arrived at the conclusion that the objections taken by some of the Powers to certain portions of the Treaty are of too serious a character to leave any hope of the Treaty being accepted as a whole, and they have, therefore, informed the Portuguese Government that a ratification of the Treaty would be useless. It is, however, the hope of Her Majesty's Government to maintain that portion of the Treaty which relates to the River Commission, and, as originally proposed by them, to give it an International character. The powers it would have possessed under the Treaty were practically identical with those of the Danube Commission, from which it only differed in the composition of the controlling authority.

MR. O'DONNELL: The noble Lord says that the only difference between the proposed Commission and the Danubian Commission is in regard to the controlling authorities. But the difference of the originally proposed Commission on the Congo was that it was an Anglo-Portuguese Commission, while the Danubian Commission was an International one. Now, I understand that the Government propose to give up entirely the Anglo-Portuguese Commission, and that

they are ready to accept an International Control of the mouth of the Congo.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; that is perfectly accurate. The original proposal, which Her Majesty's Government supported till the end of the negotiations, was that the Commission should be of an International character. Therefore, in adopting that suggestion, we are reverting to the original proposal.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Is it intended that the powers of the River Commission should extend so far as to enable them to levy Customs duties?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No; the River Commission, and all River Commissions made after the Treaty of Vienna, 1815, have nothing to do with Customs duties; they only deal with the navigation.

MR. BOURKE: Is the Government prepared to say that so much of the Treaty as remains—which is certainly a very important part—will not be ratified till the House has had an opportunity of coming to a conclusion upon it?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No; I do not say that any part of the original question remains. What I said was that the idea contained in that clause of the Treaty would be maintained. There will have to be a fresh agreement of an International character.

MR. BOURKE: But will that be submitted to the decision of the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The pledge which the Prime Minister gave on the subject last year referred to the Treaty between this country and Portugal; but this is a fresh matter, and I cannot answer the Question without Notice.

MR. BOURKE said, he would put a Question on the subject on the Paper.

NAVY—CHATHAM DOCKYARD.

MR. GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is a fact that six ships only of the Royal Navy have been commissioned at Chatham since 1880, while in the same period twenty-six have been commissioned at Devonport, fourteen at Portsmouth, and twenty-nine at Sheerness; how many ships have been paid off at Chatham during the same period; and, whether there is any reason for diminishing the number of Her Majesty's ships commissioned and paid off at Chatham?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : The number of ships commissioned between the 1st of January, 1881, and the 1st of June, 1884, at the ports named in the hon. and learned Member's Question, was as follows:—At Chatham, 7; at Sheerness, 29; at Portsmouth, 29; at Devonport, 30. There were four ships paid off at Chatham within the same period. The matter is decided by consideration of the public interest; and Chatham, being used more especially as a building yard rather than as a repairing yard, is naturally a less fit place for paying off and commissioning ships.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS — DOCK-YARD POLICE.

MR. GORST asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in fulfilment of a promise made by him in the House of Commons on May 7th 1883, a telegram was sent by his authority on May 8th from Scotland Yard to the authorities of the Metropolitan Police at Chatham, in these terms—

“Pressing. Please forward to this Office, by morning of 10th inst. for the information of Sir Edmund Henderson, a report stating the wishes of the men of all ranks employed under C. D. Acts as to remaining in a Dockyard or being transferred to a Town Division; those among them who are of the old Dockyard Force can be pensioned on abolition of office if approved by the Treasury, if they do not wish to enter on duty in the Metropolitan Police;”

whether several members of the Force, on the faith of the above promise of the Commissioner, elected to resign and take their pensions on the scale referred to in the above telegram; whether these persons have not, in every instance, been refused generally, and not on any individual ground, any increase to their ordinary pensions as for abolition of office; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take in order to fulfil the promise made by Sir Edmund Henderson on their behalf, and on the faith of which those members of the Old Dockyard Force who elected not to enter on duty in the Metropolitan Police have acted?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he was doing all in his power to settle the question of the pensions of the policemen formerly employed under the Acts referred to in the Question of the hon. and learned Member.

RAILWAY REGULATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. B. SAMUELSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is intended to proceed with the Railway Regulation Acts Amendment Bill; and, if so, whether he will be prepared to make such modifications therein as will meet the objections of traders to its provisions relating to terminals and appeals?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that the prospects of a Bill seriously opposed at the end of the Session were not very hopeful. At the same time, he did not altogether despair of being able to make progress with the measure referred to. He did not know what alteration of the Bill would give satisfaction to all traders, because they entertained different views on the subject. Some of them desired that the Bill should go forward in its present form, while there were others who proposed modifications. All he could say was that he thought it was a fair subject for discussion, and he should be prepared to give full consideration to any Amendment that might be proposed on either side. In the meantime, it was only fair to say that the proposals of the Bill, in his opinion, went as far as they could fairly do in justice to the Railway Companies and their shareholders.

INDIA—THE CANDAHAR STATE RAILWAY.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the line, hitherto officially known as the Candahar State Railway, is henceforward to be designated the Sibi-Pishin Railway; and, if so, in deference to what views or circumstances this has been done?

MR. J. K. CROSS: No information of any such intention on the part of the Government of India has reached the India Office; but the sensible suggestion of the hon. Baronet shall be placed before the Viceroy, who will doubtless give it the consideration which it deserves.

NAVY—STOPPAGE OF PAY.

MR. J. R. YORKE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What is the number of men in the Royal Navy who have been punished during the last year by

stoppage of pay; what is the amount of the money so received; and, what becomes of it?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am unable to give my hon. Friend the information he asks for in his first Question, because it would take much time and involve a great amount of labour to ascertain the number of men affected by stoppage of pay. If my hon. Friend will turn to the Navy Estimates for this year Vote 1, sub-head H, on Paper 11, he will find that a sum of £9,000 is taken to the credit of the Vote for "stoppages of pay from men when in cells, mulcts, &c." This is an estimated amount based on the experience of recent years, and the sum so estimated is thus deducted from the Wages Vote.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE
STAFFORDSHIRE YEOMANRY—
RIOT AT LICHFIELD.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Birmingham Daily Post*, attributed to the Mayor of Lichfield, in connection with the Yeomanry disturbances at Lichfield, to the effect that what had occurred "was only what had taken place in former years;" and, whether he will direct that the inquiry which he has ordered shall extend to the general conduct of the Corps while in training for some years past?

COLONEL LEVETT also asked, whether it was not the fact that during the last five years the confidential Reports of the officers respecting the Staffordshire Yeomanry had been, both as to discipline and general conduct, highly satisfactory and creditable to the regiment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In reply to the Questions of the hon. and gallant Member for Lichfield (Colonel Levett), I have to state that the regiment did not train in 1879. The Reports for the last four years have been very satisfactory. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), I have to state that my attention has been called by the hon. Member to the statement in question; but I do not see that any advantage would arise from the extension of the inquiry suggested by the hon. Member.

DR. CAMERON asked whether it was true that the inquiry would be conducted in private?

Mr. J. R. Yorke

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he was not aware of the circumstances under which the inquiry would be conducted; but he had seen a statement in the newspapers to the effect that it would be private.

DR. CAMERON gave Notice that he should call attention to the subject on an early date.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—INCEN-
DIARY FIRES.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Lord Advocate, Whether there is any truth in the statement made in *The Dunow Herald* of the 14th instant that, during the previous week, there had been three plantation fires in Morayshire alone, the last one taking place within four miles of Gordon Castle, the Duke of Richmond's seat, much valuable timber being destroyed; and, whether there is any truth in the statement made in several other papers that within the last four weeks there have been an unusual number of agrarian fires in Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I do not know of any newspaper called *The Dunow Herald*; but I have inquired in regard to the matter to which the Question relates, and I am informed that the only plantation fire known to the authorities to have taken place in Morayshire about the time referred to occurred on the 1st of June at the Hill of Orbliston, between four and five miles from Gordon Castle. The fire was a serious one, a considerable extent of timber having been destroyed, and the Procurator Fiscal made a full investigation in regard to it at the time. There is no reason to suppose that the plantation was set on fire wilfully. It appears to have begun at a place where there were signs that a small fire had been lighted, probably by one or more tramps, for the purpose of cooking food; and it seems to have been blown by the wind to a whin bush near, from which it extended to the plantation. It appeared that an attempt had been made to extinguish the fire in the bush by throwing slime and water upon it from a neighbouring ditch. I have no reason to believe that there have been any agrarian fires in Scotland recently. All fires of any moment occurring in Scotland are investigated by the Fiscals and regularly reported to the Crown Office. There has been no appreciable increase

in the number of the fires reported during the last year, and none of them can be recognized as agrarian.

**SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—
THE MILITARY GRAVEYARDS
AT PRETORIA.**

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If there is any information at the Colonial Office as to the state of the graveyards of British soldiers and others who died at Pretoria in the Transvaal; if it is the case that they are now in a very neglected state; and, whether he will direct the British Resident there to take them under his charge and see that they are kept up with proper care and attention?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I think this Question should more properly be put to my right hon. Friend the Chief Commissioner of Works, as it is within his Department that the care of these graveyards rests. But I may say that we were informed in 1882 that the walls round the Pretoria Cemetery had been placed in a state of substantial repair. We have no information since of its being in a neglected state. On the contrary, we have received within the last month a despatch from the British Resident which shows that he is looking after it. He writes that heavy rains had damaged the enclosing wall of the military cemetery; but that he had repaired the damaged part and strengthened the neighbouring portion.

**ARMY—THE LATE CAMPAIGN IN THE
TRANSVAAL—RECOGNITION OF
MILITARY SERVICES.**

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will take into consideration the granting of a clasp to be worn on the South African medal by those officers and men who were engaged in the Transvaal operations, with either the word "Transvaal," or the name of the fort defended, inscribed thereon?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I must refer the hon. Member to my reply of the 19th of April, 1883, and that of my Predecessor in the previous year; and repeat that there is no intention of granting a medal or other decoration for this campaign.

**CONVICT PRISONS (GREAT BRITAIN)—
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS—
POWER OF MAKING
REPORTS.**

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why the Roman Catholic Chaplains of Convict Prisons do not give an annual Report same as the Protestant Chaplains do; and, if he will cause them to do so for the time to come?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, who was imperfectly heard, was understood to say that the Roman Catholic clergymen who officiated in prisons had not the formal title "chaplains," and accordingly did not send in formal Reports. They had the power of reporting anything which they thought worthy of attention. If any bad results were found to follow from their not making formal Reports, he would have no objection to inquire into the matter.

**CUSTOMS—SEARCHING OF PAS-
SENGERS' LUGGAGE.**

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the case that the luggage of two Irish Members of Parliament has been searched at Holyhead, within the past few weeks, by custom house and detective police officers, notwithstanding that upon one occasion they were informed beforehand of the name of the Member whom they molested; whether it is customary to search the luggage of passengers to and from Ireland at Holyhead; if not, upon what grounds these searches were made; and, whether steps will be taken to prevent its recurrence? The hon. Member, in explanation of the form of the Question, added that he did not claim any special exemption for Irish Members of Parliament if a usual or well-understood practice of searching passengers' luggage prevailed at Holyhead, as at Portsmouth and Dover. He merely desired that Irish Members should not be singled out for these attentions.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I heartily concur in the view taken by the hon. Member, and I can answer his Question with the sympathy of a fellow-sufferer. On Whitsun Monday I returned from that part of Her Majesty's Dominions known as the Channel Islands, and I left my luggage in the boat with a servant to be cleared in the usual

way. I, however, carried in my hand a large box, labelled "Home Office, Criminal Department." That was immediately secured by the Custom House officer, and then I was taken into a shed. Being a meek man myself I did not object, nor did I claim the privilege of a Member of Parliament, nor even of a Secretary of State; but I produced my Cabinet key and opened the box. My box was searched, and a chalk mark was made on it, and I was allowed to leave the Southampton Dock without a stain upon my character. If any hon. Member thinks it is a misfortune to be particularly suspected, the same thing has occurred to me; but I can assure the hon. Member that it is neither the intention of the Department nor the rule to suspect any person unnecessarily. Zeal sometimes does outrun discretion, and under such circumstances I am disposed personally to applaud it. It is not the intention that the rule as to searching should be carried out with any unnecessary inconvenience to, or suspicion of, either Irish Members or Secretaries of State.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PROTESTANT PROSELYTISING.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a letter in *The Dublin Freeman's Journal*, from the Rev. Daniel Heffernan, C.C., complaining of an attempt to kidnap Catholic children by a Protestant proselytising institution in Dublin; and, whether the Government will institute an inquiry into the matter?

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to different newspaper reports and letters published in the Dublin journals, detailing cases where children taken away from their parents by proselytising agents are locked up in proselytising homes in Dublin, Kingstown, and other parts of Ireland, and denied or refused to their parents when applied for; whether it is a fact that the wives and daughters of persons occupying official positions in Ireland are engaged in this traffic; whether it is his intention to propose any amendment of the Laws, with a view to punishing persons who so retain children against the consent of their parents; and, whether he will cause in-

quiry to be made, with a view of ascertaining to what extent the Law is being violated in this respect?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have seen two letters in a Dublin newspaper of the character mentioned, which are, probably, the communication to which the hon. Member for Athlone (Mr. J. H. M'Carthy) refers. I am informed that they have reference to cases which are the subject of certain *ex parte* applications recently made to the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland for *habeas corpus* orders, and that affidavits have been filed in that Court denying the statements made in the affidavits upon which the applications were made; and that the cases are now at issue in the Court. With regard to the latter part of the Question of the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Harrington), the Government have no information that any such traffic, as is suggested, is carried on. I am advised that the law provides any aggrieved person an ample remedy for the offence of unlawfully taking or detaining children from their parents or guardians, and that no amendment is necessary. There does not appear to be any ground upon which the Government could institute the inquiries suggested. The inquiry will probably be ample in the Courts of Law; but we can judge after it has concluded.

MR. HARRINGTON: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered whether the wives and daughters of Judges and others occupying official positions in Ireland are concerned in this traffic; and I would also ask him if the Government are not in possession of information on this subject; and, whether he does not think it will be well for them to make inquiries?

MR. TREVELYAN: I think the hon. Gentleman will see that whether these proceedings should be characterized as "traffic" is precisely the question now being tried in the Courts of Law.

MR. HARRINGTON: I am not at all referring to cases in the Courts of Law. I am aware certain cases have been brought into the Courts of Law; but what I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman is this—While the law does contain provisions to punish persons—"Order!"—I shall put myself in Order by asking a Question—while the law does make provision to punish a person for taking away a child, will the

right hon. Gentleman endeavour to so amend the law that when a child has been taken away the person from whom it was taken shall be able to recover it?

MR. TREVELYAN: If the law is defective, Sir, I shall certainly think it necessary to take measures for making it effective; but I will be a better judge of that after we see the result of the cases in the Law Courts.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY— CASE OF MRS. P. N. FITZGERALD.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On whose authority, and for what purposes, Detective Sergeant Bulmer visited the house of Mrs. P. N. Fitzgerald, at Cork, and attempted to draw her into statements incriminating her husband, now awaiting trial in Sligo Gaol on a charge of treason felony; and, whether orders will be given to prevent a repetition of such conduct?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sergeant Bulmer, by the desire of his officer, called at Mrs. Fitzgerald's house to make some inquiry with regard to a person who he believed was known to her. He denies that he made any reference whatever to the case against her husband, or that he attempted to draw her into statements incriminating him.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)— TAUNTON GAOL.

MR. E. STANLEY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has determined to close the prison at Taunton; and, if so, on what grounds; and, whether it is not the case that, since it has been taken over by Government, the military and civil cells have been constantly full, and how the assizes can be held in Taunton if the prison which was built by the county to communicate with the courts is closed?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is not desirable now to enter into the details of this question, which is being investigated. But I shall be most happy to hear anything that can be alleged on this subject. I expect that the matter will be thoroughly discussed before a final conclusion is arrived at.

BANK HOLIDAYS—GOVERNMENT CLERKS.

MR. KENNY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If there is any special

reason for depriving the clerks in the Paymaster General's Department and in the Treasury of the Bank Holidays granted to clerks in the other departments of the Civil Service; and, if not, whether in future they will be granted such holidays?

MR. COURTNEY: Public business does not permit the Treasury and several other Offices to be altogether closed on Bank Holidays. In the case of any clerks whose attendance may be required on these days, this fact is taken into consideration in fixing the amount of leave to be allowed to them.

IRISH REPRODUCTIVE LOAN FUND ACT—LOAN TO — KEDY AND — DRISCOLL.

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that two men named Kedy and Driscoll, residing at Portmagee, county Kerry, entered, in June 1883, into security for a loan under the Reproductive Loan Fund Act; that a boat-builder named Lynch contracted with the Inspector of Fisheries for the construction of a boat for those men; that this boat was afterwards approved of, in the usual manner, by the coast-guard officers, and a certificate to that effect forwarded to the Inspector of Fisheries; whether it is a fact that repeated applications have been made to the Inspector of Fisheries and Board of Works for payment of the amount during the past twelve months; and, whether, though the first instalment for repayment has actually been called in and paid, the amount of loan itself has not been yet paid to the contractor.

MR. TREVELYAN: The facts are as stated, except in one important particular—the amount of the loan having been actually paid a fortnight ago. It was accidentally delayed through a clerical oversight in the office of the Inspector of Fisheries, which is to be regretted. But the Board of Works paid it at once on receipt of the necessary certificate from the Fisheries Department.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)— RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

MR. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state how many magistrates of each religious denomination

have been appointed for each county in Ireland since the present Government came into office?

MR. TREVELYAN: The information asked for could not be given for so long a period without an amount of inquiry into the circumstances which would take a very considerable time. Moreover, the result would be misleading, as it is only since the appointment of the present Lord Chancellor that the subject of the religious denomination of magistrates has been given its present prominence. Since the present Lord Chancellor came into Office he has appointed 187 county magistrates. Of these, it is understood that 84 are Roman Catholics, 65 Episcopalian Protestants, 30 Presbyterians, 2 Wesleyans, 1 Jew, and of 5 the religious profession is unknown.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE HIGH SHERIFF OF DROGHEDA.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Mangan, High Sheriff of Drogheda, is still the proprietor of a house where wine, spirits, and cyder are sold contrary to Act of Parliament; whether, if such be the case, it is the intention of the Exchequer to prosecute Mr. Mangan for a deliberate and daily breach of the Law; and, whether the Government intend to allow a person who knowingly and publicly violates the Law to retain the honourable office of High Sheriff?

MR. HEALY: I also beg to ask the Chief Secretary, whether it is the fact that the Government, on receiving a communication from the High Sheriff of Drogheda informing them that he was willing to resign his position, informed him that they had been advised that, on taking the office, his licence had lapsed?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Mangan is still the proprietor of a house where wine and spirits are sold. A Question as to the intention of the Exchequer authorities would more properly have been addressed to the Secretary to the Treasury; but I understand the Commissioners of Inland Revenue consider it more than doubtful whether they could take proceedings for the recovery of the penalty in this case, and they do not intend to do so. As the hon. and gallant Member is aware, the circumstances are quite novel; and there appears to be some variance of opinion as to the exact

legal bearing of the case. Neither the Irish Government nor the Commissioners of Inland Revenue wish to act harshly towards Mr. Mangan, who, no doubt, acted *bona fide*, and was taken by surprise. In regard to his continuance in the office of High Sheriff, the Lord Lieutenant has decided to accept his resignation, and to supersede him; but His Excellency has decided that, owing to the near approach of the Assizes, it would be embarrassing and inconvenient to do so at once. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), the facts are as stated; but I think his Question with regard to the bearing of legal opinion has been already answered.

MR. HEALY: No, Sir; the right hon. Gentleman has directly contradicted the letter of Mr. Robert Hamilton. [*Cries of "Order!"*] I shall put it to the right hon. Gentleman in the form of a Question. Is it not the fact that Sir Robert Hamilton has directed a letter to Mr. Mangan informing him that, owing to his having accepted the office of High Sheriff, his licence lapsed? Upon that ground now, does the Lord Lieutenant propose to supersede him in the office of High Sheriff?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Mangan has resigned.

MR. HEALY: No; he tendered his resignation; but it was not accepted.

MR. TREVELYAN: I should like to answer that Question on Notice. But I should think it not improbable, as a matter of conjecture, that if Mr. Mangan continues in the office of High Sheriff, it may be possible that the Government might then consider itself morally obliged to proceed against him for selling drink without a licence. I think that is possible.

MR. HEALY: How can that be so; for the right hon. Gentleman has stated Mr. Mangan's licence has lapsed?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Mangan is now selling, I presume, beer and spirits without a licence. The Government consider he has been brought into that position not by his own fault, and they will not prosecute him. If they continued him in the office of High Sheriff, it might fairly be argued they would be bound to prosecute him.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, if a common informer chose to lay infor-

mation against Mr. Mangan, would the Excise not be obliged to prosecute him? Has he not lost his licence and the office of High Sheriff by the mistake of the Department?

MR. TREVELYAN: I should prefer to ask legal advice before I answer that Question. I am bound to say that, except on absolute pressure, the Government in Ireland will never prosecute an innocent man.

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin (Colonel King-Harman) whether he would have any objection to become the common informer?

SCOTLAND—THE QUEEN'S PARK, EDINBURGH—PERMISSION TO PLAY FOOTBALL DURING THE AUTUMN AND WINTER MONTHS.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he will take into his early and favourable consideration the unanimous desire of all classes in Edinburgh that permission should be given to the youth of the city to play football in the Queen's Park during the autumn and winter months?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, he should be very glad to give permission for the purpose indicated in the Question, provided the games would not interfere with the use of the Park for other purposes.

EGYPT (INTERNAL AFFAIRS).

MR. VILLIERS STUART asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, as a result of the Conference, Her Majesty's Government will be hampered in any degree in carrying out their reforms in Egypt, including equalization of the land tax; abolition of such petty taxes as are opposed to the principles of political economy, and the protection of the fellahen from the arbitrary and capricious cruelties to which they have hitherto been subject; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will render it clear at the Conference that they regard the establishment of a humane, just, and stable system of administration as an essential condition, without which they cannot withdraw from Egypt either with safety or with honour?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government do not anti-

cipate that they will be hampered by the result of the Conference in regard to the material and moral progress of Egypt. The conditions of the withdrawal of the British troops from Egypt are stated in the Papers recently laid before Parliament.

MR. O'DONNELL: Would the noble Lord state when Her Majesty's Government began to carry out any reforms in Egypt?

MR. GOURLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What measures Her Majesty's Government intend adopting for promoting and completing those reforms in Egypt suggested by Lord Dufferin in his Despatches of the 18th November, 1882; what practical steps are being taken in order to bring about an equitable adjustment of the Land Tax; and, if it is intended to recommend the Egyptian authorities to modify or abolish the octroi, bridge, and river tolls, as recently recommended by Colonel Moncrieff?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am not able to make any general statement, such as I am invited to make by the hon. Member, until some decision has been taken in regard to Egyptian finance, upon which the internal administration of Egypt depends.

MR. HENEAGE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can inform the House what is the acreage of land in Egypt rented directly from the State by the wealthy Foreign landholders and by the Egyptian people respectively; also the amount of land sub-let by the large landholders to the fellahen; whether it is true that, whilst the landholders only pay from eleven to fourteen shillings per acre, they sub-let a large portion of their holdings to the fellahen at from three to five pounds on acre, with the further right to claim their labour free of cost; further, what progress is being made with the Cadastral Survey; and, whether it is a fact that it has already been ascertained in the districts surveyed that the registered acreage is considerably below the real amount of cultivated land?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The ochuri lands, estates held by the rich landowners, amount to about 1,308,000 feddans, a feddan being about an acre. The lands held by the fellahs, or Kharadji lands, comprise 3,406,480

feddans. I have not been able to ascertain how much of the ochuri lands are sub-let. The tax on these lands is, on an average, 52 piastres (10s. 8d.) a feddan, and on the ordinary lands 128 piastres (26s. 3d.) I may point out that there is much valuable information on all these subjects in the Papers laid before Parliament last year—"Egypt," Nos. 6 and 7. Progress has been made with the Cadastral Survey; but, owing to the want of funds, it has not been so rapid as might be desired. There is reason to suppose that the old register of acreage is not correct.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE ROYAL SOUTH DOWN RIFLES.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is a fact that Major Stewart, the Adjutant of the Royal South Down Rifles, at present undergoing their annual drill at Downpatrick, reported Captain Wallace for insubordination; whether the Colonel of the Regiment (Waring) stated to the Adjutant that, if he would press for a court martial, all the officers of the Regiment would resign, and in consequence no trial of Captain Wallace took place; and, whether it is a fact that both officers and men have disputed with Major Stewart as Adjutant of the Regiment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: A telegram has been received from the officer commanding the regimental district in which all the allegations in question are distinctly denied.

INDIA (BENGAL)—MORTALITY IN GAOLS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the continuance of high rates of mortality in a number of Bengal gaols during the last year; whether the average mortality in the Bengal gaols has exceeded 60 per 1,000, being much higher than the average among the general population; whether the death rate in Singhboom Gaol was 102 per 1,000, in Moorshedabad Gaol 107, in Beerbhoom Gaol 111, in Purneah Gaol 114, in Dinagepoor Gaol 117, in Lohardugga Gaol 119, in Bogra Gaol 122, in Burdwan Gaol 142, in Champaran Gaol 145, and in Myensingh Gaol 226 per 1,000; whether he is aware that no local unhealthiness accounts for this excessive mortality,

and that, for instance, while the death rate in Beerbhoom Gaol was 111 per 1,000, it was 24 per 1,000 in the Beerbhoom district, and while the death rate in Burdwan Gaol was 142 per 1,000, in the Burdwan district it was 35 per 1,000; and, that facilities will be given by Government for a thorough examination of the causes of the excessive mortality in Indian gaols?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The Bengal Gaol Report for last year has not yet been received; but the figures given in the Question show that it is based on the Report for 1882, in which year there was a great deal of sickness. As regards every one of the gaols mentioned in the Question, except that at Lohardugga, the Report states expressly that the surrounding district was suffering severely from malarial fever; and as to Beerbhoom, which is expressly referred to as having a mortality higher than that of the district, it is stated in the Report that the mortality of the general population, though far below that of the gaol population, was higher than any on record. Government are not in possession of any trustworthy statistics as to the death rates of the general population; and, therefore, all these comparisons are more or less misleading. Of the deaths which did, in fact, occur in gaol many were caused by ailments not specially induced by residence in gaol. For example, the actual number who died in the Burdwan Gaol in the year was 14; of these five were in bad health when admitted to the prison, and never did any work; and as regards Moorshedabad, the Report shows that of the 17 prisoners who died during the year 13 were in bad health when admitted. The rate of mortality, however, has certainly been very high, and is not clearly accounted for, although the subject has been receiving constant attention. The Secretary of State directed last year that the whole subject should be thoroughly investigated.

In answer to Mr. BUCHANAN,

MR. J. K. CROSS said, that if the hon. Member desired to move for any extracts from the Report he should be happy to furnish them.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS wished to know whether the investigation into the matter had taken place, or would it take place as soon as possible?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Yes, Sir. Perhaps he might be allowed to say that there was considerable misapprehension as to the state of affairs. If they took the whole of the persons who passed through the gaols and the number who died, it did not seem so very excessive as it appeared from the general statistics. Of 94,848 people who passed through the gaol, the deaths were 1,085.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he understood the Under Secretary admitted that the mortality exceeded 60 in 1,000, and in some cases went up to 100, or even 200, in the 1,000. Was it not the case that the wholesale mortality to which he had called attention had been brought for a long succession of years to the notice of the Government, and that, nevertheless, this wholesale assassination of prisoners continued year after year? He wished to know whether the Under Secretary would answer his last Question—what facilities would be given for a full examination of that excessive mortality?

MR. J. K. CROSS said, he had already stated that the Secretary of State last year directed that a thorough investigation should be made; but the Report had not yet been received, and he would rather wait for it before answering that Question.

INDIA (MADRAS)—GOLD MINES IN MYSORE—CONCESSIONS TO BRITISH OFFICIALS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If the further report upon the connection of military and uncovenanted, as well as covenanted, officials in mining speculations, which was promised last year, has been received from the Madras Government?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The Correspondence regarding the alleged participation of British officials in Mysore gold mining transactions has already been laid on the Table, and distributed. No further Report has been promised or received.

INDIA (STATISTICAL ABSTRACT)—EXPORTS OF FOOD GRAINS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he can state or undertake to give a brief Return of the average prices, and the annual exports, of the principal food grains of India, during the past twenty years?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The annual exports of the principal food grains of

India for the last 20 years are given in the Statistical Abstracts relating to British India, and in greater detail in the Indian Trade Returns, both of which are annually presented to Parliament. A table of prices of food grains for past years is now being prepared, which will, I hope, be included in future Statistical Abstracts.

INDIA (PUBLIC HEALTH)—SANITARY PRECAUTIONS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will inquire whether it is true that at Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, the three principal ports of communication with this country, there is a complete absence of the most elementary sanitary precautions; whether it is the case that at Madras the people have been dying of small pox during several months of the present year at the rate of many hundreds a week, and that every kind of abomination is still allowed to accumulate even within a short distance of Government House; whether it is the case that at Bombay there is no kind of epidemic hospital, but that cholera and small pox patients are treated promiscuously in the general hospitals, notwithstanding the constant presence of cholera, and although during three months of last year upwards of a thousand persons died of small pox in Bombay; whether it is the case that in Bombay, even in times of serious epidemics, the only means of disposing of infected sewage is by pumping it into the harbour, crowded with shipping under destination for all parts of Europe; whether it is the case that the Army Sanitary Commission has recently reported that "the increase of cholera in Calcutta is a perfectly legitimate consequence of filth unremoved and accumulating among the dwellings of the people;" and, whether a recent Government resolution has recorded the fact that multitudes of the people of Calcutta are allowed "to live in the midst of filth, to sleep on filth, to bathe in filth, to drink filth, to cook in filth, and wash their clothes in filth?"

MR. J. K. CROSS: It is not true that at Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, there is a complete absence of the most elementary sanitary precautions. In each of the three Presidency towns there is an organized Municipal Health Department, and last year the expenditure of the three Municipalities on sanitation

and sanitary objects was over £225,000, out of a total expenditure of less than £800,000. There has been a bad epidemic of small pox in Madras during the present year; but at the date of the latest Returns received it has greatly diminished. The sanitary state of Madras is not good; but much is being done to improve it. There is no permanent epidemic hospital in Bombay. On the occasion of epidemics isolated temporary hospitals are erected, and burnt when no longer needed. A portion of the sewage of Bombay is discharged into the harbour. Both the Municipality and Government have long been anxious to get rid of this system, and several Commissions have inquired into possible alternatives; but there are great physical difficulties. The Government of Bombay have lately given the Municipality formal notice to discontinue the system. The words cited relate not to the sanitation of the City of Calcutta, but to that of the "Bustees," or Native villages within the municipal limits, which is very unsatisfactory, and regarding which the Government of Bengal considers that the Municipality has not done all that might be done.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, what steps he proposed to take to preserve the people of this Country from the dangers of constant communication with pestilential localities, especially at a time when there was so much contagion abroad?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We rely for defence against cholera, in the first place, upon the efficiency of our customary sanitary operations; especially upon purity of water supplies, and upon the removal of excremental matters and their products. As cholera in England is, for the most part, spread by means of foul water and of infected excrements, these are the most important securities. In the second place, we rely on provision made at our ports for the detection of imported cases of sickness, and for the seclusion of such cases until danger of infection is at an end. And as regards small pox, which is a disease not peculiar to foreign countries, we have confidence in the power of vaccination and re-vaccination to limit its spread. These various measures, properly carried out, afford the best practical protection to this country against the danger of constant com-

munication with pestilential localities abroad.

MR. O'DONNELL asked whether the Secretary to the Local Government Board could state if any special precautions had been taken as to the importation of disease from the Indian ports during the last 12 months?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he had no special information on the subject.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE— CANADIAN CATTLE.

MR. PELL asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether, having regard to the great reduction effected in the number of animals affected with foot-and-mouth disease, the Privy Council do not consider that the time has now come to put in force the provisions of the twenty-ninth section of "The Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878," which empower them to direct the slaughter of animals by particular local authorities, with compensation in all or any of such cases?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, that the local authorities of the four counties in which, so far as was known to the Privy Council, foot-and-mouth disease existed—namely, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Kent—had been asked to forward to the Privy Council without delay the exact number of animals diseased, and of the animals that had been in contact with them up to the present time. When that information was received the Privy Council would be in a better position to judge what course they should take in regard to the slaughter of animals.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether it is true that a cargo of Canadian cattle has arrived at Liverpool suffering from foot-and-mouth disease; and, if so, what steps the Government have taken?

MR. DODSON: I am glad to say that the report referred to is not true.

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—THE ANNUAL LEAVE—THE WAR OFFICE.

MR. ION HAMILTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the case that the Lower Division Clerks in the War Office are allowed much less

annual leave than similar clerks in almost all the other public offices; and, whether it is therefore the intention of the Lords of the Treasury to recommend that a uniform scale of leave, and sick leave, should be fixed for Lower Division Clerks throughout the Service?

MR. COURTNEY: The leave of the staff of an Office is primarily a matter of internal discipline, to be settled by the head of the Department. This Question, therefore, should, perhaps, have been addressed to my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War; but I may say that I understand the War Office lower division clerks have the normal amount of leave. With reference to the latter part of the Question, I have to say that a Treasury Circular will shortly be issued, suggesting that heads of Departments should take united action, with a view of reducing the irregularities that at present exist in this respect.

BOARD OF ADMIRALTY—RETIREMENT OF MR. A. HOUGHTON.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If that Department have enforced the retirement of Mr. Arthur Houghton from the Public Service upon the completion by him of his sixtieth year, and of his fortieth year of service in that office; whether the head of his Department has recommended that Mr. Houghton's active service should be allowed to continue; and, whether, under Paragraph 2 of the Admiralty Memorandum of May 1882, it would not be possible for the Department to continue Mr. Houghton's employment and save burdening the Treasury with an unnecessary pension?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Houghton will be retired on the 30th of June, having exceeded the age of 60 years. The Regulation under which he retires was originally issued by the late Government, and was confirmed in 1882 by the present Board. The paragraph in the Memorandum to which the hon. Member refers states that—

"The only exception will be in the case of officers holding important positions, whose services it may be desirable to prolong, solely with reference to the interests of the Public Service."

The case of Mr. Houghton was most carefully considered, and it was decided

that it did not come within this exception.

POST OFFICE — TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION—PRESS NEWS.

MR. HOULDSWORTH asked the Postmaster General, If he is aware that press news is supplied to the Ellesmere, Russell, Central, and thirteen other clubs in Manchester; whether the Department have power, under the Acts of Parliament, to restrain the members of the said clubs from using telephonic communication for their own private business and affairs between these clubs; and, if he is prepared to withdraw the interdict issued by the Department, so far as applies to telephonic communication between clubs simultaneously supplied with the press news?

MR. FAWCETT: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that I am aware that Press news is supplied to the clubs he mentions, as well as others in Manchester. The question of the legality of telephonic communication between separate clubs is quite distinct from that of the conditions regulating the supply of Press news. I have already indicated what the latter conditions are, in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of the 17th instant; and I feel that it would be inconvenient to enter upon a discussion of the legal position of the Post Office with regard to telephonic communication in reply to a Question.

PUBLIC HEALTH — THE PEEL GROVE BURIAL GROUND.

MR. JOHN HOLLOND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the recent decision of the magistrates in the case of the Peel Grove Burial Ground, Bethnal Green, by which it appears that the bye-laws made by the Metropolitan Board of Works under "The Metropolitan Management Act, 1878," are inoperative to prevent the erection of houses on a burial ground, in which it is stated about 20,000 bodies were buried between 1844 and 1855; and, whether, if the Home Office has no power to prevent the scandal of building upon such ground without the removal of the bodies, the Government will give facilities for the passing of the Disused Burial Grounds Bill, which now stands for Committee?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he understood that the Metropolitan Board had the intention of appealing against the decision in question; and he hoped, therefore, that it would not be conclusive. But if it should be so, he agreed with his hon. Friend that it would be extremely desirable that that great scandal and evil should not continue. He heartily wished success to the Disused Burial Grounds Bill, and was very sorry that it should be blocked from the usual quarter; but if there was a chance of getting on with the Bill it would be of great advantage, especially to the people of London.

LICENSING LAWS (SCOTLAND) — INFRINGEMENT AT DUMFRIES — THE "SHIP" INN.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Law of Scotland peremptorily prohibits the common sale of exciseable liquors by unlicensed persons; if so, whether he is aware that the Ship Inn, Dumfries, is being openly conducted as a public house, although no certificate or licence has been granted to any person in respect of it; and, whether he has instructed or intends to instruct the procurator fiscal to prosecute those concerned, or to intimate to them that if the Ship Inn, while unlicensed, continues to be conducted as a public house, persons buying or selling exciseable liquors therein will be prosecuted?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): It is, of course, unlawful to sell exciseable liquors without a licence. I believe that no person has obtained a licence applicable to the "Ship" Inn at Dumfries; but the Revenue authorities have undertaken not to prosecute in respect of a petition by the Licensing Magistrates, and their promise to grant a licence on the first opportunity and upon a deposit of the duty. The Inland Revenue authorities, who are familiar with the whole circumstances, are the best judges of the propriety of a prosecution; and, having regard to the course which they have taken, I do not intend to give any instructions to the Procurator Fiscal on the subject.

SCOTLAND — ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS IN LEITH.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that a district

in Leith, purchased with the aid of £100,000 borrowed four years since from the Imperial Exchequer under the Artizans' Dwellings (Scotland) Act, has been let by the Leith Corporation to proprietors of shows, rifle ranges, merry-go-rounds, and gambling establishments; whether numerous complaints have been made through the Leith newspapers that the place is a public nuisance; whether the School Board has protested against the application of the area to such purposes, on the ground of the demoralization caused to school-children, whom its attractions induce to play truant and misappropriate their school fees; whether the Town Council have memorialized the Home Secretary to relieve them of the obligation to erect houses for the working classes, and whether they base their application on the allegation that there are a large number of unlet workmen's houses in the burgh; and, whether, considering the purpose for which the £100,000 was advanced, the Leith Corporation cannot be compelled either to feu the ground for the purpose for which it was acquired, or to dispose of it and repay the loan?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): I am informed that the cleared portion of the ground has been till lately let for shows as a temporary source of revenue; but that it has not been let for gambling establishments. Complaints have appeared in the Leith newspapers in regard to the condition of the place, and the School Board have called attention to the shows, and urged their removal. The Town Council have memorialized the Home Secretary to relieve them either wholly or partially of the obligation to erect houses for the working classes, basing their application on the allegation, *inter alia*, that there are many unlet workmen's houses in the burgh. With respect to the last part of the Question, the municipal authorities of Leith say that they cannot at present obtain offers for the ground.

NAVY—DOCKYARDS — POSITION AND PAY OF SHIPWRIGHTS.

MR. HENRY ALLEN asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he can now announce any decision of the Board as to the position and pay of the leading men of shipwrights in Her Majesty's dockyards; and, as to the

Petition of the shipwrights, as a body, for an increase of pay?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Treasury approval has recently been received for the scheme recommended by the Committee on the Constructive Staff of the Navy. The leading men of shipwrights will be designated Inspectors. Their salaries will range from £100 to £150 a-year. In a few days the necessary orders will be issued to the yards. I am not authorized to hold out any hopes of a general increase of pay for the shipwrights.

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is an Instruction to the Civil Service Commission, in order to obviate suspicion of unfairness, that candidates for public appointments should be known to examiners by numbers only; whether it is the fact that persons appointed to examine candidates *viva voce* have asked candidates as to the place at which they have obtained their teaching, and as to the persons who have imparted that teaching to them, and have given the impression to the candidates that they were favourably disposed or the reverse, as the candidate has appeared from some school, or college, or private tutor, and whether this practice of examiners has had the approval of the Commissioners; whether the father of one candidate, in consequence of the treatment which his son received from one of the examiners in the particulars before cited, has complained to the Commissioners, and received an evasive or irrelevant reply; and, whether, in order to obviate a possible impression that the examinations on behalf of the Government are conducted unfairly, he will agree to an inquiry by Royal or Parliamentary Commission into the system of appointing examiners and setting papers at the office in Cannon Row?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. I have referred it to the Civil Service Commissioners, with whom the matter rests; and they inform me, with reference to the first Question of my hon. Friend, that they do not think it would be expedient or practically possible to use numbers in all their examinations; but that they do so in most of the impor-

tant competitions, including such competitions, as that to which the next Question refers. As to the second Question, the Commissioners state that it has come to their knowledge that at a recent *viva voce* examination an examiner questioned some of the candidates as to the places at which and the persons by whom they had been taught; but the Commissioners have satisfied themselves by inquiry that whatever impression the candidates may have formed, the examiner was, in fact, in no way favourably disposed to them or the reverse in consequence to their replies on these points. The Commissioners do not approve of interrogating candidates in the manner described, and they have taken steps to prevent any repetition of the occurrence. As to the third Question, the Commissioners state that the father of one of these candidates complained to them on the subject, and requested that his son might be re-examined by another examiner. As the Commissioners, on inquiry into the matter, were satisfied that no injustice had been done to him, they did not consider that there was any ground for holding such re-examination, and the father was informed accordingly. Under these circumstances, I see no occasion for any further inquiry.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—AFFAIRS IN ZULULAND.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will give a day for discussion upon the state of affairs in Zululand? He would remind the right hon. Gentleman of the great gravity and importance of the question, which was, indeed, only second to that of Egypt. He hoped, therefore, that the Prime Minister would be able to give him a favourable answer.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not at all question that this subject deserves the attention of the House; but I am sorry to say, and I think the hon. Baronet need not be surprised, that in the present state of Public Business it is not in my power to place at his disposal any day.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: Then I must take the earliest opportunity of bringing the question forward.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN).

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in

making the Agreement with France that the Military Occupation of Egypt by England should be continued till the 1st of January 1888, any decision had been come to by Her Majesty's Government as to the retention or abandonment, total or partial, of the Soudan?

MR. GLADSTONE: The question of the Soudan has never been touched upon or treated in the preliminary communications with France. They refer only to the territory of Egypt Proper, and the Soudan is not included in that territory.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the Question, whether any decision has been come to by Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: With respect to the decision of Her Majesty's Government, I thought it was clear and a matter of notoriety that the advice pressed upon the Government of Egypt was all in favour of the evacuation of the Soudan.

EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any of the financial proposals about to be submitted to the Conference are such as could not be carried into effect without the concurrence of the House of Commons; and, if so, whether he will not at least make the House acquainted with such portion of the proposals before its freedom of action is hampered by the meeting of the Conference?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid that I cannot vary from the decision at which the Government have arrived under the circumstances of the course; but we wish to take every care, as far as depends upon us, that there shall be no invasion of the freedom of action of this House. We cannot, however, guarantee the freedom of action of the House against the proceedings of other parties.

MR. GIBSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Have any communications been made by Her Majesty's Government to the French Government as to the nature, character, or extent of the financial proposals to be submitted to the Conference; at what dates and between whom did such communications take place; is the result of any such communications embodied in any writing official or non-official in the possession of Her Majesty's Government; and, has

the fact of such communications been conveyed to any of the other Powers?

MR. GLADSTONE: The full proposals of the Government in regard to finance were communicated confidentially to the Powers, and also to the Porte, on Tuesday last. Previous to that time there were certain informal communications of a partial character; but no engagement of any kind has been taken by this country or given.

MR. GIBSON: Were the financial proposals made to France before they were made to the other Powers?

MR. GLADSTONE: I can add nothing to what I have said. They were partial communications; but they were not confined to any single Power, nor do they involve any engagement on one side or the other.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will undertake that the results of the consultation with the Powers on the communications which have passed between England and France will be communicated to the House, so soon as they are received by Her Majesty's Government, whether before or during the sittings of the Conference, if it should assemble? He wished further to ask the right hon. Gentleman, in reference to this Question, whether it was in his recollection that he stated on the 27th of May—

"We undertake and engage that in the event of any common understanding with France in consultation with the Powers, and of any result following those communications, all the results and the whole conclusion shall be presented to Parliament before the Conference meets;"

and further, on being pressed by his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) later on on the same subject, he said—

"We have spoken, not of the arrangement with France, but of laying the arrangement with the Powers before the House at a date anterior to the Conference."

MR. GLADSTONE: Undoubtedly we have deemed it our duty to lay before the House all arrangements that we have been able to make, and all the results at which we have arrived. The entire result is laid before the House, so far as we have been able to arrive at it. With respect to the consultation with the Powers, we have no authority to define a limited time within which the replies shall be made, and replies have not been made by the Powers

which could form the subject of communication to this House. I think this also applies to the Question of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). The question seems to be whether we intend to postpone the invitation for the meeting of the Conference until the Powers have given replies with regard to the preliminary communications with France. We have no such intention, and one of the most conclusive reasons against such intention is that the financial condition of Egypt does not admit of it.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH: Can the right hon. Gentleman inform us whether he has received answers from any of the Powers; and, if so, from which?

MR. GLADSTONE: I could not give any formal answer to that Question without Notice; but I think I am correct in saying that such answers as we have received are to the effect that no objection has been taken to the arrangement; but the final judgment is reserved to a later stage of the proceedings. I have no right to say so; but I think it very possible that the Powers may not give such final judgment until they have some knowledge of the proposals to be laid before the Conference.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Will the right hon. Gentleman give his own view of what he meant when he said—

"We shall lay before the House the whole conclusion at which we have arrived after consultation with the Powers."

MR. GLADSTONE: "After consulting with the Powers" is exactly what we have done. We have consulted the Powers. We are not in possession of answers from them of a definitive character, and such as we could communicate to the House.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Have all the Powers as yet agreed to attend the Conference?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, on May the 27th, he gave a pledge to the House to the effect that Her Majesty's Government would, under the contingency which has since arisen of a common understanding with France, present the whole conclusions at which they arrived to Parliament before the meeting of the Conference; whether an important portion of such conclusions

is the imposing of certain pecuniary liabilities upon Great Britain with regard to Egypt; and, whether he is now prepared to redeem the pledge he then gave.

MR. GLADSTONE: The important part of this Question is in the second paragraph. In reference to that I can only say it has not entered into the arrangements that have been made.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Am I right in supposing that no conclusion has been arrived at with regard to pecuniary liabilities?

MR. GLADSTONE: I thought I had made it clear before by previous answers that the whole subject had been reserved for the decision of the Conference.

Subsequently,

MR. GLADSTONE explained that when he had stated that the Powers had accepted the invitation to the Conference he had not included the Porte, which was not generally included in the term "the Powers;" but, in order to prevent any misunderstanding, he ought to say that the Porte would attend the Conference, though it was doubtful whether it would have a Representative present on the first day.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in 1855, he did not join with Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Ricardo, Mr. Laing, and other members of the Tory Party and of the Radical Party, in strong opposition to the proposals of Lord Palmerston, with reference to a guarantee of a Turkish Loan of £5,000,000; whether Lord Palmerston only succeeded in defeating the opposition of the First Lord of the Treasury by a majority of three; whether the First Lord of the Treasury is correctly reported by *Hansard* as having used the following words, in his speech against the Second Reading of the Bill:—

"It is the prerogative of the Crown, under the advice of the Ministers, to determine the terms of these Conventions, but I am not to be told that the functions of this House, with regard to entailing charges on the people, are to be set at naught by this doctrine of prerogative;"

and, if the First Lord of the Treasury, in any proposals he may make with regard to Egyptian Finance, will adhere to the doctrines and principles with regard to guarantees of loans laid down

by him generally in opposition to Lord Palmerston in 1855, and particularly in the passage quoted above.

MR. GLADSTONE: This Question is made up of certain matters of public notoriety and public record. I hope the noble Lord will forgive me if I do not go over all these matters to ascertain who did and who did not support a certain Motion, or by what numbers it was carried; but as to whether I am correctly reported, I cannot say whether these are the exact words I used, but certainly they contain extremely sound doctrine, and I could not express it better if I attempted to do so. I am glad to find from the Question of the noble Lord that he concurs in that doctrine. I have seen this Question for the first time this morning, and I have not really had the time to refer to my speech, as I have been engaged in attendance upon Her Majesty at Windsor.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to find a few moments?

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord is asking me to perform a most disagreeable task. But out of respect to the noble Lord, and to acknowledge the compliment he has paid me in rescuing from the dust of oblivion my old speeches, I will endeavour to make the reference as soon as I can.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, on the 15th August 1882, the Earl of Dufferin, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and Plenipotentiary at the Conference then being held, wrote to Lord Granville in the following terms:—

"I think it advisable to put on record that, when complying with your Lordship's instructions to acquiesce in the Italian proposal relative to the temporary organisation of a maritime police in the Suez Canal, I was careful to make it perfectly clear to the Conference that the arrangements under discussion did not in any sense or degree imply the neutralisation of the Canal, which was a principle to which the British Government would never subscribe. All the Representatives fully recognised the distinction, and the Russian Representative repudiated the idea of even hinting at such a proposition;"

whether Lord Granville, on the 29th August 1882, wrote to the Earl of Dufferin as follows:—

"I have received your Excellency's Despatch of the 15th instant, and, in reply, I have to

state that Her Majesty's Government approve of your having explained to the Conference that their acquiescence in the Italian proposal for the temporary organisation of a maritime police in the Suez Canal did not in any sense imply an agreement on their part to the neutralisation of the Canal;"

and, what circumstances have occurred to alter the policy of Her Majesty's Government to such an extent, that a solemn declaration made by the Representative of Great Britain to the Powers of Europe assembled in Conference in 1882 is repudiated in a private agreement made between Her Majesty's Government and France in 1884?

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord has, perhaps, been misled by some ambiguity as to the sense in which the term was employed. Her Majesty's Government did come to the conclusion that what is commonly called the neutralization of the Suez Canal was not expedient. The other day I stated—I am not sure that I applied the word neutralization to the Suez Canal—that there would be a plan of neutralization in Egypt, and that the Suez Canal would be embraced within that plan; but to prevent any possibility of mistake I said that the plan of neutralization of Egypt would be founded generally, so far as the case would admit, on the principles applied to the case of Belgium, and that the plan as regarded the Suez Canal would be founded on the principles which were, I think, very clearly and distinctly set out in a despatch of Lord Granville, dated January 3, 1883. There is no change in the view of Her Majesty's Government since that time.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the statement made by Her Majesty's Government to the Government of the Porte, when inviting Turkey to the Conference, that financial questions would only be considered thereat, the proposal made by Her Majesty's Government to that of France, that the Military Occupation of Egypt by England should be continued till January 1888, was communicated to Turkey either before or at the time of making it?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; the statement of arrangement with France was communicated to Turkey even before the time of making it. The arrangement was communicated to Turkey as well as to the other Powers.

Lord Randolph Churchill

MR. CHAPLIN said, his Question had been anticipated by an impromptu Question put to the Prime Minister by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith); but he wished a reply to the last paragraph — Whether the engagement referred to the laying of an arrangement with the Powers, and not to the laying of an arrangement with France, before the House, at a date anterior to the Conference; whether the replies from the Powers who had been consulted had been received; and, if they were not received before the date fixed for the meeting of the Conference on Saturday next, how he proposed to fulfil his engagement to Parliament unless the meeting of the Conference was postponed?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; I consider we are bound, as soon as any arrangement with the Powers is made, to make that arrangement known to Parliament. We have not made it known now because it has not been concluded. We have no right to say that definitive answers will be received until the Powers are aware of the whole of the propositions we intend to make. Then, the hon. Member asks whether we are to propose that the Conference should be postponed. I do not consider that we have ever made an engagement to postpone the meeting of the Conference for the purpose of receiving these replies. I have the gravest doubts whether we could obtain those replies before the meeting of the Conference.

MR. CHAPLIN: Is it not the case that the right hon. Gentleman undertook on the part of the Government, after several consultations had been held with the Powers, to place the result of those consultations before the House of Commons at a date anterior to the holding of the Conference?

MR. GLADSTONE: As far as regards our consulting with the Powers, that is certainly true. We have made known our consultations to the House; but, as far as regards the answers from the Powers, we never made any engagement.

MR. CHAPLIN: How can you fulfil your engagement to place them before the House before the meeting of the Conference?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have made no engagement at all to give those answers

before the meeting of the Conference, nor was it in my power to make any such engagement. The Conference was invited for the purpose of considering urgent financial questions connected with Egypt; and it would not have been tolerated that we should postpone such a meeting until we had the answers of the Powers with regard to our communications with France.

MR. CHAPLIN: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, if he is correctly reported to have used these words—

“ We have spoken not of laying the arrangement with France, but of laying the arrangement with the Powers before the House at a date anterior to the Conference; ”

and I wish to know how the Prime Minister reconciles his language on that occasion with the course he has taken?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot say, on a challenge across the floor of the House, whether the words quoted by the hon. Member are precisely reported or not. I should require to have an opportunity of comparing the different reports. We have consulted the Powers on this subject; and, undoubtedly, I am under the belief that I conveyed to the House that that which we contemplated would ultimately come to be an arrangement with the Powers, and not with France alone.

MR. CHAPLIN: I beg to give Notice that I shall ask a further Question on the subject; and I shall give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of verifying the reports of his speech.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, whether the engagements made with the Powers will be made dependent upon the decision of the House; and whether the Powers will be told that the engagement will not be final or conclusive until it has been submitted to the House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have said, I think many times, that the whole of the preliminary engagements and the plans, which may be accepted and adopted by the Conference, will ultimately depend upon the vote of Parliament.

MR. PULESTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean by Parliament both Houses of Parliament?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think I need not go further than to say that it will be dependent upon the vote of Parliament. I wish to qualify what I said in reference to a reply which I gave a short time ago to a Question of the hon. Mem-

ber for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) as to the Porte's accepting the Conference. What I said was about the acceptance of the Porte. It is what we have reason to believe; but it has not been notified to us in any formal or official manner.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, whether the first meeting of the Conference will be on Saturday?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; it will.

EGYPT (THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE) — VOTE OF CENSURE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What facilities he will afford to the Member for Portsmouth for bringing forward the Motion of which he has given Notice?

MR. GLADSTONE: I assume that we shall dispose at once of the third reading of the Franchise Bill; and upon that assumption we shall be prepared to place Monday at the disposal of the hon. Gentleman. We have anticipated that, under the circumstances of the case, the House would certainly not be satisfied with conducting a debate of that kind except from day to day.

EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE—SPEECH OF M. FERRY.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government accept the interpretation as to the new powers of the Caisse Internationale which the French Prime Minister attributes to it, and especially that

"It is expressly stipulated that the Budget shall be submitted to the Public Debt Commission in time to allow it to make observations, which will be considered; and it will thus exercise a powerful influence over Egyptian finances. Comparing this institution with the old one, which had to be abandoned, we may say that the Public Debt Commission will have nearly all the powers of the old Control except the right of attending Cabinet Councils?"

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member apparently quotes from an authentic and official report of M. Jules Ferry's speech, giving a very clear, able, and comprehensive account of the whole arrangements relating to the Dual Control and to the international authority which is to be attached to the Commission of the Caisse. The hon. Gentleman has

selected a single passage of that speech of M. Jules Ferry, and has asked me to pronounce an opinion upon it. I decline to do so. It would be very hard indeed if the Parliament of England were supposed to be bound by every explanatory expression used by the Minister of France, as it would be very hard if the Chamber of Deputies in France were to put to M. Jules Ferry questions founded on partial extracts of statements of mine. Having said that, I should say that, in point of fact, this passage of M. Jules Ferry's speech is strictly correct; and the whole discussion by him of the subject of the international arrangements is full, clear, able, and true, and I have no fault to find with it at all.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

MR. RITCHIE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether the Government seriously contemplate proceeding with the London Government Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE: In the circumstances in which we are now, with a debate such as that anticipated on Monday, I cannot give any answer as to the date of proceeding with this Bill or with other matters, however important they may be. The hon. Gentleman will be entitled to put a Question to me on another day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—[BILL 260.]

(Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate.)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

MR. GLADSTONE: I rise, Sir, to move the third reading of this Bill, and, in so doing, I shall make a very short explanatory statement. The House is aware that many ominous declarations have been made or indications given as to the future fate of this Bill both in the House and outside of the House, sometimes by persons of great importance. I have refrained advisedly, and so have my Colleagues, I believe without exception, from referring to those declarations and indications. Our opinion is that with regard to quarrels and collisions, if they are to arise, the proper rules applicable to the case are contained

in those few and well-known words of Shakespeare—

“Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear't, that th' opposed may beware of thee.”

I should have wished, Sir, to preserve this silence to the end; but some declarations made in this House have been so explicit that I do not feel authorized so to preserve it. One of those declarations was from an hon. Member, who said that he would not affect to deny that great dangers overhung this Bill; and he evidently spoke on the basis of something more than a mere private opinion, as, indeed, he was entitled so to speak. Another right hon. Gentleman said in the last few days that no practical man believed that this Bill had the ghost of a chance. These are declarations which it is not possible for me wholly to pass by. I shall not regard these statements as declarations founded upon a sound estimate of the facts. I think that they impute to the wisdom of another branch of the Legislature probable conduct such as it is not, in my opinion, honourable to that House to impute. [“Oh, oh!”] That is my opinion. I have no doubt that the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners) thinks, on the other hand, that that which the Opposition has not been able to attain in this House ought to be attained by the sheer force of a majority elsewhere, nor do I for a moment complain of his entertaining that opinion; but I am only saying I do not attach weight to these declarations, while I admit them to be made and to call for some notice on my part. As I understand, the plea on which it is urged that we may expect this Bill to be dealt with in such a manner as to put an end to its existence is that it is an incomplete Bill. Upon the subject of the severance of redistribution from the franchise I wish only to say these few and very brief words. A complete Bill has never been presented to Parliament upon any occasion; it has always been incomplete, either with respect to the severance of enfranchisement from redistribution—and many Franchise Bills have been presented without redistribution—or in the sense of dealing only with one of the three countries. Now, Sir, if we had proceeded on this occasion by excluding from our Bill the cases of Scotland and Ireland, I ask what sort of aspect would

such a measure have been deemed to wear, and truly would have worn, in the face of the people of the Sister Isle? It would have been deemed, I am afraid, to bear the character not only of an intention to exclude Ireland from the benefits of such a measure, but of a fraudulent concealment of the solemn reasons for that exclusion. It appeared to us absolutely essential that the three countries should be dealt with as one. With regard to the Franchise Bill itself, and with regard to the charge of Gentlemen opposite that we ought to have united redistribution with it, how do we stand? It will, I think, be admitted alike by foes and friends that we have sacrificed everything we could for the purpose of putting this Bill forward; we have allowed nothing, so far as our choice and discretion went, to interfere with it, and yet here we are with a simple Franchise Bill approaching the final period of the measure upon the 26th of June. I ask, what would have been our condition if, together with a Franchise Bill, admitted to be comparatively simple, so far as we can understand from the case of 1832—I say, if we can only bring a Franchise Bill of the simplest character to its final issue in this House on the 26th of June, what would have happened to this measure if it had included the whole of the difficult and complex matters connected with the subject of redistribution. I am bound to say that in urging this plea I do not stand alone upon my own authority. Only a few days ago a conversation took place in this House with respect to what is to happen next year when we bring in a Redistribution Bill, to which we are pledged, as far as Parliamentary pledges can be given. [“Oh, oh!”] Someone sneers at that. What I mean is this—that it is absolutely impossible, amidst the contingencies of human affairs, to say what sudden, urgent questions of emergency may arise. But these contingencies are extremely rare, and the House has a right to know our intentions with regard to redistribution. That assurance from us was accepted by the House, and the result of it was embodied in the clause of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which fixed the date for the commencement of the operation of the Bill, in accordance with assurances we have given that we pro-

pose to deal with redistribution during the next Session. And I think, when an assurance of that kind is given, it amounts to a covenant between the Government and the House. But, Sir, when, notwithstanding that contingency was taken into view, and when the topics under discussion happened to lead to the question of the time a Redistribution Bill would take, one Gentleman, extremely well acquainted with Parliamentary procedure, treated with ridicule the idea that the Redistribution Bill should receive the Royal Assent by the 31st of July; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) spoke in less detail, but substantially and exactly in the same sense. Now, I want to know, is it possible for the Government to have a more complete and conclusive vindication of the course they have taken in separating the franchise from redistribution than this—that with the simplest Franchise Bill ever submitted to Parliament we have reached the 26th of June before coming to the third reading; and when redistribution only is spoken of on the opposite side of the House, the proposition is treated with ridicule that the Redistribution Bill should receive the Royal Assent by the end of July. I repeat, as the occasion seems to require it, that for us to have united redistribution and the franchise in the same measure would have been a fraud upon the House and the country; because we not only thought—we knew from our Parliamentary experience that in the present state of Business in the House, and with the habits of discussion and of treatment of Business which now prevail—it would be an impossibility, and we might as well spare ourselves the trouble of having such a Bill introduced. So much for redistribution. With respect to the threats held out, I wish principally to point out that we have acted suitably to those words of Shakespeare—"Beware of entrance to a quarrel." If there was anything suggested to us not incompatible with the objects we had in view, we did not refuse it, for the sake of avoiding such a quarrel, which I should regard as a calamity grievous to the country, bringing into question the Parliamentary institutions under which we have lived so long—a conflict, the results of which, if there are in the country men of revolutionary opinions,

might have been acceptable to such men, but which it was our solemn duty to use every reasonable means to avoid. For that reason, as I contend—I am afraid I shall shock the right hon. Gentleman whose head, I think, I already see expressing dissent—every question that came up, in what we thought the spirit most likely to mitigate resistance, and to obviate a conflict between the Houses of the Legislature. It is true, as I have said, that no word of acknowledgment of this has been uttered; but, on the other hand, we have been told that this is a Bill to insure the permanent existence of a Liberal Government. Is that an equitable or a liberal mode of looking at public questions? Is it a rational mode? Whom are we asking Parliament to enfranchise? Why, Sir, taking England and Scotland—I will not speak of Ireland, because the case is separate—the largest enfranchisement about to be made, as we think, and as you must admit, is the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourers. Is that a proceeding taken by the Government which has in view nothing but the perpetuation of its own Ministerial power? Is there any class in the country which is so liable to influence from above—I do not mean illegitimate influences, but call them, if you like, legitimate and genial influences—is there any class so liable to this influence as the agricultural labourers of this country? Why, Sir, nothing but the greatest misconduct of those over them ever could separate the agricultural labourers from the farmers, the landlords, and the clergy; and yet the Bill which we are bringing in, and which seeks to enfranchise this great mass of men immediately associated with the farmers, landlords, and clergymen, who are the bases of the Conservative power of this country, does not for one moment shield us from the charge of the Opposition that we are seeking to enfranchise those who are, more than any other, our political opponents, for the purpose of perpetuating our own power. Sir, I humbly and respectfully say that that is not a rational argument. Then, what are we to say as to the service franchise? Does that look very like the action of a Government seeking to perpetuate its own power? Are the gamekeepers, the gardeners, the coachmen, who are chiefly, certainly very much under influence, not illegitimate, but,

perhaps, legitimate—are those generally persons who are in the service of Liberals, or are they not, in the enormous majority of cases, in the service of our opponents? This was not forced upon us. We introduced it into the Bill of our own accord, and yet, when we have seized every opportunity of disarming irrational as well as illiberal opposition, we have entirely failed in our object. But, Sir, it has been taken note of in the country. The facts cannot be altered that wherever we had a question to consider in which, upon the one hand, it would have been open to us with the certain support of the great mass of Liberal opinion to have taken a more advanced course, or where we had reasonable hope of avoiding serious collisions by taking a course of great moderation, we have determined upon taking the moderate course, and we have run the risk of offending for the moment, or at all events of raising questions in the minds of many of our most generous supporters; but we have done it all through, as, for instance, in the introduction of the service franchise and in the preservation, without any limitation except the provision against the illegitimate creation of property votes, of the mass of property votes which already exist. And so, when it was suggested to us, partly on practical grounds, by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and partly on political grounds, that the introduction of a date for the commencement of the Bill would mitigate its character, and might tend to draw towards us the more moderate of its opponents, we threw no difficulty in the way. We were willing there, again, at the risk of being misunderstood by some of our most ardent and sincere supporters, for the sake of attaining that object which I have described—namely, that we would beware of entrance to a quarrel. I think we have given sufficient evidence of our desire to avoid a quarrel. I am bound to say that I hold the question of this evidence to be matter of the greatest importance, because even the remote probability of a conflict between the two Houses upon such a question as this I take to be the most serious prospect that has been opened during my recollection since the crisis of the Corn Laws was opened to the view of Parliament. I will not undertake to put a limit to the mischiefs and the difficulties which might result.

Most grave I am confident—too painfully confident—they will be. But what the ultimate issue of it will be I have not a doubt. That the duty of preventing it by every reasonable means was the most sacred duty incumbent upon us on this occasion, next to the great business of enfranchising a vast mass of the population, I do not doubt; and the second duty, as well as the first of our obligations, which we have carefully and strenuously endeavoured to fulfil. I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read the third time.”—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE and Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL rose together, but there being cries for the former the latter gave way.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I was anxious to follow the right hon. Gentleman after the speech—the extraordinary speech—he has just made. That speech was not a speech upon the merits or the demerits of the Franchise Bill, which we are now asked to read a third time—it was a speech upon the question whether the House of Lords is any longer to form a part of the Legislature of this country. It was a speech upon the question whether the House of Lords is to be at liberty to examine, and to vote upon, and to take any part in the legislation which affects the Constitution of the country, or whether the House of Lords is bound, at the will of a majority of the House of Commons, or something even worse than that, at the will of an imperious Minister, to listen to threats, and, affected by those threats, to refuse to do the duty which lies upon them. I submit that it is not for us to discuss here what course the House of Lords may think it right to take upon any measure which comes up from the House of Commons, and has to be examined by that Assembly; but when the right hon. Gentleman comes forward, and in a most theatrical manner makes a declaration, the meaning of which it is impossible to misunderstand, he is raising an issue which the country must take care to notice, perhaps in a manner different from that which he expects. We have had great reason to question the wisdom and the propriety of the course which the Government have adopted in the matter of

this Franchise Bill. We have had still greater reason to distrust a measure which has been brought forward, as this has been, as an obviously and confessedly incomplete part of a most important measure. I have from time to time had occasion to ask why we should be expected to pass a Bill for the extension of the franchise without dealing with the question of redistribution; and the answers which I have received, the arguments which have been raised, and the indications which have been given, have convinced me that a much larger question is at issue than the mere question whether it is convenient to take these measures together or separately. It has convinced me that we have never been informed, not only of the minute details of the plan of the Government, but of the real meaning and object of the great Constitutional change we have been invited to undertake. We have never been told what is the point at which the Government are driving. If it is the mere extending of the franchise to a large number of persons, even to so many as 2,000,000 of persons, that is a very large question in itself; but that is by no means the whole question before us. We have to consider what is the intention of the Government; is it intended to displace and altogether dislocate the division of power in this country; and, if so, how, and upon what principle, and with what object is that dislocation intended? Upon this point we have never had any information whatever—I mean any authoritative information—given in this House, either in connection with or in support of this Bill. We have had information out-of-doors, Sir, and of a kind sufficiently alarming. I need not dwell now upon the declarations which we were in the habit of referring to some weeks ago, which plainly told us that this measure was merely the prelude to more important and serious changes in the reorganization and the reconstitution of our electoral system, pointing, as we were told, to manhood suffrage, equal electoral districts, and the payment of Members of this House. All these things were kept dangling before the eyes of the multitude, and before audiences who were pleased to listen to them, and from time to time they have cropped up in this House; but they were not brought prominently before us.

What we have always said was that it was our duty to our country to inquire what the plan and what the scheme of the Government was, that we might judge of it as a whole before we could pronounce an opinion upon it. What we said when this measure was first brought forward, and when my noble Friend (Lord John Manners) moved an Amendment upon the second reading, was—"We do not ask you to put into one measure the whole of your redistribution scheme—that may or may not be a convenient method of proceeding; but we ask you to disclose your scheme, and to disclose it in such a form that we may have your whole scheme before us." Well, I say we have never had that put before us, and we have never known what is to be done. What we have every reason to fear is that an enormous addition is to be made to the constituencies, that no rearrangement is to be relied upon to be made as to the allocation of the power so introduced into the Constitution, but that those 2,000,000 of capable voters, whoever they may be—and we cannot distinguish the case of Ireland, as the right hon. Gentleman seems to wish to do, from the case of Scotland—are to be turned loose upon your electoral system, and are to have a large voice in the management and the manipulation of that most difficult and troublesome question—the rearrangement of the electoral system. I know that we are told that the Government hope to bring a measure forward during the existence of the present Parliament; but I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will not take it as a personal reflection upon himself or his Colleagues if we say that we attach only a moderate value to that promise. We do not doubt that they intend to do it; but the right hon. Gentleman knows—and he has indicated it in his speech just now—as well as we do, that that is a matter over which he and his Colleagues can have no such absolute certainty as to insure us from the consequences of a failure of that intention. What position are we to be in if we pledge ourselves and the country to this measure of the extension of the franchise? Now, Sir, I say that the House of Lords is peculiarly bound to look into questions of this sort, and to demand that a case should be made out in favour of the proposed change. I do not presume to anticipate what the opinions of the House

of Lords in reference to this Bill may be; but I do not think that they should be regarded as setting themselves against either the feelings of the people or against the feelings of this House if they demanded that fuller explanations should be given, that more time should be taken for consideration, and that a more perfect scheme should be presented to them to form their judgment upon. I say that those who deny that right to the House of Lords are striking a blow at the Constitution of the country of which I do not believe the people of the country will approve. There is a sort of cool assumption on the part of hon. Members opposite, or of some of their supporters out-of-doors, that in this matter the majority of the House of Commons are speaking in the name and on behalf of the whole of the people of England. I utterly deny that they have any right to assume that position. Where is the evidence on which it is based? When we ask where is the evidence that the people of this country desire such a measure, we always meet with the taunt—"Oh, you will not be satisfied with anything until you see the people coming in a crowd to pull down the Park railings." That is not at all the view which we take. We say, where is the evidence that they desire it? Where are the Petitions in its favour? Has anybody taken the trouble to look at the Petitions? He will see that they are but few. They are not nearly so many as the Petitions presented in favour of female suffrage. If anyone looks into the statistics relating to the female suffrage question, he will find that when you talk about a mandate from the people, there is quite as much a mandate in that case as in this. How is it you are to find out what public opinion is with regard to this Bill if it is not by your elections? This measure, we are told, is a measure dealing with the county franchise. It so happens that since it was introduced we have had five county elections. The first election was for South Lincolnshire, which has a population of 122,000 and 11,000 voters. There was no contest. That does not seem to imply any great interest or keenness for this enfranchisement. In West Somerset the population is 116,000 and the number of voters 9,000, and the majority was 762. In Cambridgeshire the majority was 903. In South Hants,

where the election took place when our discussions were far advanced, the majority was 1,437, and in Mid Surrey the majority was 2,796. There is, therefore, a total population of 817,000, with 66,000 voters, in five constituencies, in each of which the Conservative candidate was carried by a large majority. This is a question of evidence; and I venture to say that whatever class of evidence you give you will find very much the same result—that is to say, that the people are perfectly prepared to examine and discuss the question, and desire to see an extension of the suffrage, but have not bound themselves to follow your plans, though they are perfectly content, and naturally desire that those plans should be fairly discussed, fairly examined, and thoroughly understood before they are brought into operation. I must say that on one occasion the right hon. Gentleman gave some very excellent opinions of his own as to the principles on which redistribution should proceed. But he has given us no assurance whatever that the redistribution will be conducted upon what I may call Constitutional principles. There were very ominous words which fell from the right hon. Gentleman, even in his opening speech—namely, where he spoke as to the great strength which was imparted to the Constitution by the mere admission of large numbers. So far as we can see, the principle of numbers is the only principle upon which this Bill is founded. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman went so far, in speaking of the great strength of numbers, as to import a curious illustration from America, in which he said that the Government of America and the American people would never have got through their great struggle had it not been for the enormous basis upon which their Constitution rested—that is to say, he pointed to universal suffrage, or something like it, as the goal to which his aspirations were directed. Whatever may be the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman, we have no kind of security as to the conduct which his Colleagues will pursue when we come to the redistribution question next year. What will then be the value of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman at the time he introduced the Bill? He gave us then an interesting account as to the principles on which redistribution should be carried out. He told us a great many

things extremely interesting, with which in the abstract we were prepared to agree. What will be the value of that next year? How far will his Colleagues have advanced by that time? What will be the state of mind of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War? Will he advance as rapidly as he has done in recent years? A few years ago, when the noble Lord was in Opposition, he told us on the Bill brought forward by the present Chief Secretary that it was a fatal fault in it that it separated redistribution from extension of the franchise. He has entirely got over that now, and over a good many other stages too, which I only refer to as showing that the mind of the noble Lord is a very open mind. Then, we are promised a redistribution scheme. That is, I confess, cold comfort, until we get some idea of what that redistribution scheme is to be. My confidence in a good redistribution scheme is very much shaken by all I have seen and observed. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has made a reference to the clause inserted upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and spoken of that clause as if it were a great concession. If that is the right hon. Gentleman's idea of concession, I am afraid that we have very little to expect. The right hon. Gentleman has assented to a clause which, I believe, gives us nothing whatever, but which may do a great deal of harm by deluding people into the belief that it does some good. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton has simply put in a clause that which, even without the clause, would be almost absolutely certain—namely, that the Bill shall not come into operation until the 1st of January, 1885. I do not attach the smallest value to that. Those who take any comfort to themselves from that have deluded themselves with vain hopes. I do not, Sir, desire to occupy the time of the House, or that time should be occupied on this last stage of the Bill, when it is about to pass from us, by lengthened speeches; nor do I mean to challenge any Division on the subject. There is no question whatever that we are powerless in the hands of Ministers in regard to any influence that we can bring to bear upon them. I repeat that if the threats of the right hon. Gentleman against the House of Lords are to be held as representing the opinions of

his Colleagues, or the opinions of the independent Party in this House, it is the most serious declaration I ever heard—the most serious declaration that a Minister of the Crown ever made, or that, I venture to say, this House ever heard. I can only hope that the right hon. Gentleman will in course of time learn a little more wisdom, a little more discretion, and a little more respect for the principles of the Constitution.

MR. GOSCHEN: Sir, I hope I shall be allowed a very few sentences upon the final stage of this Bill in this House before it passes to that stormy tide which seems to await it in "another place." I have felt it my duty to oppose this Bill at every preceding stage. I have opposed it, not on the ground of its being inopportune at this particular moment, not solely on the ground of its being an incomplete measure; but I have opposed it frankly because I was against what appeared to me to be the vital principle of the Bill—the extension of the franchise to 2,000,000 of voters. But I must frankly acknowledge that I have not seen any political forces, inside or outside the House, which associated themselves with that opposition. We are now at the third reading of the Bill. The Leader of the Opposition has spoken upon it, and not by a single word has he opposed, in the name of his Party, the vital principle which underlies the Bill. The Conservatives in this House, as a Party—I think they will acknowledge it themselves—have not opposed the principle of the extension of household suffrage to the counties. Here and there, there may have been an isolated voice which has made an individual protest; but the Conservative Party in this House have not opposed the principle of this measure. Most of the Conservative Leaders who have spoken outside the House have taken a similar course, and they have attempted to make it plain that any opposition they might offer was to this particular measure, and that it must not be understood that it was due to any reluctance to the extension of household suffrage to the counties. The Leader of the Opposition has spoken to-day of certain elections which have taken place, and he called that evidence of the reluctance of the counties—or of a certain indifference, I ought rather to say—on the part of the coun-

ties, about the extension of the borough franchise to them. I have been associated, more or less, with hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite in opposing this Bill; and I may claim, therefore, to be an impartial witness when I say that I cannot find any evidence of indifference to the Bill on the part of the unenfranchised classes in the fact that the enfranchised class in the counties do not support a measure which may make them divide that franchise with the unenfranchised. But there is a more serious point. Is it not the fact that the Conservative Members who have fought these counties have expressed themselves in the most guarded language as to any opposition they might be thought to entertain to the principle of this measure? I have spoken of Conservatives inside and outside the House; and I think I may honestly say that my views on this question have not been shared by either the one or the other. This leads me to the conclusion that the country now looks upon the principle of the extension of household suffrage as being accepted, passed, and ratified beyond recall; and I am of opinion that whatever fate may befall this particular measure, or whatever fate may befall the present Government, the country would insist on any Government that came into Office submitting proposals embodying that which is the vital principle of this Bill. We must therefore acknowledge that, subject to questions of time and circumstance, such hopes have been held out that the unenfranchised in the counties almost look upon it as though they have now a clear right to have the suffrage extended to them. In these circumstances, I must confess that, in my opinion, the time for further opposition to the extension of the suffrage has passed, and I have made my last speech against the principle involved in this Bill. Henceforth my duty as a humble Member of this House will be to look to the question of redistribution, and to attempt to co-operate with all the efforts that may be made to render it sure that there shall be a fair and equitable distribution of political power between all the component parts of the country and between the electors, old and new.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, interesting

and important as it was, sank into insignificance in comparison with the speech which had been delivered by the Prime Minister. He did not believe that no such minatory speech as that made by the Prime Minister that evening had ever been delivered to the House of Commons by a responsible Minister of the Crown. He thought that the Prime Minister must have come to the conclusion that that was the last opportunity he would have of addressing the House on that measure. If it were not so, he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman would have deferred till a future occasion those vain threats to the House of Lords. What were the grounds on which the Prime Minister warned, in tragedy accents, the House of Lords not to meddle with this measure? He said that if by any chance the House of Lords threw it out, the result would be a political crisis which might end in the modification of the Constitution of this country. If the House of Lords were henceforth to be considered a Body incapable of modifying or rejecting a measure of that kind, he would assert that the time for that modification of the Constitution had already arrived; and he, for one, would not lift a finger to protect an Assembly that did not dare, when it thought right, to challenge an appeal to the country. The Prime Minister had described that as a conflict, as far as there was to be a conflict, between the two Houses of Parliament. If a conflict was to take place at all, it would be one between the two Houses, and not one between the House of Lords and the country. If hon. Gentlemen opposite thought that in that matter they had the opinion of the country behind them, the remedy was in their own hands; all that they had to do was to advise the Crown to dissolve Parliament. [An hon. MEMBER: At the bidding of the House of Lords!]
—and it would then be seen who was in the right—the Leader of the Opposition, when he appealed to the evidence of the recent elections, or the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who said he was quite certain that he had the country on his side. The Prime Minister said that the Government could not bring in a Bill dealing with redistribution at the same time as they dealt with the franchise, because such a Bill would be of such magnitude that they would have had to exclude Scotland and Ireland

from its purview. ["No!"] That was the substance of the right hon. Gentleman's observation; and if they excluded Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman said they would have been supposed to have been engaged in a fraudulent concealment to the people of that country. That meant that the Government would not have been believed if they had said they intended to pass a Bill for Ireland next year. But if they would not have been believed in that case, why were they to be believed now, when they said they would bring in a Redistribution Bill next year? He took their own estimate of their own veracity, and asked what value was to be given to their assurance? That Bill originated at the Conference at Leeds. The Leeds Conference gave its orders to the Cabinet, the Cabinet gave its orders to the House of Commons, and now the House of Commons wanted to give its orders to the House of Lords. The first two stages of that process had been successful. He earnestly hoped that the third and last stage would not be successful. Personally, he was strongly in favour of that question being dealt with; but if it was to be dealt with successfully they must approach it in a very different spirit from that which had been hitherto exhibited; they must approach it with an anxious desire to preserve the balance of the Constitution; they must not attempt, as they had done, to work that great measure, not in the spirit of statesmen, but in the spirit of electioneering agents.

Mr. NEWDEGATE observed that the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had used one expression which, coupled with what had fallen from the Prime Minister, was very significant. The right hon. Gentleman said that the householders of this country must now consider that they had acquired a right. That involved a great change—a revolution, as the Prime Minister had declared, greater than any that had occurred since 1688. Heretofore, in this country, the franchise had never been considered as a right but always as a trust—a power in the hands of the voter to be exercised for the benefit of others besides himself. He (Mr. Newdegate) looked upon this measure as one which the House of Lords would be perfectly justified in referring to the country, if it were only for this reason—that he felt that one certain consequence of the pass-

ing of that Bill with its complement for redistribution must be, that the House of Lords itself must be so reformed as to be virtually replaced by a Body with power enough and determination enough to insure to the country that no such revolutionary change as that now proposed should be adopted by Parliament without having been referred to the constituencies themselves. If the House of Lords passed that measure, such as it promised to be, he said, as a humble but sincere Constitutional Member of the House, that to his mind they would create a necessity for some Body like the Senate of the United States, which should be able to stand between the country and the dictation of a single Chamber, or the arbitrary will of a too-powerful Minister. Freedom was not secured by mere deference to popular impulse, or by merely giving immediate legislative effect to popular impulse, but by securing the reference of every proposal for great Constitutional change, affecting the distribution of power among the different classes in the country, for the mature deliberation of the people themselves. He should never consider this Bill, if passed, valid until it had received the sanction of the people.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT thought that if ever there was a speech less calculated than another to obtain the end which it seemed to have in view, it was the speech which the Prime Minister had delivered that evening. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to forget that Englishmen throughout this country liked fair play, and disliked, above all things, to be dictated to by anyone. The Prime Minister had endeavoured to dictate to the House of Lords; but he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was persuaded that dictation would have no effect upon their Lordships. The Prime Minister had vitally changed his mind on this very question since 1866, when he said, on the subject of redistribution in reference to Lord John Russell's Reform Bill, that there was nothing more base or contemptible than the conduct of a Government which silently excluded from the scope of their measure the redistribution of seats, which was only second in importance to the franchise itself. He hoped the House of Lords would take note of that expression of opinion. He ventured to say that the Upper House would deal with this question in a states-

manlike way. The Prime Minister had chosen to override the House of Lords in the matter of purchase in the Army, and now he came down and said that if the House of Lords did not pass this Bill, there would be a quarrel between the two Houses such as had never taken place before. He believed that, looking at the present condition of affairs, the House of Lords would be able to take their decision freely, and they would do that which they believed to be best in the interest of the country. In his opinion, it would be to the interest of the country that they should go to the country to see whether the people were so anxious for Reform as they were represented to be. He doubted very much whether the country would wish in the present state of Irish and Egyptian affairs to retain at the head of affairs the present Prime Minister.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had asked why the Prime Minister had thought right to use words of warning to the House of Lords. The circumstances under which they were placed were very peculiar. Never had a Government been placed in such a position as that in which those who had charge of this Bill had been put by those who opposed it. The words of the right hon. Gentleman were fair words of advice, and the circumstances were that a responsible Member of the Opposition had thought it right to inform them that the Bill was to be put to death. Where was it to be put to death? Not in that House. There was no disguise on the subject. It was the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) who stated that every Member of that House knew that the Bill had no chance of passing into law. From what source was this danger to come if not from the House of Lords? What was to be inferred but that some arrangement had been come to that the Bill should not pass the other House? The noble Lord who led the Opposition in the other House had not waited for the Bill to say that the House of Lords had a right to examine this Bill. The noble Lord had thought it right, in a campaign which he had undertaken on behalf of his Party, to address persons outside the House of Lords, and to give reasons why the House of Lords should throw out a Bill,

the merits of which he could not know. If, then, the House of Lords had felt it to be their duty thus to announce their intention beforehand, was not someone in a responsible position in his right to warn them, and to ask them to pause before they took that step; to warn them of the consequences that might follow? He protested against it being said that the words of the Prime Minister constituted a threat. There had been no threat. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, that would be a matter of opinion. Others must judge besides hon. Members who exclaimed so loudly. Words of advice had been fairly given to those who expressed their own opinions freely enough. The recent elections had been referred to; but it must be remembered that all the candidates had expressed themselves in favour of the Bill. They had stated that they were supporters of the principles of the Bill, and were willing to give it their support. They knew that there were responsible Conservatives at Birmingham, under influential patronage, who had decided that opposition to this measure should never be mentioned. The feeling of the country was known. And what was the state of the Benches opposite? Very meagre. If the feeling of the country was opposed to the Bill, ought not that feeling to be expressed by the Conservative Members of the House who were in a position of responsibility, and ought they to shrink from division? They preferred at that hour (8 o'clock) to be engaged in a more pleasant occupation than in defending the country and the Constitution in the hour of danger.

MR. LEWIS said, he would defy the Attorney General to produce any words of a responsible Leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Lords in which he said that he would pledge the House of Lords to pursue a certain course with respect to this Bill. The noble Lord had said that it was impossible to judge the exact course which the House of Lords would pursue until they had seen the Bill; the attempt, however, to separate the two questions of franchise and redistribution would justify the House of Lords in throwing out the Bill. He ventured to assert that the House of Lords would be justified in throwing out the Bill on account of its action with regard to Ireland under the present state of affairs. He asked

the House to look at the present condition of Ireland, and to say whether, when that country was subject to the Coercion Act as a necessary instrument to preserve anything like good order, and life, and property, this was the time when they should play the game of those who were the opponents of law and order. The right hon. Gentleman had claimed for this Bill that it was an incomplete measure, and he had challenged them to point out a Reform Bill that was complete when first introduced. No doubt, other Reform Bills had been incomplete in regard to registration, boundaries, and other matters; but he maintained there never had been such an incomplete measure as this. It was not only incomplete in itself; but it was incomplete in regard to the explanations by which it was accompanied. A great deal had been said with reference to the extraordinary generosity of the Government in meeting the views of those who sat on his own side of the House, as well as the House generally, by accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). It seemed to him, however, that it was idle to suggest, with the Bill before the House at this late date of the Session, that the normal and natural result of passing the Bill at this period of the Session would have been the same without that Amendment as with it. The Attorney General had referred to recent elections as an indication that the constituencies were in favour of the Bill. He had been present at a meeting of the constituents of the hon. Member just returned for South Hants; and although that hon. Member had said that he was in favour in the abstract of the extension of the franchise, he would oppose any plan which totally omitted redistribution as a part of the Bill. Was he justified in calling that supporting this particular Bill? After all, it was impossible for any one, however strongly he might support the Bill, not to come to the conclusion that the course now taken was legislating with one eye open and the other shut, and that to support the extension of the franchise in existing circumstances without the smallest idea as to how the constituencies were to be arranged or settled was simply dealing with the question in such a way as to hoodwink the House of Commons.

Mr. Lewis

MR. HEALY referred to the action of the House of Lords in hampering legislation, and said it was absolutely impossible to get any of the most moderate reforms passed in the House of Lords with regard to Ireland. He thought, however, that when once the English public saw how a measure which concerned themselves was dealt with their consciences would be aroused, and they might then see how obnoxious a body an unreformed House of Lords might become.

MR. WARTON said, they had heard a great deal about the other House of Parliament, and they had heard the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General try to tone down the declarations and threats of the Prime Minister. He had actually denied that any threat had been made; but he must say that, although he disliked the Prime Minister's politics, to do him justice he thought courage was one of his attributes, and he therefore thought that the right hon. Gentleman would not shrink from saying that he had threatened the House of Lords, and that he meant it. He looked upon the Prime Minister as the modern Gracchus, with all the instincts and aspirations of such a democrat; and he thought it was the wish of those who sat below the Gangway on the other side, together with the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and his Friends from Ireland—the Democratic and the Nationalist Party—to be led on by the Prime Minister in a crusade against the House of Lords. The House of Lords was as much entitled as the House of Commons to express its opinions, and neither House ought to attempt to bully the other. There never was a majority of the House of Commons which was entitled to as little respect as that which now followed the lead of the Prime Minister. It was a majority which was inconsistent both in its principles and in its practices, and the House of Lords could not be expected to pay it much respect. He thought the power of the Prime Minister ought to be curtailed, because he believed nothing more unconstitutional existed than the extreme power possessed by the Prime Minister. He complained that the suggestions of the Prime Minister were too favourable to Ireland, and did not recognize the just claims of Scotland.

MR. SPEAKER pointed out that the hon. and learned Member was travelling beyond the Question before the House.

MR. WARTON declared that the Government had not made up their minds as to the character of the Bill before they introduced it; and the consequence was that the House had had a perpetual series of surprises throughout its discussion.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER said, he believed there were few Members of the House who would not regret very much the tone adopted by the Prime Minister and the Attorney General with regard to the House of Lords. At all events, it would have been more decent to have allowed their Lordships to have discussed the question before using any threats towards them. The discussion which had taken place on the Bill had been remarkable in more ways than one. It had been remarkable for the obstinacy with which the Government had stuck to the very letter of the Bill as it was brought in. It had also been remarkable for the ineffectual struggles on the part of one or two Members sitting on the Ministerial side of the House to assert their own opinions. These Members reminded him of barnacles clinging to the bottom of the Governmental ship, making a few ineffectual attempts to set themselves free. The hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) had a Motion on the Paper which practically carried out the arguments of the Opposition; but, acting under pressure from the Government, he withdrew altogether from the contest. The hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) also made a bold show in favour of women's suffrage; but he thought he was justified in saying that the hon. Member knew perfectly well that his Motion had no chance of passing; and he, therefore, had the satisfaction of not offending his great Chief, and, at the same time, escape all risk at a General Election by the terms of his speech. The discussions would also have shown to the country that the Conservative Party were not opposed to anything in the shape of Reform, or of extension of the suffrage to the counties. The Opposition had, however, asserted over and over again that they did not believe in setting so dangerous a precedent as dividing the extension of the suffrage from redistribution. They had some justification in arguing that

from the speeches of the Prime Minister of late years. The Prime Minister, among other things, had said speaking of approaching the subject of redistribution with a view to what was commonly known as "cooking the constituencies," "seeking to destroy the effects of a redistribution of the franchise through a redistribution of seats is making redistribution a most dangerous engine as regards public liberty." That was the danger the Conservative Party had seen in being obliged to trust redistribution entirely to the hands of a Government whom they did not think over-scrupulous. As for himself, he had always been in favour of the extension of the franchise in counties; and he never could see any reason or justice why that extension should not be carried out. Inasmuch, however, as the Attorney General had expressed a hope that the Government would be able to devote the greater part of next Session to the consideration of a Redistribution Bill, he did not think constituencies would have suffered much if they had had to wait another year. The Government could then have devoted the whole of the Session to the consideration of a complete scheme; and he believed that if they had done so, they would have met with a good deal of support from the majority of the Conservative Party. The Prime Minister, in the course of his speech, had said the Liberal Party had shown confidence in the people. He did not deny that the assertion of the Prime Minister was perfectly correct; but, unfortunately, there were very few Liberals on the Ministerial side of the House. A considerable portion of hon. Gentlemen opposite belonged to the extreme Radical Party; and if they were to judge by outside utterances, they had every right to be suspicious of the Radical Party, and the confidence they professed to repose in the people. He was very much struck with a sentence which was let drop by the junior Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) at one of those large Caucus gatherings which were supposed to demonstrate the immense desire and imperative necessity which the people of the country considered there was for the extension of the franchise in counties. On that occasion the hon. Member for Newcastle said—

"That the future of Radicalism did not depend on the spontaneous action of the masses,

but on the way in which the opinions of the masses were manipulated by certain small handful of resolute and convinced men."

They had, therefore, a right to be suspicious of the Radical Party; and it was because they were suspicious that the Opposition had endeavoured to urge on the Government the necessity of combining the two measures of redistribution and extension of the franchise. The Government, by the course they were taking, were setting a dangerous precedent, which he ventured to predict Members on both sides of the House would in the future have cause deeply to regret.

MR. SPEAKER then put the Question. The Question is that the Bill be now read the third time. Those who are of that opinion say "Aye." Those who are of the contrary opinion say "No." I think the Ayes have it. The Ayes have it.

MR. GLADSTONE: I desire to observe that the Bill is read the third time *nemine contradicente*.

MR. SPEAKER: The Bill is read the third time *nemine contradicente*.

Bill *passed*.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

[Lords].—[BILL 207.]

(Mr. Mundella.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th June], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed*.

DR. FARQUHARSON remarked that it was a subject for congratulation that a measure like this, which promised to terminate the long controversy relating to medical reform, had been introduced into that House. He supported the Bill without much enthusiasm. He was not wholly satisfied with it. If it was carried in its present form it would injure all and probably ruin some of the Medical Corporations in this country. He said in its present form, because if the Amendment so ably brought forward by the right hon. Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair) were agreed to it would remove many of the objections felt to the Bill. Such a Bill as that now before the House ought to be backed up by very good reasons indeed. The

public opinion on the question had been worked up by the Medical Press, which was entirely a London Press, and not always a safe guide as indicating the feelings of the country on great national questions. His countrymen almost all opposed this Bill. It was feared in Scotland that the Bill would, as regards competition, have a downward effect, and lower the standard. In Scotland the Corporations had always examined in the three subjects of medicine, surgery, and midwifery. It was said that many incompetent men who had failed to pass in London had gone to Edinburgh, where they had obtained their degrees; but exactly the same thing could be said in the converse way, for men who had failed in Edinburgh had come up to London and passed the examinations. But even granting that those things were true, that referred more to the past than to the present. The Corporations had now set their houses in order, and some of the Scottish bodies had formed a conjoint Board for examination. But he was willing to accept the Bill, because it was desirable to put an end to the constant agitation and turmoil which beset the Medical Profession year after year. He was surprised to hear his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) object to the direct representation of the Profession on the Medical Council. It was surely desirable to have all possible interests represented. The objections to the Bill were mainly to details, which might be modified in Committee; and he was glad to support its second reading.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, that the Bill was earnestly desired by the Medical Profession, and that medical men, generally, have expressed themselves as most eager for it. His words conveyed the impression that there was almost unanimity among medical men about it—indeed, he said 19-20ths of them were in favour of the Bill. But that he (Mr. Dick-Peddie) ventured to say was not the case. The House had heard from the hon. Member for Carlow County (Mr. Gray) that there is very general concurrence of opinion against the Bill among Irish medical men; and he (Mr. Dick-Peddie) could confidently say that it was the same with the Medical Profession in Scotland. His right hon. Friend the

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Member for the University of Edinburgh said that two of the Scottish Universities and the three Corporations in Scotland were opposed not to the Bill as a whole, but to some provisions in it. But he thought his right hon. Friend was in error; for, at that very moment, there was a large deputation in London from three of the Universities and the three Corporations who had come up with the intention of opposing the Bill altogether. With regard to Edinburgh University its position was originally one of hostility to the Bill; and it was a moot point with them, to the last moment, whether they should not oppose it, and he understood they had ultimately resolved to support it, only on condition that a clause was added on the lines indicated by the right hon. Member for Edinburgh University providing that assessors should be sent by the Medical Boards to take part in the final examinations by the Universities, and in the joint final examinations of the Corporations. The hon. Member for Carlow had stated that the Bill was opposed in Ireland on account of its centralizing tendency, and because the Corporations were satisfied that its effect would be to extinguish them. In these objections and fears the Medical Profession in Scotland shared. The Universities dreaded the centralizing effect of the Bill, and the Corporations not only dreaded that, but feared that the effect of the constitution of the Medical Boards would be, before a very long time passed, the extinction of the Corporations and of the extra-mural Medical School. No one in Scotland opposed what the Vice President of the Council said was the principal purpose of the Bill—namely, to secure the three-fold qualification in all persons added to the Register. All highly approved of this, and the Corporations in Scotland had adopted it in their final examinations. But they agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets that it would have been well if the Bill had gone no farther than requiring that. What was feared, as he had said, was centralization, in consequence of the powers and constitution proposed to be given to the Medical Council. The duty of the Council was to be the exercise of supervision and control over the Medical Boards. The Council was to have the power of regulating everything connected with the Profession of Medicine. It was to have, as the right hon. Gentle-

man the Vice President said, “not only the power of recommending, but of enforcing its recommendations.” That it had not had that power hitherto had secured moderation in its actings. On this Council thus increased in power Scotland was to have representation much less than it had on the present Medical Council. Scotland now sends a fourth part of the members to the Council; but on the new Council she would practically have only one-sixth of the members as her representatives. The six nominees of the Crown would, as a rule, be taken from England, and almost certainly they will be men resident in London. But the proposition of one-sixth of the members of the Council would be most unfair to Scotland. He found from the Minutes of the Medical Council from 1879 to 1883 that of those who went up for final examination in that time 8,457 were in England, 6,673 in Scotland, and 3,368 in Ireland, so that about one-third of all the candidates were examined in Scotland; and it was, therefore, entirely out of the question to propose to give to Scotland such a small representation as the Bill provided. It was feared that if Ireland and Scotland had a decided minority of representatives on the Council, the Council would be apt to regulate matters more with regard to the interests of the Profession in England than to those of Ireland and Scotland. The Corporations in Scotland had special ground to apprehend evil results from the constitution of the Council, as they would likely have no direct representation on it at all. Two of the Scotch members of the Council are to be sent by the Medical Board; and as on that Board there will be a large preponderance of University members, the Corporations believe that the representatives sent to the Council by the Board will be selected from the University members. The Corporations object to the proposed constitution of the Medical Board for Scotland. The proposal of the Bill was that eight members should be chosen by the Universities, and only five by the Corporations. But the Universities examined only 2,333 of the 6,673 candidates examined in Scotland in the years he had mentioned, while the Corporations examined 4,340. Now, what are the powers of this Board? They are to govern all matters appertaining to medical teaching, examinations, and licensing. The Corporations

fear that by intrusting these matters to a Board on which the Universities have an overwhelming preponderance, serious injury would result to the Corporations and to the extra-mural schools. He did not suppose that the Professors in the Universities would use means to induce the students to go to their own classes instead of to those of the extra-mural teachers; but the students would, undoubtedly, be influenced by the supposition that by attending the classes of those who were to examine them, they would stand a better chance of passing the examination, and would accordingly forsake the extra-mural classes for those of the Universities. Such a result would be much to be deplored. It would be disastrous to medical teaching in Scotland, and to the Universities themselves. The extra-mural schools had been of the greatest value. They had kept, by the competition they offered, the teaching of the Universities at a high level. Where a Professor had outlived his usefulness it had been of immense advantage to students to have the extra-mural classes to go to, and those schools had greatly benefited the Universities by being a training ground for Professors. Almost every distinguished Professor, for many years past, had received his training, and acquired his reputation first of all, as a teacher in these schools. Why, then, should anything be done by legislation to injure the Corporations and the extra-mural schools. Further, he should state that the Corporations had already adopted schemes for a full examination in medicine, surgery, and midwifery, and had thus already made provision to secure the end which the Vice President of the Council had said was the most important one sought by the Bill. The Corporations knew it would be hopeless to oppose the passing of the Bill. They gave the highest credit to the Vice President of the Council for the zeal he had shown for medical reform; and they acquiesced in the second reading in the hope that the Vice President would make reasonable concessions in Committee, and accept Amendments which would make the Bill less injurious and unjust in its operation than they feared it might be.

DR. LYONS said, he must congratulate the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) on the introduction of the Bill. At the same time, considering the

great advance that had taken place in medical science within the last 25 years, it might be a question whether it was not rather risky for the Legislature to step in and interfere with a number of Medical Bodies, under whose work it was recognized that material improvement had taken place. The Bill, which dealt with a most complicated subject, touched several of the interests of the Profession, and affected the position which it occupied in relation to the public. There were many difficulties in the way of dealing with this subject which, perhaps, had not been fully realized even yet by the right hon. Gentleman who had introduced the Bill. There was, perhaps, no human calling in regard to which the public was so much at the mercy of the practitioners as in the case of the Medical Profession; and therefore it was desirable, in the interests of the public, not only that the Medical Profession should consist of men of the highest attainments in the science of medicine, but it was also of the greatest importance that the high moral tone of the Profession should be to the fullest maintained. That tone was in part due to the influence exercised over students and practitioners by the corporate Bodies with which they were bound to be connected, in order to obtain the degrees or licences, without which they could not legally practice. Under this Bill it was not only possible, but probable, that a very large number of medical men would in future not be intimately associate with any Corporation or University. The Bill would establish a kind of compound Institution, to which the Universities and Medical Corporations would each of them contribute a contingent of examiners. The qualification which the students would gain would not be such a qualification as would attach them to any Corporation, and no undefined Body of that kind would be able to exercise influence over them. No inducement would be held out to them to seek the honours and distinctions of the Universities and Medical Corporations; and, therefore, the connection of the Medical Profession with those Bodies would be broken. It must be borne in mind that these corporate Bodies had, generally speaking, no funds of their own; and, therefore, the majority must die of sheer inanition. He knew that fears of that kind were profoundly entertained in London and elsewhere. He had heard it stated that

in London these corporate Bodies would not be in existence in 10 years; and if that were so, what must be the case with Corporations in other parts of the country, which now found it difficult to make both ends meet? Having no funds, they must *ex necessitate rei* die out. That was a very serious consideration for the right hon. Gentleman and the Government, and it would certainly be his duty to see that the matter was fully considered in Committee. These Corporations performed very useful functions, and, looking to that and the length of time during which they had existed, he should regret extremely the suppression of any one of them. In the Bill, as it came from the House of Lords, he found that the two Corporations of apothecaries who were the most ancient of the Medical Bodies in Ireland had been omitted. These Bodies performed most useful functions. The apothecary was undoubtedly the poor man's friend, and was always ready in the most generous manner to give him the benefit of his advice. It would, therefore, be very seriously felt if anything were to happen which would destroy the great body of apothecaries, who were the custodians of medicaments by which people were healed, and were the necessary complement of physicians and surgeons. He trusted that that House, which represented the popular element, would restore the apothecaries to the position to which they were entitled, and it would certainly be his duty to endeavour that that should be done.

MR. BUCHANAN said, he did not think that a Bill of this character ought to be pressed forward at the present time, when there were other measures of much greater public importance, interesting to a large portion of the community, which required the attention of the House. For several years past Bills on the subject had been introduced; and although none of them had become law, they had produced reforms in the Medical Licensing Bodies. Year by year the necessity for a measure of this character had steadily grown less, and since last year a most important step had been taken in the shape of a conjoint scheme of the Scottish Medical Corporations, and the resolution that for the future they would issue no more single licences. There was strong evidence to be adduced from the Report of the

Commission on Medical Degrees that the principle on which this Bill was founded was unanimously repudiated in Scotland, as prejudicial to the interests of Scottish medical education. The Bill practically disregarded what had been urged by the most influential minority of the recent Commission, and went entirely contrary to the ideas of the Scottish Medical Profession and the Scottish Medical Authorities. He was willing to allow that the present Bill was an improvement on the Bill of last year, both in regard to the constitution of the Board and other matters. It was much to be regretted that the Government had taken this measure into their hands. The Medical Authorities in Scotland, however, were willing to bring the long struggle on this subject to a close, by accepting the proposals of the Bill, if the Government would agree to certain modifications. He thought there would be but little opposition to the measure, if the Government could give an assurance that in Committee they would accept the proposed Amendment of his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair) with reference to medical examinations.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) could not agree with the hon. Member who had just sat down as to the time at which this Bill should be brought forward. A question which involved the interests of the Medical Profession was one of the most vital and important that could be discussed by the House. He hoped, therefore, that no time would be lost, but that the Bill would become law, with certain necessary Amendments, during the present Session.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was willing to admit that the Bill dealt with an important subject, which demanded attention; but, in his opinion, it was not the outcome of any general feeling in its favour on the part of the Medical Profession, but of professional jealousies. Medical gentlemen generally preferred to carry on their business without mixing themselves up in any agitation of this character, and on that account were easily manipulated to the opinions of any ring which might be formed. He submitted that undue influence was given to the Universities, some of whom, such as Trinity College, Dublin, or Oxford, really had no medical school of any consequence, while

great institutions like the Apothecaries Hall were eliminated by the scheme. He failed to see how the operations of the Bill would strengthen the action of the Medical Council. In Committee, it would become his duty to move a considerable number of Amendments.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed for Monday next*.

ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLL) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 97.]

(*Sir Charles W. Dilke, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

MR. E. STANHOPE quite admitted that at one time he might have held views on this subject different to those he now entertained; but since the passing of the Corrupt Practices Act, by which voters were no longer permitted to be carried to the poll, a different case had arisen. It was not, therefore, from any desire to delay the Bill that he thought it should be referred to a Select Committee. He objected to one rigid rule being applied to all constituencies. He had endeavoured to make himself acquainted with the views of the various constituencies on this subject, both large and moderate-sized constituencies, and the result showed that a very considerable difference of opinion existed in their views on the subject. This inquiry showed that some constituencies desired an extension of the hours of polling such as was proposed in the Bill; others were of opinion that no extension was required at all; while others, again, thought that the hours should be modified, but not prolonged to the full extent suggested. One or two places considered that a distinction should be made between summer and winter, the extension of hours being confined to the former period, in consequence of the increased difficulty of keeping order in winter when it grew dark earlier. What was really required was a more elastic system, which could easily be adapted to the peculiar circumstances of each constituency. He, therefore, thought that the proper mode of dealing with that Bill

would be to refer it to a Select Committee. If that were done at once, the Select Committee might report the Bill to the House in a fortnight or three weeks; and if the Session continued for the ordinary period there would be no difficulty in passing the measure through that House, and sending it up to the House of Lords in time for its proper consideration by that Assembly. He begged, therefore, to move, as an Amendment, that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. E. Stanhope*),—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was willing to acknowledge the fairness of the hon. Member's speech; but he would remind the hon. Member that that subject was not new, but one that had been considered by two Select Committees, and discussed on several previous occasions. Many of the questions that had been raised by the hon. Member were questions of detail, which could be conveniently dealt with in Committee. The present Bill differed from the former measure on the same subject by substituting the number of electors as the test instead of the optional system, because when the optional system was proposed many objections to it were stated in that House. The hon. Member had attacked the adoption of a rigid system. As the Bill was now drawn, it proposed an extension of the hours in boroughs having over a certain number of electors. The limit fixed was, of course, open to consideration in Committee. There would, therefore, in future be two systems in existence. There were now two systems, because the hours of polling in the Metropolis were longer than the hours in the country, and that Bill would apply the London system to boroughs in the country with 5,000 electors and upwards. The hon. Member had spoken of the possibility of a Select Committee recommending the adoption of varying hours; but as long as they retained non-resident franchises it would be specially inconvenient to have different hours of

Mr. Arthur O'Connor

polling throughout the country, as many people who travelled from a distance to vote would not know for certain the hours of polling at a particular place. That Bill had been proposed as the result of a very large amount of local inquiry made by a relative of his, now, unfortunately, no longer among them. With regard to the bearing of the lengthened hours upon the preservation of law and order, that matter had been very carefully gone into by the former Committee. They not only had before them the Chief of the Metropolitan Police, who was strongly in favour of the Bill extending the hours of polling in the Metropolis; but they also had similar evidence as to the School Board elections in the boroughs of the country, which caused considerable excitement. Those elections were all conducted under a system which enabled the local authorities to extend the hours between 8 and 8, and yet they were unaccompanied by any rioting or disorder. There was often a disinclination for the long hours on the part of the authorities who conducted the election, but not on the part of the people. In Manchester, for example, a great number of the people desired an extension of the hours, though those at the head of affairs might be otherwise disposed. The working of the longer hours in the Metropolis had been completely successful, and all the experience they had had of it was favourable. [Mr. R. N. FOWLER (Lord Mayor): Not in the City.] The City was in a very peculiar position, because, while in the Metropolis generally it was known to be difficult to get people to meet before 8 o'clock in the evening, it was very difficult to get them to meet in the City after 5 or 6 in the afternoon, because so many of them lived at Brighton and other places. It had been suggested that they should make a difference as to the hours in winter and summer; but that plan had been tried in the Ballot Bill of 1872, and after being carried with great opposition through that House it was rejected in the House of Lords. He had given up what, in his own opinion, was a compromise which might have been accepted on this subject, because he had found that there was great difference of opinion on the question, and that, on the whole, opinion was against giving the local authorities power to fix the hours of polling.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) admitted that for constituencies like those of Chelsea, and in the suburbs, later hours might be found convenient; but he did not think the same advantage was experienced in the City of London. In the City, at present, they found that after 5 o'clock in the afternoon the polling clerks were left sitting with nothing to do, as nearly everyone went out of town at 4 o'clock. That was not an argument against the Bill generally; but he thought that it was an argument in favour of giving to the local authorities some power to regulate the hours in which polling should take place in each particular constituency. He thought that the different questions which must arise as to each constituency would be far better considered in a Select Committee than in a Committee of the Whole House; and he would, therefore, support the Amendment of his hon. Friend.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL, while opposing the Amendment, suggested that as they had two Grand Committees sitting idle, one of these might dispose of a Bill of this kind, so that it might come before the House at an advanced stage.

MR. TOMLINSON thought that a Select Committee was the best means by which individual opinions might be gathered. At the same time, as regarded his own constituency, he thought that the hours fixed in the Bill would be the most suitable.

MR. SCLATER-BOTH said, he agreed with the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) in thinking that a Bill of this description might, with advantage, be referred to a Standing Committee. The necessary information would be more readily obtained by that method than by a Select Committee.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) said, that they had only one object in view, which was, to frame a Bill which would allow all voters to go to the poll. For large constituencies it was absolutely necessary that some alteration should be made; but the question was, what was the proper standard by which to go? A Select Committee consisted of a very few Members, and the result of sending the Bill to such a Committee would be that they would practically have to go through the whole Bill again, losing sight alto-

gether, perhaps, of the Report of the Select Committee. In a Committee of the Whole House, however, they had not the means of getting information which they had in a Select Committee. It was a question for the House to consider; but he thought that this was a matter of business, and the Standing Committees had proved themselves exceedingly useful in dealing with such questions.

MR. CAUSTON said, he hoped the suggestion to refer the Bill to a Standing Committee would not be agreed to, because it was a measure which could be dealt with very well by the House itself. They were about to extend the franchise at the present time, and he thought it would mean a large amount of disfranchisement to the working men in our large cities if the hours of polling were not also extended. He hoped the Attorney General would not press the suggestion which had been made, that the Motion of the hon. Gentleman would be rejected, and that the Bill would be proceeded with in Committee of the Whole House that night.

MR. BROADHURST said, if the suggestion of sending the Bill to a Grand Committee had been made at an earlier stage, he did not think any objection would have been made to it; but he must remind the House that they were approaching a period of the Session when to lose time over the consideration of such a Bill as this would mean the Bill being lost for the whole Session. He, therefore, asked the Government to proceed with the Bill now. He thought that no reason existed why a measure upon which there was no serious difference of opinion should not be got through Committee in a very short time.

MR. RUSTON said, he could assure the House that there was scarcely any measure before the House at the present time which was regarded with so much satisfaction by a very large class of electors than the present proposal. A large class of the electors of this country had been enfranchised; but the effect of the hours of polling was such as to mean a considerable amount of disfranchisement. This proposal, which extended the hours of polling, was one which was regarded with immense satisfaction, particularly by the working classes. Having had occasion, recently, to consult a constituency numbering 7,000 electors many

of whom were working men, he thought he could say this with confidence. This proposal might be regarded as a complement to the Corrupt Practices Act of a former Session. He could understand that in past times, when elections were characterized by a large amount of rioting and disorder, it was desirable that the poll in populous towns should be closed early; but under the new Act he thought no such necessity existed. He thought, therefore, it was desirable to proceed in passing an Act of this kind. There was an important fact to consider in regard to how this matter affected the working classes. In London alone there would be from 10,000 to 20,000 working men who were employed at their daily work four or five miles distant from their homes, and who found it absolutely impossible to leave their work and record their votes in their own polling districts without losing at least half a day's wage. This was a very important consideration, and as this measure would bring relief to the working men who had been enfranchised, and also to the many thousands who were to be enfranchised, he gave his earnest support to the Bill, and hoped it would be carried as rapidly through the House as possible.

MR. HEALY said, he hoped the Government would not consent to the sending of this Bill to a Grand Committee. Irish Members were generally very inadequately represented on those Committees; and he protested against a Bill of this kind being sent to such a Committee. If this were done, it would simply mean a large amount of subsequent discussion on Report. If the Government wished to save time, his advice to them was to get the Speaker out of the Chair, and proceed with the Bill now.

MR. GLADSTONE said the suggestion of sending the Bill to a Grand Committee was made by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), and it had been supported in the most impartial spirit by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hants (Mr. Selater-Booth). The Government had been inclined to suppose that it was the general view of the House that the Bill should be referred to a Grand Committee; but it was now quite evident that this was not the general view, and, as the hon. Member who spoke last said, would only lead to a waste of time.

While quite willing to concur in sending the Bill to a Grand Committee if it had been the general view of the House that it should be so, yet, as it did not seem to be the general desire of the House, he believed they had no other course to adopt than to get the Speaker out of the Chair, and proceed with the Bill.

MR. WARTON said, he must protest against the Bill being proceeded with now in Committee of the Whole House, because there were many hon. Members having Amendments on the Paper, who were not in their places to move them. It seemed to him that the Government wished to force the Bill through in the absence of those who had carefully considered it. In his opinion, that seemed to be a reason why the Bill should be sent to a Select Committee.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he was very much disappointed at the action which the Government had taken, because they had practically admitted the proposition he had put forward, and that some inquiry was necessary. He had suggested a Select Committee; but they had not adopted that suggestion, although willing to adopt the suggestion of a Grand Committee. Now, however, an hon. Member representing an Irish constituency came forward to oppose this course, and the Government gave way. He did not think this was treating him fairly in this matter. He asked leave to withdraw his Amendment to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, and if this permission was granted he should ask leave of the House to propose that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Law. ["No, no!" and "Divide!"]

Question put and *agreed to*.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Hours of polling in boroughs with more than five thousand electors. 31 and 32 Vict. c. 125).

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he should like to know if he would be in Order now in moving that the Chairman report Progress? He thought, under the circumstances, the Government would be quite prepared to assent to that Motion.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Government could not assent to it.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had thought that the object of the Government was to secure that the Bill should be discussed by Members who had paid attention to the subject, with the object of making it as good a measure as was possible; but, at the present moment, there were hardly any Members present who had put down Amendments on the Paper. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was not present; and as the Government intended to go on with the Bill, he would move the Amendment which stood in the hon. Member's name—namely, to leave out the words in the 1st clause "to which this Act applies," in order to insert the words—

"In a Parliamentary borough which has, at the passing of this Act, a number of registered electors exceeding 10,000."

It appeared to him that the limit contained in the proposal of the hon. Member—namely, boroughs exceeding 10,000 registered electors—would be a much better limit than that proposed in the Bill. As the House would not allow him to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, so that it might be inquired into carefully, he would make this proposition. He could assure the Committee that there was a large consensus of opinion in the smaller Parliamentary boroughs likely to be affected by the Bill that if the hours of polling were extended to the full extent proposed by the Bill, there would be much greater risk of bribery and corruption than there was at present. He knew that that was one reason why the Government were inclined, in the first instance, to accept his proposal that there should be some further inquiry into the matter. He believed the case of large boroughs was one which did require some alteration; but he thought it would be better to fix the limit at 10,000, as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) proposed. The clause would then read as follows:—

"At every Parliamentary or municipal election in a Parliamentary borough which has, at the passing of this Act, a number of registered electors exceeding 5,000, and not exceeding 10,000, the polls (if any) shall commence at 8 o'clock in the forenoon, and be kept open until 6 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, and no longer."

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 5, to leave out the words "to which this Act applies," and insert the words

"in a Parliamentary Borough which has, at the passing of this Act, a number of registered electors exceeding ten thousand,"—(*Mr. E. Stanhope*),

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (*Mr. E. Stanhope*) had not moved the Amendment with the same object the hon. Member for Northampton had in view. The intention of his hon. Friend was that there should be a sliding scale—that in the case of boroughs with 10,000 registered electors they should be allowed to vote until 8 o'clock at night; while in boroughs with between 5,000 and 10,000 electors the poll should be closed at 5 or 6 o'clock. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire moved the Amendment in order to make it appear that 10 was substituted for five in the Bill itself. He (*Sir Charles W. Dilke*) thought it would be more convenient to take the opportunity of discussing the figure to be substituted for the figure 5,000 now in the Bill, when they arrived at the figures. The hon. Member for Northampton would have been in Order, because he wished to move a sliding scale; but if it were desired to change the figures, it would be better to do so when they came to the figures themselves.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he did not understand the object with which his hon. Friend had moved the Amendment, and he was sorry that the hon. Member for Northampton was not there to move it himself, seeing that it was one of which he had given Notice; because, although his hon. Friend might be moving it with the best intentions, still it would have been satisfactory to have heard what was in the mind of the hon. Member for Northampton at the time he placed it on the Paper. He had risen to protest against the poll being kept open in small boroughs from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock at night. Anybody who was accustomed to take part in elections in small boroughs knew how important it was to have the town quiet as soon as possible after the election was over. Representing, as he did, a large acreage constituency where the voters came up to poll from considerable distances, if no declaration of the poll took place before 8 o'clock in the

evening, the consequence would be that the whole of those enthusiastic voters, from the want of something to employ their time between the hours of 3 and 8 would be found drinking in the public-houses, and congregating together in a manner which would probably lead to inconvenient and undesirable results. He did not know whether, after what the right hon. Baronet had stated, that was the proper time to move any Amendment in regard to restricting the hours of polling; but he certainly thought that they were beginning at the wrong end. If it was necessary to extend the hours of polling, the beginning had better be made earlier in the morning instead of the hours being continued later in the evening. If a man wanted to go to the poll he would not object to get up a little earlier in the morning in order to do so; but he thought they were running a great risk of bringing about drunkenness and riotous proceedings if they kept the poll open late in the evening. It might be that it would only be good-humoured rioting; but, although commencing in that way, it frequently degenerated into very undesirable rioting. If the right hon. Gentleman thought it necessary that 12 hours should elapse between the opening and the closing of the polling booth, he thought it far better that the extra hours should be given in the morning, rather than that they should keep open the polling booth until 8 o'clock at night. Personally, he did not agree that the extension of the hours of polling was at all desirable; but if it was necessary to have the polling booth open for 12 hours, it was desirable to commence earlier rather than to continue it open later. He did not think the limit suggested by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire was that which was desired by the hon. Member for Northampton. As he understood the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton, it was that there should be a sliding scale in the case of the smaller constituencies, in regard to which there was no necessity whatever for an extension of the hours. Why should the hours be extended where the voters did not exceed 2,000 in number? He thought it was only in a case where they exceeded 5,000 that the hours of polling should be extended beyond 4 o'clock, and they might be further extended by

a sliding scale, according to the number of electors on the Register. He was not, however, prepared to say what the sliding scale should be.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member for Wilton (Mr. S. Herbert) appeared to be labouring under a misapprehension. He appeared to think that it was intended to extend the hours of polling in boroughs of 2,000 electors, whereas, as the Bill was drawn, the extension would be limited to boroughs of 5,000 electors. The hon. Member suggested that the poll should be opened earlier in the day—at 6 o'clock in the morning instead of 8. That was a matter which had been carefully considered by one or two former Select Committees, and especially by one that was presided over by Sir Charles Adelerley (the present Lord Norton), who was himself much in favour of the proposal. But it was found that in the building trade, in the summer months of the year, the men for whom this Bill was very much needed indeed, began their work so early that even 6 o'clock in the morning would be of very little use to them. All the people who were interested in the matter preferred an extension of hours in the evening to the opening of the poll earlier in the morning. He was, therefore, afraid that he could not accept the suggestion of the hon. Member.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he was willing to confess that he had had in his mind the future constituencies rather than the present.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, he should support the Motion for leaving out the words "to which this Act applies."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, they had not reached that point yet.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question before the Committee is, that the words "to which this Act applies" stand part of the clause.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, that was the point he desired to address himself to. He wished to support the proposal for leaving out those words, not with the view of accepting the words which followed, but for the purpose of including all boroughs; and his reason was this. He understood the ground upon which the hours of polling were to be extended was that it would meet the convenience of a great many electors who were employed at a distance from the

place of polling, and who were unable to register their votes before 4 o'clock. Now, that was a difficulty which did not apply to large boroughs only. The difficulty in the small burghs in Scotland was quite as great as in the large. His own district of Kilmarnock consisted of five burghs, the largest of which had only 4,000 electors, while one of the remaining four had only 700, and many of the voters in all the burghs which he represented, being miners and ship-builders, were employed several miles away from the place of polling. In the whole of his burghs many of the electors would not be able to attend the polling booth before 4 o'clock without sacrificing a large portion of their working time. In almost all of the burghs in Scotland there were a large number of men employed in the building trade, who did all the building work that was necessary to be done within a considerable distance of the polling places. Many of them at present patriotically sacrificed half-a-day in order to record their votes; but he thought that if this boon was to be given to the large boroughs, the small boroughs should be allowed to participate in it also.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE remarked, that the hon. Member who had just spoken was mistaken if he was under the impression that the Bill would not apply to the district of burghs he represented.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, he perfectly understood that it would apply to the Kilmarnock burghs; but he was speaking in the interests of other small boroughs.

MR. E. STANHOPE expressed his readiness to accept the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet; and, as it would probably be better to discuss the question later on, he would withdraw the Amendment.

MR. HEALY said, that as the Bill at present stood it would only apply to two constituencies in Ireland—namely, Dublin and Belfast. He wished to ascertain clearly what was in the mind of the Government on the question. The borough of Belfast had 21,000 voters, and the City of Dublin between 13,000 and 14,000; but Cork, which was the next largest Irish borough, had a constituency below 5,000. Of course, if they got the extended franchise which the Government proposed, there would be

other constituencies which would come under the Act; but he certainly thought that, even as the franchise stood, the Bill ought to be extended to such places as Cork and Limerick.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the constituency of Cork numbered 4,800, and he had intended to include the Irish Members among the large number of Members he had proposed to consult. The intimation he had given, that the extension would include three boroughs in Ireland, applied to Cork. Perhaps it would be better that he should say now what he should certainly have to say later on in the Committee—that, for himself, he was disposed to think that 4,000 would be a better number than 5,000.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he understood the Question before the House to be that the words “to which this Act applies” should stand part of the clause. Was he to understand that the Act applied to all boroughs, or only to certain boroughs which contained more than 4,000 or 5,000 electors? He not only wanted to know the mind of the Government upon the matter, but he wanted also to know what his own mind was upon it. He was very anxious to collect what his own mind was, and also that of his constituency, and at present he was not able to complete the operation. He understood the Bill, as it was framed at present, would not apply to the Kirkealdy district of burghs which he represented, whereas a limit of 4,000 and upwards would do so. It was, therefore, important to him and to his constituents to know whether the Bill was to affect them or not. He represented a good-sized burgh, so far as the number of electors was concerned; it was a very long burgh, when the area comprised in it was considered, and the Bill should apply to it. He not only represented Kirkealdy, but three other burghs, which were very small and compact; and he wanted to know if the Act would apply to those small burghs—whether, in point of fact, the smaller and compact burghs would be included within its operation? He hoped the Government would explain clearly what was in their mind, and whether they intended that the Bill should apply to the small burghs or not.

MR. CROPPER said, that for his own part, representing, as he did, a borough

with only a constituency of 2,000 electors in it, he was perfectly content with the hours of polling as they stood. He thought that in the small boroughs, as a matter of convenience, it was desirable to have the polling booth closed at 4 o'clock, so that they might not have people parading the streets all night in order to know what was going on. Those who were acquainted with the small boroughs would be perfectly aware that it would be productive of considerable inconvenience to keep the poll open until a late hour. He hoped, therefore, that the provisions of the Bill would not be extended to the small boroughs, and he recommended the Government to adhere to the figure which they had at first adopted.

MR. W. FOWLER said, he lost his election in 1874 owing to the poll not being kept open after 4 o'clock. He had a very strong feeling that this would be a very beneficial measure, and that it ought to be applied to boroughs generally. There were a great many voters in all boroughs who were not able to reach the polling booth at breakfast time, or during the dinner hour, and if they were not prepared to lose half-a-day's work they would practically lose their votes. He did not think that it was at all fair to deprive these men of their votes because they happened to be hard working men. He failed to see any sound reason for confining the Act in the way proposed by this clause. If he understood the matter rightly, the whole question of imposing a limit or no limit depended on the words they were now discussing. If the words “to which this Act applies” were left out, it would be a General Act. He insisted that that was the point the Committee were now really discussing, and if the matter went to a Division he should certainly vote for the omission of those words.

MR. HEALY said, he did not see why the matter should be confined to the question of keeping open the poll until 8 o'clock. For instance, why not, in some cases, have it 6 o'clock? He thought that would be a very fair compromise in the small boroughs; and he would suggest that in Ireland the hour should be 6 o'clock for boroughs with 2,000 voters, while the suggestion made by the Government for the larger boroughs might be accepted as being perfectly fair. He did not propose, however, to

take any part in the discussion of the English question.

MR. ILLINGWORTH thought his right hon. Friend in charge of the Bill was rather disposed to reduce the privilege the measure would otherwise confer in the case of the small boroughs. The only objection which seemed to impress the hon. Member for Wilton (Mr. S. Herbert) was, that by keeping the poll open there might be riotous proceedings. Now, rioting, under the new system of voting, was almost absolutely unknown. Riots took place formerly in districts where the majority of the inhabitants were without a vote, while the minority had one. But since the vote had been conferred upon all householders there was just as much respect manifested by the working classes for the mutual rights of the electors as was displayed by electors of a higher standing in society. He thought it would be a great boon to have the hours of polling extended generally. His hon. Friend the Member for Kendal (Mr. Cropper) said he was anxious to get an election over as quickly as possible in a small borough. Now, those who represented large towns, and had some experience in the matter, knew that it was the practice to cast up the voting papers after the poll was closed, and the result was often not made known until 10 or 11 o'clock at night. He had known in his own constituency a very large and good-natured body of persons congregate around a polling booth and patiently wait until the result was made known; and under the modern system of elections in no instance had they manifested a disposition towards rioting. He doubted very much whether it was worth while to make any distinction between the large and small boroughs. At any rate, if there were any constituencies that ought to be exempted from the operation of the Bill it should only be those where the electors numbered less than 1,000 or 2,000, and he hoped that the existence of such constituencies would be very much circumscribed when the next Dissolution was brought about.

MR. BROADHURST wished to ask the Chairman whether, if these words were allowed to pass, the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), and his own Amendment later on, would be ruled out of Order?

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member refer to an Amendment later on in the sub-section?

MR. BROADHURST: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question now before the Committee is, that the words "to which this Act applies" stand part of the clause. If the Committee agree to insert the words proposed by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), that Amendment, no doubt, would cover the latter part of the section, fixing the number at 5,000; but, at present, the words before the Committee are that the words "to which this Act applies" stand part of the clause.

MR. WHITLEY asked what the effect would be, if the Amendment were withdrawn, upon his Amendment, which provided that the polls should be kept open longer in the summer than in the winter months?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member, by his Amendment, proposes to leave out certain words which are quite of a different character, and that Amendment would not be interfered with by the one now under discussion.

MR. H. SAMUELSON asked whether, if these words were struck out, he would be precluded from moving, in line 10 of the clause, after the word "any," to insert the words "or county," in order to bring county elections under the operation of the Act?

THE CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members are putting Questions prematurely. I think that it would be better to decide the Question now before the Committee before I answer any further questions of this kind.

MR. H. SAMUELSON said, he had only put the question because he thought that it would be impossible to argue the question of the counties on the words now before the Committee; and it appeared to him to be more reasonable that the question should be raised distinctly by an Amendment. What he wanted to know was, whether he would be in Order, if the words "to which this Act applies" were continued in the Bill, in moving an Amendment which would have the effect of including counties?

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not see any Amendment to the effect stated by the hon. Member on the Paper.

MR. H. SAMUELSON, said, the Amendment was not on the Paper; it only consisted of two words in line 10 of the Bill. He proposed to insert the words "or county" after the word borough.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that on the point of Order he would suggest that this was altogether outside the scope of the Bill. He believed that the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington), who had placed an Amendment on the Paper on going into Committee on the Bill to provide that an Instruction should be given to the Committee that they should have power to extend the Bill to counties, had fully considered this point. The noble Lord had asked for an opinion upon the point, and he was distinctly told that, before the counties could be included in the Bill, it would be necessary to move an Instruction.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think that the insertion of the word "county" would be clearly beyond the scope of the Bill.

MR. H. SAMUELSON wished to explain the reason why he desired to move the Amendment. It was because the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington), whose Amendment was down upon the Paper on going into Committee as an Instruction to the Committee, had, somehow or other, disappeared without moving it. As he (Mr. H. Samuelson) was now informed that the insertion of the words he suggested would not come strictly within the scope of the Bill in Committee, he would move to insert them on Report.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he assumed that the ruling of the Chairman had now been given upon the point of Order, and he hoped the Committee would be allowed to go on with the consideration of the clauses of the Bill. He would simply remind his hon. Friend the Member for Frome (Mr. H. Samuelson) that the counties were altogether in a different position from the boroughs.

MR. E. STANHOPE rose to Order. He thought the clause did not apply to counties at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is so.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was about to consider the restriction which the clause did contain, and to discuss whether it should be applied to all boroughs. He would point out that he himself, on a former occasion, supported

the general proposition for applying a provision of this kind to all boroughs; and he had done all he could to press that principle upon the attention of Parliament; but after the strong objections raised to it on the part of hon. Members, and especially of those connected with the small constituencies, he had consented to adapt the provision to the largest constituencies only. For his own part, he should have no fear of the general or universal application of the Bill to all boroughs; but he knew that that feeling was not reciprocated by a large number of persons in the House who did not share that view. A great many of them thought that this provision was altogether unnecessary in connection with the small boroughs. The operation of the Bill had, therefore, been limited to the case of the large towns; and if it worked well, they could hereafter extend it to the smaller boroughs. The proposition was now to apply a principle, which had worked well in the Metropolis, to boroughs of middle size; and he had no doubt that hereafter, if any proposition were made to extend the same provision to the small boroughs, that the Representatives of the boroughs, to which it was proposed to apply it now, would be able to rise in their places, as the Members for the Metropolis did now, and say that it worked well. He appealed to the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent (Mr. Broadhurst) not to press his Amendment against all limitation as to the boroughs to which the Bill should apply.

MR. BROADHURST said, he wanted to have an assurance that the words extending the application of the Bill which were contained in his Amendment, and in that of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), would be capable of being moved if the present words were allowed to stand?

THE CHAIRMAN replied in the negative.

MR. BROADHURST said, it would then be his duty to support the omission of these words, in order that all limitation might be done away with. He could assure the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill that he would be sorry to do anything to jeopardize even a half-measure of this kind, in his endeavour to obtain a whole one; but his instructions on the subject were so definite, and his own opinion was so strong in favour of

doing away with all limitations, that he dare not permit the Bill to pass without taking a Division upon this Amendment. Earlier in the evening the right hon. Gentleman, in replying to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), said that it would be very undesirable in many cases to have different hours of polling in different constituencies. He (Mr. Broadhurst) entirely concurred with that statement.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that was not his argument.

MR. BROADHURST said, he was quoting the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill, and it was an argument in support of his proposal to do away with all limitations. It was quite a mistake to suppose that there was no necessity whatever in the small boroughs for the extension of the hours of polling. In the small boroughs it was much more easy for an employer, and for those who had authority over the workmen, to prevent them from voting before 4 o'clock in the afternoon, than it was for employers in large manufacturing centres. Speaking of his own constituency, he was bound to be frank with the Committee and to say that, so far as they were concerned, they needed no extension of the hours of polling at all. At the General Election in 1880, he believed that every voter who supported his hon. Colleague and himself had polled before 12 o'clock in the day. They had a general holiday afterwards, and the whole of the business was over before the dinner hour. He regretted to say that there were not a large number of constituencies which were as patriotic as his own. He hoped that would all be mended in time; but, until that day arrived, they ought to give every facility in their power to every man to enable him to record his vote without loss to himself or his family; and, therefore, to be in Order, he would move to strike out, in line 5 and in line 6, the words "to which this Act applies."

THE CHAIRMAN: That is the Question already before the Committee.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire proposed to withdraw his Amendment, in order to bring it on at a later period of the clause, when they would be asked to fix the number of electors, whether 5,000, 4,000, or 1,000. His own opinion was that that would be a much more convenient

mode of dealing with the subject. The hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent (Mr. Broadhurst) would be in no way prejudiced, and when they came to define the constituencies to which the Act was to apply, it would be competent to insert the figures. Personally, he was indifferent whether the figure was 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, or 4,000, because he was perfectly satisfied that no Liberal Government would propose, or the House of Commons pass, any measure of redistribution which would permit the retention of a constituency with less than 4,000 electors. He thought the extension would be far larger than that, and therefore he was indifferent in regard to what figure was put into the Bill. He would, however, suggest, as a matter of Order, that the question should be decided whether this Amendment was to be withdrawn, so that it might be raised later on when they come to insert the figures.

MR. WARTON said, he did not think that the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent ought to be taken unawares; therefore, he would ask the Chairman whether, if these words were struck out, there would not still remain a limitation necessarily by the very title of the Bill? It was a Bill to extend the hours of polling in certain boroughs, and therefore it seemed to him that there must be some limitation. Consequently, the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent would be unable to move any Amendment which would render all boroughs liable to these hours of polling. He would like to have the decision of the Chairman upon that point—whether they were in any way bound in Committee by the title of the Bill, because, according to the title, the Bill could not be applied to all boroughs?

THE CHAIRMAN: In regard to the point raised by the hon. and learned Member, it is quite competent for the Committee to alter the title. It is obvious that, if the words "to which this Act applies" are left in, it would be necessary to put some limit, or else all boroughs would come in.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Government did intend to fix a limit, and, therefore, it would be necessary to allow these words to remain in the Bill. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had expressed a hope, which he trusted would soon be realized, that in a

very short time there would be no small constituencies in existence; but the Government were dealing with things as they were, and the Bill had to be applied to the constituencies as they were. If the happy day should ever arrive to which his hon. Friend referred, the objection of the hon. Member for Stoke would remedy itself; but, dealing, as they now were, with very small constituencies, some of which did not contain as many as 1,000 electors, they had to consider whether these words should be retained or not, so as to determine whether the extension to 12 hours should apply to all boroughs, or whether some other provision should be made. He thought the House would agree that the keeping of the poll open for a long time was not a benefit in itself. All that was wanted was to keep the poll open for the exact time that would allow all voters, according to their position, to vote. No one wished, either for the convenience of the Presiding Officer, or for the avoidance of corrupt practices, or for the prevention of rioting, that the poll should be closed too early to allow the electors to record their votes. Nor should it be kept open late unless they were to obtain some benefit from keeping it open. It was because it was thought necessary and beneficial to keep it open for longer hours than the law at present allowed that the Bill had been introduced. He would ask those who represented small constituencies whether they could not poll all the voters in those constituencies between the hours of 8 and 4? [*Cries of "No!" and "Yes!"*] There was evidently a difference of opinion upon that point. Therefore, upon that point, let them vote and determine whether or not in certain constituencies it would be sufficient to keep the poll open between the hours of 8 and 4. If it was, it would be advisable to apply the Bill to all other constituencies, but not to them. He did not see why they should force this Bill upon the unwilling Representatives of very small constituencies, who knew their constituencies could be polled within the hours named. If these words were retained they could always determine the limit to which they would apply the Bill. If they were rejected they would be bound to apply the Bill to the small constituencies containing only 600 or 700 electors, whether they required it or not.

The Attorney General

MR. H. SAMUELSON said, the question was not the size of a borough in which a voter lived, but the distance from it at which he worked. He did not think it was easier for a man, who was working three or four miles away from the polling booth, to record his vote, if he was an elector for a small borough than if he was an elector for a large one. It must be borne in mind that, under the Corrupt Practices Act, the candidate and his agents were not allowed to pay the voter's travelling expenses; and he could not see why any difference should be made on account of the size of a borough. A man who worked three or four miles away from a small borough in which he lived, would find it just as difficult to go to the polling booth and vote as one who worked the same distance from a borough containing 5,000, or 10,000, or 50,000 electors.

MR. HORACE DAVEY said, he thought it was more possible for employers to put pressure upon working men in small boroughs than in large ones. He had known instances in which employers had sent their workmen, whom they suspected were going to vote contrary to the way in which they wanted them to vote, out of the borough to a place in which they were kept employed until 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening, and, in consequence, prevented their voting at all. He believed the measure was absolutely necessary in order to free working men from the pressure which would otherwise surely be put upon them at election time in small as well as large boroughs; and if the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Broadhurst) persevered in his intention to divide the Committee on his proposal to leave out the words "to which this Act applies," he should vote with him.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he rose to repudiate the doctrine of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent, on which he based his argument in favour of the Amendment—namely, that, under it, it would be less possible for employers to prevent their workmen voting. On behalf of employers, he maintained that they would never think of doing anything so base as the hon. Member had implied. With regard to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Attorney General, he thought that the statement made by

him had placed the Committee in a somewhat false position, inasmuch as he had left the question an open one, notwithstanding the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The hon. and learned Gentleman said it was a question which Members representing small boroughs would decide for themselves—a statement entirely at variance with that of the President of the Local Government Board. As far as he could make out from the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman, every Member who believed it to be to his own interest to vote for the extension or restriction of the hours of polling would do so.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON said, the hon. and learned Attorney General had referred to some boroughs of 600 or 700 voters, and said that in respect of them there was no necessity for the Act. Although the borough which he represented (Andover) was a borough of much more importance than those mentioned, containing, as it did, at least 900 voters, he might be allowed to state, in their behalf, that there was no question in which they took a stronger interest than that raised by the Amendment, the principle of which he hoped would be established by this Bill. As the borough had but one polling place, and many of the electors found it impossible to get there in time to record their votes—that was to say, before 4 o'clock in the afternoon—he sincerely trusted the Committee would adopt this Amendment. To have one hour of closing for the larger boroughs and another for the smaller boroughs, would, as far as he could see, lead to confusion without any good result.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 132; Noes 78: Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 135.)

MR. WHITLEY contended that the hours of polling named in the Bill were an unreasonable extension of those now fixed by law, and he proposed that they should be altered to between 8 A.M. and 7 P.M. during the summer, and 8 A.M. and 6 P.M. during the winter. If this Bill was to be what, a few months ago, he was told it was—namely, a measure for giving every working man an opportunity of recording his vote, some protection other than that which the Bill

proposed must be provided, and such was the object of the Amendment he was about to move. There were certain localities in Liverpool and other great towns where it would be almost impossible for respectable working men to record their votes without danger to themselves at an hour so late as that prescribed by the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had told them that 8 o'clock would be the hour in London. Now, there was no doubt that at that hour a large amount of drinking took place; and he had ascertained that that was the case in Liverpool. The town, again, was divided into separate districts—in one part there would be a large number of Protestants, and in another a large number of Roman Catholics, and the result was that there existed at all times a considerable amount of excitement; the Constable having assured him that at election time, if the polling went on at a late hour, he could not be responsible for the peace of the localities. Therefore, he believed that the extension of the hours of polling provided for by the Bill was an unreasonable extension and an unwise one, because it would lead to a great deal of malpractice of the kind he had indicated. Again, he held that it was the true interest of the ratepayer that workmen should have an opportunity of recording their votes, and that they should be protected by the State in exercising the franchise; but the Committee would note that, as a rule, most working men left off work in the winter months at about 4 o'clock, and therefore he was convinced that 6 o'clock in the evening would be sufficiently late to enable them to record their votes. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said this was simply an Extension Bill, and he (Mr. Whitley) would be glad to see the legitimate intention of the measure carried out; but he earnestly hoped the Committee would be induced to accede to a reasonable extension only of the hours of polling, and his own idea of what was reasonable in that respect he had embodied in the Amendment he was about to move. He believed there were some boroughs where the extension proposed in the Bill would not be open to the objections that lay against it in the case of others, and with regard to them he would suggest that the local

authorities should have the power of determining the hours that would be most convenient in their localities. Finally, on the ground of avoiding the abuses to which polling at a late hour must give rise, and with the object of bringing about the universal desire that the independent working man should have the opportunity of freely exercising the franchise, he submitted his Amendment to the favourable consideration of the Committee.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 7, leave out all the words after "until" to the end of the sub-section and insert "7 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day and no longer between the 1st day of April and the 30th day of September in each year; and shall commence at 8 o'clock in the forenoon and be kept open until 6 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day and no longer between the 1st day of October and the 31st day of March in each year."—(*Mr. Whitley*.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. SAMUEL SMITH said, he could not acquiesce in the Amendment of his hon. Colleague. His own experience was, that in Liverpool it was the universal feeling amongst the working classes that it was necessary that the polling booths should be kept open until a comparatively late hour, in order that the people should not lose their opportunity of recording their votes. In Liverpool, large numbers of the working classes worked two or three miles away from the polling places during the day-time; and he was satisfied that unless they were to extend the hour till 8 o'clock, as proposed in the Bill, thousands of people would be disfranchised. Nor was he in favour of leaving the matter to the decision of the local authorities, as suggested by his hon. Friend. He thought, on the contrary, there should be a limit of time fixed by the Bill. With regard, however, to the hours of opening the poll, he thought a later hour than 8 A.M. might suffice when the closing hour was 8 P.M.

MR. C. JAMES said, he was not in favour of any curtailment of the time proposed in the Bill, which would prevent a number of colliers exercising the franchise. These men had to walk very often two miles to the pit's mouth, descend a mile or so under ground, and walk another two miles afterwards;

then they had to return to the bottom of the shaft and be wound up. Again, when a collier reached his journey's end he would have to wash before going to vote; and therefore he said, if this Bill was to be of any use to the colliers, 8 o'clock must be the very earliest time at which the polling booth was closed. Finally, he appealed to the Committee not to agree to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Liverpool (*Mr. Whitley*) in the interest of a worthy class of men.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the discussion of this question had been anticipated somewhat on the Motion for Mr. Speaker leaving the Chair, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (*Mr. E. Stanhope*) having made some remarks bearing upon the subject, which he had ventured to answer. He could not help thinking that the hours proposed in the Amendment before the Committee would not be thoroughly satisfactory, either to colliers or to men engaged in the building trade. A good deal of evidence had come before the Government in regard to the hours of work obtaining in the various boroughs, which, if his hon. Friend were acquainted with it, he believed would cause him to confirm the statement that the hours he had proposed in his Amendment were not really such as would suit the classes he had alluded to. In 1872 the sliding scale scheme was proposed by the Government of the day; but the House of Lords rejected it on the Motion of Lord Shaftesbury. The Bill came back to the Commons, and the clause was again inserted; but the House of Lords once more rejected it, and the scheme was then dropped. On the whole, he thought the Committee would do well to adopt a fixed hour for polling.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had great sympathy with the object of the Amendment of his hon. Friend, who had given good reasons why the hours proposed should be considered in reference to the localities mentioned. But there was this objection to it, in common with the Bill itself—namely, that it introduced a rigid instead of an elastic system. He hoped, therefore, his hon. Friend would be inclined to adopt the plan which he himself had hinted at, of the local authorities fixing hours which would be suitable to the various localities.

MR. HOULDSWORTH said, he had no hesitation in accepting the proposal

that the local authorities should have the power to fix the hours in the various districts; but he should feel it his duty to oppose the proposition of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), and he was convinced that in large constituencies such as he represented, and that of the hon. Member for Liverpool, it would be perfectly impossible for the working men to exercise the franchise without an extension of the polling hours. The principal reason for that was that, as the House was aware, conveyances could no longer be used, and that prohibition had introduced an entirely new element in the large constituencies. An immense number of working men worked at a considerable distance from their homes, and he had statistics in his possession showing that in some wards in Manchester at least one-half, and in some cases as many as 75 per cent, of the working men would be disfranchised unless the polling hours were extended. As to the fear that an extension of polling hours would cause a danger of riot or disturbance, his view was that the danger of riot or disturbance arose not so much in connection with the polling as with the declaration of the poll, which, under the present system, often took place late in the evening, when there was a certain amount of excitement among the people, and a large number of people congregated to hear the declaration. If hon. Members knew the practice in these large towns, where there were a large number of polling districts, they would know that it was impossible for any large number of people to be congregated at any one of the polling stations when the polling was going on. The great danger was when there was a declaration of the poll, and there was an excited mob gathered together to hear the result; and he should suppose that the effect of this Bill, if it was carried into effect, would be practically that the declaration of the poll, instead of being made, as it was at present, at 9 or 10 o'clock in the evening, would be postponed to the following day. That, he thought, would be a great advantage. It would avoid the danger arising from a great number of people congregating together. He could not agree to the present proposal, and he must support the Government.

MR. WHITLEY said, he still thought the hours he proposed would be amply

sufficient to enable working men to record their votes; but he would not press his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he would not trouble the Committee by repeating the arguments he had used in support of his previous Amendment; but he wished to say that the result of a careful inquiry he had made in many boroughs in respect to the polling hours was, that there was the utmost difference of opinion. In some boroughs the people desired no change; in others they wanted the change which was proposed in the Bill; while in others they thought an elastic system was the best. They might, he thought, adapt the Bill to the season of the year, or the different circumstances of the locality; and these people earnestly hoped the Government would adopt some such Amendment as he now proposed, and for which he had already given reasons.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 8, at end, add "unless the local authority shall make an order varying either the hour when the poll shall commence or when it shall close, but so that the poll shall always be kept open for 10 hours at the least."

—(Mr. E. Stanhope.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. BROADHURST said, that, so far as his experience in connection with this matter had gone, it was entirely contradictory to that of the hon. Member and to the hon. Member's Amendment. He had found that there was a strong and almost unanimous feeling against leaving this matter to the local authorities, it being felt that in matters of this kind the House of Commons should decide, and not relegate the decision to Town Councils, there to be fought all over again. With regard to the suggestions of riot and possible drunkenness from late polling, he had seen late polling in London districts, both for School Board and other elections, and he had seen no riot or drunkenness; neither did he think it would occur anywhere else. If there was any voting in the world that ought to be done in the open daylight, it was the voting for the House of Commons itself, and they in the House should be the last to talk to people outside of the danger of voting under the influence of excitement.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE thought what he might have said had been somewhat anticipated, and that he could only repeat what had been said by the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent. When this proposal was made on a former occasion, almost with one accord the House rose against it, and the strongest objection was urged against leaving this power to the local authorities. The proposal was open to the objections he had advanced earlier in the evening, and he could not assent to it.

Question put, and *negatived*.

MR. BROADHURST said, he would not trouble the Committee with the Amendment next standing in his name, as he thought the Committee had decided on the principle of it earlier in the evening.

MR. CARINGTON hardly understood the course adopted by the hon. Member; but he should certainly take the sense of the Committee as to retaining "five thousand."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 13, leave out the word "five," in order to insert the word "four." — (*Mr. Carington.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'five' stand part of the Clause."

MR. HORACE DAVEY said, he had an Amendment, to leave out "five," and insert "three." He thought the Bill ought to be made applicable to all parts of the Kingdom, and he should, therefore, vote against "five thousand" standing part of the clause; and if the Forms of the House would permit it, he should move to substitute "three thousand."

MR. CARINGTON said, he was willing to withdraw the Amendment.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was prepared to accept "four" instead of "five," as the Committee might decide.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH supposed the Government had some reason for inserting the limit of "five thousand;" but he did not understand why the right hon. Baronet had so readily expressed his willingness to accept "four" instead of "five," or even a lower number. This was not a question of the number of electors, so much as of the number of polling places in a

constituency, and the occupations of the people. To apply this Bill to a borough like Shoreham, a large agricultural district, having 6,000 electors, in which there were about 22 polling places, with a very few electors to each, was quite unnecessary; but it was necessary for a municipal area, densely populated, containing a large number of working men who were employed in factories—men who had to vote at a few places only, and who would have great difficulty in voting within the present hours. He should have preferred to see a distinction based on the number of polling places rather than the size of constituencies; but he thought the Government ought to adhere to the limit they had inserted, or to give some reason for abandoning it.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the line of 5,000 was the line he had proposed as the result of inquiries among local authorities; but they should take in view the fact that there were a large number of places very close up to or just under 5,000, which were very important places. They had asked for this change, and as soon as the Bill was introduced this year five or six Members, coming from both sides of the House, had urged him to extend the area of the boroughs. There was some doubt as to whether the limit should be 4,000; but as to that not being the highest limitation his mind was made up, and he thought there was a strong feeling in the Committee in favour of an extension of the boroughs.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that earlier in the evening he had ventured to urge the Committee to make inquiries by means of a Select Committee, and everything that had been said since had justified that suggestion. The best answer that had been given to him was that the Government had made inquiries. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he had most carefully considered the matter, and had come to the conclusion that "five" ought, after all, to be put in; and that was a good argument in support of his proposition. He could not understand that the right hon. Gentleman now said he thought there should be further inquiries; and he hoped the Government would tell the Committee that they would stick to their previous decision.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that during this discussion both county and borough Representatives had spoken, and said the feeling in the counties had greatly grown on this subject, and there had no doubt been great progress in opinion on this matter. In the view of the Government they were not disposed to say arbitrarily that because at one time they had thought "five" would be the best number, they must now adhere to that figure, in spite of information given by borough Members.

MR. MARJORIBANKS wished to say a word or two on behalf of another class of men who had been mentioned. Remarks had been made about agricultural labourers and miners; but the Committee had heard nothing as to fishermen, and the distance they had to go to sea, and the distance they had to go to get home. A very large number of boroughs in Scotland were sea-coast towns, in which a large proportion of the constituents were fishermen, and this Bill would very much affect them. In one borough—Kilrenny, in St. Andrew's burghs, for instance—there were 360 electors, of whom 248 were fishermen. In Pittenween, of 270 electors 120 were fishermen. The total number of electors in the St. Andrew's burghs was only 2,600; so that if the limit of 3,000 was put in the Bill, a very large number of these men would be prevented from enjoying the franchise under the most favourable circumstances. He hoped the Government would consider the case of these men, and reduce the limit as low as possible.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he thought the Irish Members were entitled to have some distinction made between Irish electors and other electors. Owing to the limited franchise in some of the large and more important towns in Ireland there was only a small electorate, and the consequence was that, if the original figure was adhered to, only two cities, Belfast and Dublin, would come within the provisions of the Bill, while Cork, the third city in Ireland, would be excluded. He thought such cities and towns as Limerick, Londonderry, Cork, and Waterford ought to be considered, and that the limit should be fixed at "one thousand."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had agreed, on the part of the Govern-

ment, to accept 4,000, instead of 5,000, and that would bring some of these places within the Bill. He pointed out that the Bill which had been passed earlier in the evening would abolish the distinction between the English and the Irish franchises.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the right hon. Baronet had reminded his hon. Friend of a Bill which had been passed without dissent; but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would remind the right hon. Baronet that the time had gone by for passing different laws for England and Ireland. That principle, he thought, had been abandoned. He objected to the proposal in the present Bill, because, as his hon. Friend had pointed out, the figure in the Bill, while it would apply to English boroughs containing a certain population, would not apply to Irish boroughs of the same size, as the electorate in the latter was less than in the former. He urged on hon. Members who voted for the Amendment in the last Division to press on the Government—for they seemed very open to pressure—the necessity of reducing the number of the constituency to which the Bill was to apply until they had brought it down to 2,000.

Question put, and *negatived*.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: On the whole, I think, we can on this occasion support the word "four." There seems to be a strong opinion on the part of a large majority that such alteration should be made.

Question proposed, "That the word 'four' be there inserted."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had intimated it to be the intention of the Government to take the figure 4,000, as it would not be satisfactory either to one side of the House or the other. It would not meet the case of the small boroughs; and, as a matter of fact, they might just as well retain the figure 5,000. It was argued that the difficulty was to be met by a multiplication of the polling places; but the real difficulty was that the working men whom it was sought to assist in getting to the poll were working away from the polling places. These men in a small borough had as much right to be able to vote as men similarly situated

in a large borough. All working men had a right to be able to exercise the franchise without a sacrifice of wages. The case put by the hon. Member for Berwick (Mr. Marjoribanks) was put as a strong one. There was also the Irish case to consider; and as an Amendment, to test the question later on, he would move to insert the word "two."

COLONEL KING-HARMAN wished to know how many of the fisherman referred to by the hon. Member for Berwick (Mr. Marjoribanks) practised their vocation during the daylight?

MR. MARJORIBANKS replied, that fishermen mostly practised their vocation during the daylight. They went out at daylight to shoot their lines, and returned home about 6 o'clock in the evening.

MR. BROADHURST said, he hoped the Committee would adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler); and he wished to say a word with regard to the reply given to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Gloucester (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) earlier in the evening as to the reason 5,000 was adopted rather than 6,000. It was evident that 5,000 was adopted, not because it was logically more correct than 6,000, or than 4,000, but because the Government thought it as far as the Opposition would allow them to go. This measure, like other Liberal measures, had been framed upon what was possible with the Opposition, and not merely upon what was right and necessary. It was not in the slightest degree logical. Logically, all voters, whoever they were, and wherever they lived, had a right to be enabled to exercise the franchise. The Opposition always made a deal of talk about the large number of working men. Well, if there were so many Conservative working men, the Opposition, surely, were as much interested in giving them facilities for voting as the Liberals were. What would the Conservatives have to say to the working men, when, on asking for their votes, they were told—"We cannot vote for you, because the polling places are closed too early?" What would the Opposition say to the working men as to the course they had taken in refusing to give them facilities for registering their votes?

MR. GATHORNE-HARDY said, he should not have troubled the Committee

at all had it not been for what had just fallen from the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Broadhurst). His opinion was, that the hon. Gentlemen who were opposing the reduction to 4,000 were not those sitting on the Opposition side, but those sitting on the Ministerial side of the House. He had not heard during the course of the debate—and he had been sitting there during the greater part of the evening—any hon. Gentleman on the Opposition side of the House throw any impediment in the way of the Government in this matter. He had been rather surprised to find the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) name the number 4,000 instead of 3,000, which he (Mr. Gathorne-Hardy) should be perfectly satisfied to see adopted as the limit; indeed, he should not be in the least afraid of seeing an opportunity to record his vote given to every elector. He had been for years Member for a small borough, and was aware of this, that with the existing hours there was ample time for everyone to register his vote. Without wishing to cast any imputation on the employers of labour in the borough, he might mention that the last hour before the closing of the poll was the hour when the workmen polled. For these reasons, he was not anxious that there should be any change in the hours; but he objected to hon. Gentlemen getting up and casting on the Conservatives the imputation that they were the Members who would prevent working men from voting, when, in reality, it was the Government who would do so.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL wished to know whether the Government meant to hold to the view that in certain cases two boroughs could count as one for the purposes of the measure? Whatever the figure ultimately decided upon might be, he should like to have an assurance from the Government on this point.

MR. H. G. ALLEN desired to say a few words on behalf of a very meritorious class of voters who had not been hitherto mentioned. He referred to workmen in Her Majesty's Dockyards. He had the honour to represent a Dockyard constituency of under 4,000 persons. A great number of the workmen lived three or four miles from the place where they voted, many of them having to cross a ferry to get to it, and all these would be greatly disappointed if the line of population was so laid down as to exclude them

from the boon of being allowed to vote after the working hours. Under the circumstances, he thought that a small limit should be adopted. The Amendment on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Christchurch (Mr. Horace Davey) would include his constituency, as it proposed to make the limit 3,000. He thought that the right hon. Baronet was going to accept that limit, and very much regretted that he had not.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 89; Noes 93; Majority 4.—(Div. List, No. 136.)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Government accepted their defeat with cheerful resignation, as he had already thrown out to the Committee a suggestion as to the possibility of the figure "three" being adopted as against "four" [Mr. H. H. FOWLER: No; the figure "two."]. He would now propose that the word "three" be there inserted.

Question proposed, "That the word 'three' be there inserted."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

MR. H. H. FOWLER was sorry the Government had not accepted their defeat on this question in a spirit of complete resignation. He had certainly understood the decision of the House to be in favour of the figure "two" in the last Division. If the Government persisted in adhering to the figure "three"—which he trusted they would not—in clear opposition to an overwhelming majority of their own side—[Mr. R. N. FOWLER (Lord Mayor): Oh, oh!]. He (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was not aware that the Lord Mayor could be described as belonging to the side of the Government. They would be happy to welcome him on that side, however. But what he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) maintained was, that the Government, if they persisted in the figure "three," would do it in clear opposition to an overwhelming majority of their own side. Unless the Government were prepared to accept his Amendment, he should trouble the Committee to divide again.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) said, the Division taken was merely whether the figure "four" should stand part of the clause. After that, of course, every other figure was

open to consideration. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton spoke of the overwhelming opinion of the Members of the Party of whom he himself was one. Well, no doubt, the opinion of every Member should be taken into consideration, and there were a class of Members whose opinion, above all, should be taken into consideration, and they were the Members who represented constituencies of between 2,000 and 3,000. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton represented a constituency of many thousands. He (the Attorney General) undertook to say that if they would ask hon. Gentlemen who represented constituencies of between 2,000 and 3,000 what figure they preferred, it would be found that the majority were in favour of 3,000 ["No, no!"] Then, he could only say that the opinion of the majority of these hon. Members would be of value. He, however, did not agree with the hon. Gentleman who said "No." The Government had gone down as low as "two," and that, he thought, was as low down as they could go.

MR. E. STANHOPE was glad to hear what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman. So little did those hon. Members who represented between 2,000 and 3,000 electors think about the limit being fixed at 2,000, that there was no Amendment to limit the number to that figure on the Paper.

MR. MAGNIAC said, there was one Member in favour of fixing the limit at 1,000, as there was an Amendment on the Paper containing that figure.

MR. WILLIAMSON thought he was precluded from moving the Amendment he had on the Paper. He sincerely hoped the figure 2,000, or even 1,000, would be adopted in preference to 3,000. He knew cases in which men, though living in small boroughs, worked four or five miles from the polling places, and such men, he maintained, had as perfect right to have facilities for voting as those who lived in large and populous places.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he had voted against the Government in the last Division, but should support them now. The hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent (Mr. Broadhurst) should, he should think, be ashamed to support an Amendment recognizing the possibility of a constituency having so few as 2,000 voters.

MR. WILLIS said, he was very sorry that this change was proposed, as he was for men voting in the daylight and not in the dark. He wanted people who desired to vote to make some sacrifice in order to do it. He would rather narrow than enlarge the hours of polling, and was, therefore, sorry the Government had been defeated on the question. He should support the proposal to fix the limit at 3,000.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, that as far as he could gather from the speeches he had heard, and the general tenour of the Committee, and looking at the majority last time, it was clear that that majority were under the impression that the present opportunity was too good to lose—that they had only to press on to obtain another advantage. The best thing to be done, under the circumstances, was to move to report Progress. He begged to move that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Sidney Herbert*),—put, and *negatived*.

Original Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 110; Noes 67: Majority 43.—(*Div. List*, No. 137.)

MR. BROADHURST appealed to the Government to reconsider the whole question between now and the Report stage.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 2 (Definitions).

MR. DICK-PEDDIE moved to insert, after "borough," in line 23, "or combination of boroughs." He understood that it was the intention of the Government that combination of boroughs should be included in the Bill; but he feared they would not be unless they were specified, for the clause as it stood provided only for combinations of "places." Now, "places" were mentioned in the clause as something distinct from boroughs, and unless the words he proposed to insert were inserted, he feared that it might be held that combinations of boroughs were excluded from the benefits of the Act.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 23, after "borough," insert "or combination of boroughs."—(*Mr. Dick-Peddie*.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) assured the hon. Member that the Bill had been drafted with the view of including a combination of boroughs.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 7, at end, to add "the word 'Councillor' shall, in Ireland, be taken to mean Alderman."—(*Mr. Small*.)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to*.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 3 (Short title) *agreed to*.

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday* next, and to be *printed*. [Bill 261.]

REVISION OF JURORS AND VOTERS LISTS (DUBLIN COUNTY) BILL.

(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*,
Mr. Trevelyan.)

[BILL 124.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2 (Power to appoint revising barrister).

MR. BERESFORD proposed to leave out, in line 7, "Lieutenant or other Chief Governor or Governors," and insert "Chief Justice." He said, that in England it was the custom for a Judge of Assize to have the power of appointing Revising Barristers. In Ireland it would be much more convenient that the Chief Justice should have the power of appointing the Revising Barristers, instead of the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Justice being a Crown official, while the Lord Lieutenant was really a Party appointment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, leave out "Lieutenant or other Chief Governor or Governors," and insert "Chief Justice."—(*Mr. Beresford*.)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Lieutenant or other Chief Governor or Governors' stand part of the Clause."

MR. TREVELYAN said, the proposed Amendment was entirely contrary to the

practice in Ireland; and he was persuaded that if the practice to which the hon. Member (Mr. Beresford) had referred as existing in England did not already exist, it would not be adopted now. The whole analogy in Ireland was against the Amendment. In every other county in Ireland the revision was done by a County Court Judge, who was appointed, like all other Judges, great and small, by the Executive. In the City of Dublin there were two Revising Barristers who were not County Court Judges, but they were appointed by the Executive. The Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench had no particular official administrative capacity under the Judicature Act. The only offices to which he appointed were those specially attached to the Queen's Bench, and all other important patronage, except that which was applied by competition, was in the hands of the Chancellor. To place this matter in the hands of the Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench Division would be to cast a reflection upon the impartiality of the Lord Lieutenant. He thought Earl Spencer might be safely trusted to make this appointment.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN pointed out that, in the absence of the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Justice would appoint. The Bill ran—"The Lord Lieutenant or other Chief Governor or Governors."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that the Lords Justices did not include the Chief Justice.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he thought that in England the system of appointing by Judges had given complete satisfaction. No one had suggested that Revising Barristers in this country were actuated by political motives.

MR. WARTON said, it was clear that a Judge was better qualified than the Lord Lieutenant, who was not a lawyer, to find out who was capable of revising voters' lists. The only argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan) seemed to be that such and such was the practice in Ireland, and, therefore, they must stick to it. He hoped that, on reflection, the right hon. Gentleman would see it was proper that Judges should appoint lawyers. He should certainly support the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. Beresford).

MR. GRAY said, the present system was a most objectionable one in practice; but the proposed arrangement would be equally objectionable. The present Chief Justice happened to be a gentleman of such strong political proclivities that recently he was obliged to retire from the Bench on the occasion of a well-known political trial of great importance. He had to do so because of a partizan speech he made a short time previous. The idea of suggesting that, contrary to the ordinary practice, this gentleman should have the power of the appointment in question, was certainly most extraordinary.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he wondered whether the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gray) did not consider that the Lord Lieutenant was a strong political partizan?

MR. GRAY said, it was clear, from what had occurred recently, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman) held the opinion that Earl Spencer was a strong political partizan.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. WARTON proposed to insert, after "time," in line 9—

"Whenever satisfied that the Recorder of Dublin is unable, from unavoidable absence or illness, to discharge his duties with regard to the registration of Parliamentary voters and the revision of the list of jurors."

He very much regretted that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was not present, because he had most conclusively proved that the present Revising Barrister was not overworked. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had shown that the Recorder of Dublin was not occupied in his official duties more than 160 days in the year; but English Judges worked 220 and 230 days in the year; and it had been shown by the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) that in Belfast the Revising Barrister worked many more days a-year, and sat longer on each day, than the same official in Dublin. Besides, it had not been proved that on a single day the Revising Barrister was not able to attend to his double duties, because he could so arrange his time that he could perform his different duties at the proper time. As a matter of fact, the Revising Barrister could not take his vacation at the time of the year he

would like, and this was the reason of this monstrous joke to give another piece of patronage to the Lord Lieutenant. The Revising Barrister was not over-worked, and there was no justification whatever for this new appointment. It was possible that at times the Recorder might be unavoidably absent, and it was only at such times that this Bill ought to be brought into operation.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 9, after "time," insert "whenever satisfied that the Recorder of Dublin is unable, from unavoidable absence or illness, to discharge his duties with regard to the registration of Parliamentary voters and the revision of the list of jurors."—(Mr. Warton.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. TREVELYAN said, the objection to this and the following Amendment was, that they would result in nothing better than a sort of fiction. If the main contention on which the Bill was founded was right, the Lord Lieutenant would, annually, have to be satisfied that the Recorder required relief. The justification of the Bill depended upon this point—that, according to the ordinary routine of the criminal and civil sittings in the city and county, the business of the Recorder was so heavy up to the month of revision that he could not possibly get through his revision work without breaking up his ordinary sittings, and sitting continuously from June to Christmas. If the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) were carried, all the Recorder would have to do would be to decline to break up the sittings that he had subsequent to the 1st of October, and to state to the Lord Lieutenant that he was unable, in a satisfactory manner, to get through the heavy revising business which must begin not earlier than the 9th of September. Consequently, every year, a substitute would be appointed, and they would lose the great advantage of having a permanent officer for the business of registration. He did not think the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member would work.

MR. TOMLINSON said, it was much to be regretted that this was the first time there had been anything like an attempt to justify the introduction of the

Bill. The measure passed the second reading and into Committee *sub silentio*; and against the adoption of such a course the representatives of the taxpayers of the country had a right to protest. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Warton) had stated what he knew to be the view of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and, therefore, it was evident there was much difference of opinion as to the engagements of the Recorder of Dublin being such as made the appointment of a new officer necessary. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan) had offered his justification or his explanation of the Bill at the proper time—namely, upon the second reading—there would have been an opportunity of comparing his statements with those of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. He (Mr. Tomlinson) was not at all satisfied, after hearing the remarks of the Chief Secretary, that there were sufficient grounds for the creation of the new office which was proposed; in fact, the whole affair seemed very like a job.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH confessed that he heard with considerable surprise the statement of the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan). He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had occasion to look into this matter very carefully in the years 1877 and 1878, during the preparation of a Bill dealing with the Irish County Courts, which was about that time carried through the House. At that time the offices of Recorder of Dublin and Chairman of Dublin County were consolidated. A salary was allowed to the Judge holding both offices, and it was understood that he should do the duties of Revising Barrister as well. He could answer for this, at any rate, that at that time, and for some little time afterwards, the duties of the Recorder were by no means so heavy as to prevent him fulfilling completely and satisfactorily the duties of Revising Barrister. Probably, there were complaints that the Recorder did not hold Courts enough; but the remedy was to direct him to hold Courts at more places. Of course, he did not know what was the case now. It might be that the civil and criminal business of the Recorder had so much increased that it was im-

possible for him to perform the duties of Revising Barrister; but the Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan) had not given them sufficient evidence in support of that position. He understood the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), than whom no one had a better acquaintance with the matter, had distinctly denied that that was the fact. If the Recorder could satisfactorily perform the duties of Revising Barrister, it seemed to him (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) that it was proposed to create an entirely unnecessary office, and to throw an unnecessary burden on the taxpayers.

MR. TREVELYAN was glad the hon. Gentleman had started this question, because it gave him (Mr. Trevelyan) an opportunity of saying two or three words in regard to a subject which had been so often referred to. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) had said he (Mr. Trevelyan) had offered no explanation of the Bill upon the previous stages. As a matter of fact, he made a distinct statement the last time the Bill was in Committee; and on that occasion the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), speaking with much emphasis, characterized the Bill as a political job. He (Mr. Trevelyan) could not but believe that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who arranged for the consolidation of the offices now held by the Recorder of Dublin, was slightly incorrect in thinking that the Recorder actually discharged his duties as Revising Barrister without remonstrance. In January, 1880, the Recorder wrote a letter to Mr. Burke, the late Under Secretary, in which he said there was one portion of the functions, lately discharged by the Chairman, which he could not undertake—namely, the revision of the list of Parliamentary voters; and he respectfully asked the Government to take steps to relieve him of that part of his duties. He had read a very carefully composed Minute of Lord Chancellor Law, the gist of which was that, if the statement by the Recorder, that this work would take 21 days, were correct, something must be done. The right hon. Gentleman was as well acquainted as anyone with these matters. But it was thought well to wait, in order to

ascertain whether the period of 21 days was required. Well, the Recorder tried in vain to cut it down; and he found, in spite of everything attempted to shorten the time, the work took 23 instead of 21 days to get through. He need not go through the subsequent proceedings, and would simply observe that his right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was so convinced of the necessity for an alteration that a Bill was prepared. Both Mr. Hamilton and himself had considered the matter without any political ideas whatever; and it never occurred to him that he was doing anything more than carrying out the traditional policy of the Irish Office by introducing the present measure.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, it appeared to him that the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland would remove any difference of opinion which had existed as to the necessity for this measure. Hon. Members opposite seemed to be opposed to anyone connected with Ireland getting anything in the shape of increased pay, and he believed the hon. Member for Wexford would confirm that view. They had to consider whether or not they could obtain a proper revision of the jurors and voters lists in the county of Dublin, and whether or not the small payment to be made for it was required. For his own part, he was always delighted to meet with a proposal for the remuneration of gentlemen of the Irish Bar; and although hon. Gentlemen opposite, for right reasons, no doubt, were opposed to it, he thought the Committee ought to carry out the views of the right hon. Gentleman as proposed in the Bill.

MR. HEALY said, that applications on this subject were made by the Recorder of Dublin as far back as the time when the Duke of Marlborough was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The Committee should bear in mind that persons had to come a distance of 15 or 16 miles, and that, too, at harvest time, to Kilmainham Court House, in order to secure the privilege of the franchise. He noted as a peculiar circumstance that while the Notice Paper contained Amendments in the names of the hon. and learned Members for Sheffield, Bridport, Plymouth, and other hon. Members,

not a single Amendment had been put down by the Members for Dublin, who were more connected with the Recorder than any other Members of the House. Under the circumstances, he could only congratulate hon. Members who had given Notice of Amendments upon their new born zeal in this matter.

MR. WARTON said, his recollection was that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin had proved, with mathematical clearness, that there was no necessity for the Bill. On the other hand, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had not ventured to say that the Recorder had in any single year been unable to discharge his duties owing to unavoidable absence or illness. Therefore, he maintained that there was no reason for the Bill; but if the right hon. Gentleman would get up and say that the various duties of the Recorder called him in different directions at one time, and prevented his getting through this work, he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Question put, and *negatived*.

MR. TOMLINSON remarked that in England the Revising Barrister, having revised the county list, went on with the borough list; and he thought it was for the Government to explain why they should not adopt in Ireland a custom which had been found to work very well in England, especially when it appeared that the system in operation in Ireland was not satisfactory.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that very little could be urged in favour of this proposal. If the hon. Member had looked further into the question, he would have seen that £100 was a very little payment for the work required to be done; five guineas a-day being the smallest pay of a Revising Barrister—that was to say, if you were desirous of securing the services of a good man. Again, the revision for the county and for the borough ought to take place simultaneously, and it was for that reason that one man could not carry on both operations.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN asked whether the amount of £100 stated in the Bill was the only amount to be paid for this new office. One reason for his objecting to the Bill was that it gave an appointment to some supporter of

the Government. If the matter was to end with the £100 he should not oppose it; but he strongly objected to being told hereafter that the payment was to be five guineas a-day for as long as the Revising Barrister chose to keep the list before him. He wished to guard against the work being unnecessarily prolonged, which might happen through a briefless barrister being employed upon it, by fixing the amount at £100, and no more.

MR. WARTON said, that 200 guineas was the proper and usual fee for a Revising Barrister in England, and it ought to be the fee in Ireland.

MR. HEALY thought the Government might adopt the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport by making the payment £200 a-year.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he was willing to agree to the insertion of the words “not exceeding one hundred pounds.”

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 3, insert, after “paid,” the words “a sum not exceeding one hundred guineas per annum.”—(*Colonel King-Harman.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

MR. HEALY said, he was no advocate of giving large sums of money to Irish barristers; but in this instance he thought the Government would act wisely in refusing to put these words into the Bill. Dublin included several large Metropolitan areas. At the next revision there would be 50,000 voters to deal with; and the probability was that, if this hard-and-fast line were drawn, no one would take the office. He suggested that it would be far better to leave the matter in the discretion of the Treasury, and that the Government should decline to admit the proposed Amendment.

MR. WADDY pointed out that the Amendment should properly follow the “salary.”

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he cared not where the words were inserted; all he wanted was to have the words of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland embodied in the clause in such a manner that his object would be secured. He was willing to withdraw the Amendment for the purpose of its being inserted at another place.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Mr. Healy

Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the word "salary," insert "not exceeding one hundred guineas."—(*Colonel King-Harman.*)

MR. HEALY said, he earnestly hoped the Government would consider what they were about in this matter. Irish Members on those Benches had always taken a stand in that House in favour of economy. How could they expect to get an efficient man to sit, perhaps, for six weeks revising 40,000 or 50,000 votes, and to do the work even decently, for 100 guineas? They might get a man just called, and who, perhaps, never held a brief—the son of a Tory Judge, perhaps—who would give his decisions all one way; but what they wanted was someone in whom the people could trust.

MR. TREVELYAN said, as long as the franchise remained as now in Dublin, he should be decidedly of opinion that the business ought to be done for 100 guineas, and to that sum he should adhere. But there might be changes in the course of years which would render the payment too small to secure a proper revision of the list in Dublin County. Personally, he would suggest that no sum should be named, on his assurance to the House that the 100 guineas should not be exceeded as long as the work to be done remained as at present.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he was satisfied with the assurance given by the right hon. Gentleman that the sum of 100 guineas should not be exceeded, being at the same time open to the argument that, in the event of there being more work, there should be more pay.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Provision for absence of revising barrister) *agreed to.*

MR. TREVELYAN said, he would now ask the Committee to agree to the following clause:—

(Deduction from salary of future Recorders.)

"When first after the passing of this Act a vacancy occurs in the office of Recorder of Dublin, there shall be deducted from the salary of the person appointed to be Recorder, and of his successors in that office, the sum of one hundred guineas."

New Clause (*Mr. Trevelyan*) brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. T. O. THOMPSON said, the Committee had not heard the amount of the Recorder's salary and he was averse to reducing the salaries of Judges who were generally not overpaid—certainly without knowing all about the matter. He understood that the Recorder was to be relieved of the work of revision, because his time was so fully occupied in other ways that he could not give his attention to it. If that were so, it seemed an odd arrangement to reduce his salary.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he could not express any opinion as to whether the salary of the Recorder was small or not; but the amount of the salary was £2,500 a-year.

MR. WARTON said, the Recorder of Dublin was not overworked, and the Government knew this very well. They said he was overworked when they made the new office, and they said he was not when they made a deduction from the salary.

MR. PARNELL said, that the clause, as it originally stood in the draft of the Chief Secretary, provided that the extra charge which would be thrown upon the Treasury should be deducted from the salary of the Recorder; but as the clause had now been altered, the only amount thrown on the Treasury would be 100 guineas. He should be glad to learn what was the reason for this proposition, and he thought the pruning knife might very well be used with regard to the salaries of these officers.

MR. TREVELYAN pointed out that he had not named 100 guineas; and while sympathizing with the hon. Member in his interest on behalf of the Treasury, he thought the proposal could not be adopted.

MR. HEALY said, he was dissatisfied with the reply of the right hon. Gentleman, and asked for some further explanation.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. PARNELL thought it would be in the recollection of the Solicitor General that last year a Memorial was addressed to the Lord Lieutenant on this

matter, and he declined to interfere, on the ground that the revision was to take place in a short time. He thought the Government ought to make some inquiry into the matter.

MR. TREVELYAN promised that the points of difference should be carefully considered.

Clause agreed to, and added to the Bill.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

CRIMINAL LUNATICS BILL.

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

[BILL 256.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HIBBERT, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, explained that it carried out a great many recommendations that had been made by persons well acquainted with the subject, as well as certain decisions that had been come to by the House. He did not intend to proceed with it in Committee until the 8th of July, and he hoped the House would assent to take this stage now.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

MR. R. H. PAGET felt that at this late hour it would be useless to attempt to oppose the second reading of this Bill, nor did he propose to do so; but he believed the provision with respect to the charge for criminal lunatics would require great consideration, with a view to its being amended when the Bill got into Committee.

MR. HEALY said, it was very important that the House should know exactly what were the intentions of the Government, and that further time should be given for considering the measure.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

COLONIAL PRISONERS REMOVAL

BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 257.]

(*Mr. Evelyn Ashley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Evelyn Ashley.*)

Mr. Parnell

MR. R. H. PAGET criticized the terms prescribed by the Bill.

MR. HARRINGTON said, the Bill was only circulated to-day, and hon. Members had not had an opportunity of studying it. It was not treating the House in a fair manner to bring it on in this way, so soon after its circulation, and at such a late hour. He himself had not studied the measure, but had glanced at the Memorandum which accompanied it, and certainly thought it opened up a very large subject of discussion, which would keep the House occupied a pretty considerable length of time. Even after they had devoted a long period to it, he did not believe they would pass it. It proposed to allow the removal of prisoners from one part of Her Majesty's Dominions to another—it would permit such a large scope of removal that those of them who wished to keep a jealous eye on the conduct of British gaols would be inclined to see it thoroughly thrashed out before passing into law. They might have prisoners removed from Ireland to the Colonies, which might mean transportation.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he could put the hon. Member right in one word. The provisions of the Bill were simple, and had only a humane purpose. It was only intended to permit removals where the effect of keeping prisoners in the gaols in which they had been first confined would be to endanger health or life. The Bill was intended for such a case as this—where a European committed some crime in the tropics, in Sierra Leone, for instance, and was convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Imprisonment for any length of time would mean death to a European. Power was taken in the Bill to prevent such an accident. In Heligoland, moreover, there was no prison at all, and this Bill would give power to remove a prisoner convicted there to some other place.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had carefully examined the Bill, and was disposed to think that it was not one that should be opposed as at all a dangerous measure. He believed it to have been dictated by feeling of humanity; but, at the same time, he wished to say a word as to the abuse of the system of putting Memoranda in front of Bills. If Mr. Speaker would look at the present Memorandum, he would see

that it not only laid down the scope of the measure, but gave reasons why the House should pass it. It went the length of saying that the Bill had been sent by Circular to Colonial Governors, and had either been approved or not objected to by the great majority of them. The Memorandum also said that, though it was not likely that the necessity for putting in force the powers of the Bill would frequently arise, still it would occasionally occur. He put it to Mr. Speaker whether that was not an abuse of that liberty allowed to Members who introduced Bills for the purpose of giving a short indication of what the nature and scope of a Bill was? If this sort of thing were to be allowed, was there any limit to the debatable matter which could be introduced into a Memorandum?

MR. SPEAKER: I have to say, in reply to the hon. Member, that a Memorandum attached to a Bill should be a plain statement of the scope of the measure, and should contain nothing in the shape of argument.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 109.]

(Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [20th June].

MR. HEALY said, that before the Motion was put he would ask the House to consider what it would involve. There was a Morning Sitting to-day, and he would put it to hon. Members whether their time could not be more profitably employed than in taking a measure which was almost certain to be talked out? The Government had their Irish land and education schemes, and a number of other measures which did not relate to Ireland, to dispose of; and would it not be better to proceed with one of these than for the third time waste a day over the Irish Sunday Closing Bill? Seeing that the measure only applied to five cities, there could not be said to be any very keen demand for it. He would ask the Government to give some consideration to the wishes of certain Members of the House, and

to remember that there were other Bills about which the people of Ireland were more anxious than they were about this Sunday Closing Bill. They were anxious, for instance, to see whether the hybrid Board under the Purchase Bill of the Government was to be carried or not.

MR. COURTNEY said, the Government very much regretted the waste of time which occurred; but he trusted that in the course of to-morrow they would see the second reading of the Bill in question disposed of.

MR. HEALY: Very well; we shall see.

MR. COURTNEY: I am not able to say positively that we shall; but I hope so. We want to get rid of this Bill—it is an obstacle that blocks the way.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR wished to know what Bill would be put on the Paper immediately after the Irish Sunday Closing Bill?

MR. COURTNEY: The Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases Bill.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, that, as one who supported the Bill proposed to be brought on as the first Order to-morrow, he wished to say that it would tend to the more speedy passage of the measure ultimately, if Bills of a more important character were disposed of by the Government first. There could be no doubt that the supporters of the Bill in Ireland would view with a great deal more satisfaction the action of the Government in taking up and disposing of Bills of a more pressing character. As he said, he was a supporter of the Sunday Closing Bill; but he did not think the Government should bring it forward when there were so many Bills requiring a more pressing attention at the present moment. He hoped the Government would reconsider the matter, and put down on the Paper some measure of greater importance than this.

Debate further adjourned till Thursday next.

MOTIONS.

PERSONAL ESTATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK, Bill to make provision for the Administration of the Personal Estates of persons dying domiciled in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK, Mr. SELLAR, Mr. ARTHUR

ELLIOTT, Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL, Dr. WEBSTER, Mr. BOLTON, and Mr. DALRYMPLE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 262.]

NAVAL DISCIPLINE ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Bill to amend "The Naval Discipline Act, 1866," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN and Sir THOMAS BRASSEY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 263.]

House adjourned at Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 27th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Representation of the People* (159); Licensing Act (1872) Amendment* (160); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 4)* (161); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7)* (162); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4)* (163); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7)* (164); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8)* (165); Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 14)* (166); Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 15)* (167); Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order* (168); Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment* (169).

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Order (Highways)* (141); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2)* (132); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 11)* (156); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12)* (142); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13)* (143); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4)* (136); Tramways Provisional Orders* (150); Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3)* (151); Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order* (148); Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2)* (149); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders* (137); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2)* (138); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5)* (139); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6)* (140); Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2)* (144); Newcastle Chapter (130).

Committee—Benefices (Tiverton Portions) Consolidation Amendment* (154).

Committee—*Report*—National Debt (Conversion of Stock)* (145).

Report—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4)* (127).

Third Reading—Water Provisional Orders (No. 2)* (128); Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2)* (126); Fisheries (Ireland)* (77); School, &c. Buildings (Ireland)* (129), and *passed*.

Withdrawn—Union Officers' Superannuation (Ireland)* (146).

PUBLIC HEALTH—OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA AT TOULON, FRANCE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in rising to ask a Question of which he had given private Notice—namely, Whether the Government had any information to impart in regard to the outbreak and spread of cholera in the South of France? said, he wished very much to impress upon the Government that there were certain things they were enabled to do; and particularly the necessity that they should take measures of precaution. An Act was passed last year, which gave very extensive powers to the authorities for the prevention of diseases; and he had no doubt that Her Majesty's Government intended to put those powers into force. But, if he remembered rightly, the Act was only in continuance for one year, and it expired in September next. It was, therefore, important that it should be renewed; and he would like to know, not that he had any great doubt about it, whether it was intended to renew it? The second point which he wished to draw the attention of the Government to was the importance of urging upon local authorities to take measures, such as the use of disinfectants, and other means that might be considered desirable, for the prevention of the disease. He also wished, lastly, to put it to the Government as to whether it was their intention to send out some qualified medical man, in the nature of a Commissioner, to inquire into and report upon the exact character of the disease, about which there seemed to be a good deal of difference of opinion. It was desirable, at all events, to know whether the disease was Asiatic cholera, or whether it was a disease due to local causes.

LORD CARRINGTON: My Lords, I have to state, in reply to the first part of the Question of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon), that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to ask your Lordships to renew the Act of last year to which he has referred, and which expires, as he says, in September next. In reply to the second part, I have to state that great precautions have been taken by the Government in the shape of orders and instructions issued to sanitary authorities. Under those regulations, an officer of the

Customs may detain a vessel on its arrival in England, if he suspects it to be infected with cholera. He must give notice of the detention to the sanitary authority of the place of detention, who must thereupon cause the ship to be visited and examined by their medical officer of health or some other medical man. Moreover, without any action on the part of the Customs officer, the medical officer of health may visit and examine any ship which he has reason to believe is infected with cholera, or has come from a place infected with cholera. If, after his examination, the medical officer of health certifies that the ship is infected, no one can leave it until he has been examined by the medical officer of health; and, should he be found to be suffering from cholera, he must be sent to an hospital. Doubtful cases may be detained on board, or at an hospital, until it is ascertained whether the disease is cholera. Provision is also made in the regulations for the disinfection of articles on the ship. As regards the question whether a Government official should be sent to Toulon to report on the outbreak of cholera there, the Local Government Board think that at present there is a want of evidence to show that it is more than an outbreak of severe and excessive diarrhoea engendered by the insanitary conditions of the place. That, so far, is satisfactory. Moreover, it is stated that Drs. Brouardel and Proust have been commissioned by the French Government to make inquiry as to the disease and the measures which are taken to prevent its spread. It may be anticipated that the Report of these gentlemen will contain the information required. In these circumstances, it appears premature at present for the Board to determine whether they should recommend the Treasury to incur the expense of sending an Inspector to make special inquiries.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he was much obliged for the answer of the noble Lord; but he must express his great disappointment at the concluding observation—that the Local Government Board did not think fit to send out a Commissioner to inquire into it on the ground of the expense. He protested against any such conclusion as unworthy; and as the outbreak was, apparently, a very serious matter, he hoped the Go-

vernment, or, at any rate, the Local Government Board, would give it their earnest consideration.

LORD CARRINGTON said, that he would bring the recommendation of the noble Earl under the attention of the President of the Local Government Board.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL— DEBATE OF TUESDAY, JUNE 24.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he must ask permission to be allowed to make a personal explanation. Last Tuesday, when the House was considering the Bill for the Protection of Young Girls, he stated that the noble and learned Earl on the Front Bench (Earl Cairns) had no right to contend that the House was bound by the compromise arrived at by the Select Committee fixing the age of consent at 16; because he himself, on one occasion, voted in favour of an Amendment proposed in Committee by the noble Lord (Lord Mount Temple), to raise the age of consent from 16 to 17. He (the Earl of Milltown) was then contradicted by the noble and learned Earl; but he found, on reference to *Hansard*, that the noble and learned Earl did last year, when the Bill was then before the House, support that Amendment both by speech and vote, and that the Amendment was also supported by two other Members of the Select Committee, the Bishop of London and Lord Norton, making, with the Mover, no less than four Members of the Committee who had thrown the compromise to the winds.

EARL CAIRNS said, he had, on Tuesday last, understood the noble Earl who had just spoken (the Earl of Milltown) to refer to the Committee stage of the Bill in this, the present, Session; and he pointed out that when the noble Lord (Lord Mount Temple) proposed an Amendment to raise the age to 17 years, he (Earl Cairns) recommended its withdrawal, on the ground that the age of 16 had been fixed as a compromise, and should be accepted. The noble Earl was, however, quite correct in stating that when, last Session, the same noble Lord brought forward an Amendment with the same object, he (Earl Cairns) did support it,

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACTS—
OVER-PRESSURE IN BOARD
SCHOOLS.

OBSERVATIONS.

EARL DE LA WARR, in rising to direct attention to the Elementary Education Acts of 1870 and 1876, as now enforced by the Education Department of the Privy Council, with special reference to over-pressure in schools under Government inspection; and to the increasing burdens imposed upon rate-payers for the maintenance of board schools; also, to bring under the notice of the House the present position of voluntary schools, said, that, while he asked their Lordships to recall to their recollection the circumstances which attended the passing of the Act of 1870, he wished it to be understood that he was not objecting to the principle of the Act, but only to the manner in which it was put in operation by the Education Department. In their Report the Commissioners appointed in 1861 to inquire into the state of Elementary Education stated that satisfactory progress had been made, and that the number of children in schools had increased from 500,000 to 2,500,000; and there was no expression of opinion in the Report as to the want of school boards, or to the want of a higher Standard in elementary education. He thought that that Report showed that there was no great demand for the system introduced under the Education Acts. The Act of 1870, as worked by the Education Department, was oppressive, in that it required a larger amount of work, and, consequently, caused a large amount of pressure to be put not only upon the scholars, but also upon the teachers, which pressure affected the children and the teachers both in mind and in body. He would not detain their Lordships by quoting from many of the numerous Reports which had recently appeared from great medical authorities on the subject of over-pressure in elementary schools; and he had no doubt their Lordships were aware that Dr. Crichton Browne had reported, and that very ably, on the subject at the request of Mr. Mundella. It was, he thought, much to be regretted that the noble Lord the Lord President of the Council (Lord Carlingford) had not put the House in possession of that very able Report; but, happily, they

had the words of Dr. Crichton Browne himself, in a letter which appeared in *The Times* of the 16th of June, in which he said that his Report contained strong evidence that over-pressure existed in elementary schools. The Education Department might have had their own reasons for not making the Report public; but when Dr. Crichton Browne said he was requested by Mr. Mundella to visit some schools, and to report to him as to any defects he might discover in the present system, he (Earl De La Warr) was at a loss to understand how it could be said that that Report "in no proper sense originated with the Education Department." Speaking of the increase of headaches among children, Dr. Crichton Browne said—

"Headaches in children used to be rare, and were regarded as almost always importing organic disease of the brain; but they are now of daily occurrence."

He further stated—

"By far the largest mortality from this disease (hydrocephalus) is among infants under five years of age, in whom education has not begun; but it is a significant fact, to which attention has not hitherto been directed, that during the last 10 years, when education has been so much extended, an enormous and disproportionate increase has taken place in the number of deaths ascribed to it in the education and post-education periods."

Numerous instances were reported of failing sight in consequence of over-work; and what was said with reference to scholars applied in a hardly less degree to teachers also, especially pupil teachers. Dr. Pridgin Teale, President of the Health Department at Leeds, said—

"The nation can hardly realize what is the life of these pupil teachers. Apprenticed to their calling at the age of 13 or 14, they spend five and a-half hours a-day in the fatiguing work of drilling little children in their lessons, and in trying to maintain their attention."

Besides the overwhelming testimony of medical men to the ill-effects of over-work upon scholars and teachers, similar evidence was given by managers of schools, masters, and others. He would refer to one or two cases only among many. One writer said—

"Most of us are suffering from the strain put upon us by the amount of work demanded by the New Code."

Another master wrote—

"As things are going on at present this high pressure will be the cause of infinite mischief to teachers and scholars, not, perhaps, now, but in a

few years. My opinion is, that over-pressure must continue as long as the Department continues to hold out money prizes for the best-crammed children."

A master in Manchester said—

"I believe the health generally of teachers and scholars to be seriously affected; the eyesight of our scholars is palpably suffering, and I do not believe the mental condition to be nearly as good as it was."

The cause of the evils here alluded to was not the Act itself, but the manner in which it was enforced by the Education Department. The requirements were too great, and they were year by year increasing. Nearly every Standard in Schedule I. of the present Code showed increased requirements when compared with the Code of 1881. Before the introduction of the New Code, the full class subjects grant was paid, if 50 per cent of the scholars passed; whereas it was now required that 75 per cent should pass. There was another change in the last Code, which was important as affecting over-pressure—namely, that every child whose name had been on the books for 22 weeks must be presented for examination. In the former Code it was required that a child should have attended at least 250 times before being presented for examination. Were they to go on, year by year, increasing the difficulties which children and masters had to encounter? They must remember that the Education Act of 1870, under which the Education Department exercised their authority, was an Act "to provide for elementary education in England and Wales." But that appeared to be lost sight of by the Department, for what did they find in the Code of Regulations recently issued? Education was offered for almost any purpose or profession. It was true there were, first, elementary subjects—reading, writing, arithmetic, and needlework; but there followed what were called class-subjects, and what were they? They found among these subjects singing, English, geography, all of which were good things. Then they came to elementary science and history. Then followed what were called "specific subjects"—algebra, Euclid, mensuration, mechanics, chemistry, physics, animal physiology, botany, and principles of agriculture; including also Latin, French, and domestic economy. He asked whether that could be called elementary educa-

tion? Why should these subjects be taught at the expense of compulsory rates? He should really be glad to know in what sense schools which taught these subjects could be considered elementary schools? He did not say that there should be no such schools; but he held that schools which existed under an Act of Parliament intended to promote elementary education, and which were in a great measure supported by compulsory rates, and were intended for the poorer classes, ought not to be giving an education fit only for secondary schools, and involving an expenditure far above what was required for primary schools. Now, in order to attain to the higher Standards, not only in elementary subjects, but also in what were called class and specific subjects, more work was necessary both for teachers and scholars, and over-pressure was the result. The Act of Parliament, as he had said, was not so much to blame. It was the Education Department, who put on the pressure, either through Codes of Regulations or by means of Inspectors. Every individual child had to pass an examination by an Inspector, before a grant of money could be made for that child; and, in fact, the payments to the school depended entirely upon the results of examination. Their Lordships would easily see what the consequence must be. The masters, the managers, and the ratepayers, in the case of a board school, were all interested in the children gaining as high a percentage of marks as possible, in order that the school might obtain the highest Government grant. It was, therefore, no secret that children were frequently kept over-hours at work, when the day of examination was approaching, in order that they might pass well. This was the evil at the bottom of the whole system. It was the making Government grants in aid of schools dependent upon the results of individual examination—in other words, the holding out of money prizes for the best-crammed children. What had been well described as the "epidemic of examinations which has overrun the country" had laid its hand upon the Education Department. Before leaving this part of the subject, he must ask their Lordships to notice one other cause of pressure. When once children had been placed in a certain Standard, they must every year be raised

to the next Standard, without any reference to capacity or ability. It did not follow that a child who could do an addition sum could be brought without difficulty to do a rule-of-three sum. But, somehow or other, the child must be brought to do the rule-of-three sum, or the school would lose some of the Government grant; and pressure must therefore be applied in some way or another. There was one more fertile source of pressure—the practice of giving lessons to be done after the hours of school. It was not an absolute requirement; but, owing to the mode in which money grants were made, it became almost a necessity. Happily, however, it had recently been decided in the Court of Queen's Bench that home lessons could not be enforced. He passed on now to another point, the sources from which a large portion of the elementary schools were maintained. There was, first, the grant of the public money, which, as he understood, was, for the coming year, over £3,000,000. That was a very large sum; and, as it seemed to him in many respects, very lavishly expended. Then there was a large sum raised by rates for board schools—upwards of £1,500,000, and a considerable sum for voluntary schools. Many of their Lordships doubtless knew that the school rates were becoming a very heavy burden to ratepayers. When the Education Act enforcing them was passed, a rate of 3*d.* in the pound was the amount generally named; but now the rate exceeded, in most places, double that sum, and even more. In London he was informed it was 8*d.* or 9*d.*, and was expected to be still higher. He held in his hand a statement, which he believed to be correct, that in 189 places the School Board rate was 1*s.* and upwards; in 214 from 9*d.* to 1*s.*; in 519 from 6*d.* to 9*d.*; and in 610 from 3*d.* to 6*d.* That was the natural consequence of the expensive system carried on and encouraged by the Education Department—expensive buildings, high salaries, which were a necessity for the class of teaching now given, and many other costly items, which we were told in 12 years had raised the sum expended by the London School Board to about £12,000,000. It might be said that the ratepayers were doing it themselves. That was true to some extent, and, no doubt, they had themselves to blame;

but the fault rested not wholly with them. The Education Department applied a stimulus through Inspectors, and by offering large grants of public money. He ventured to urge that an elementary school, which was in a great measure supported by rates, should confine itself to elementary subjects. If more was wanted, let there be schools of another class which were not supported by compulsory rates. There was one other matter which he could not pass over without notice. It was that of the large number of infants brought into public elementary schools under the regulations of the Education Department. It was not a little startling to hear a statement made a short time ago by Mr. Mundella that there were 400,000 children between the ages of three and five years in elementary schools; and though it appeared in the Education Act of 1876 that “a child means a child between the ages of five and 14 years,” yet the Education Department encouraged the attendance of children who could scarcely speak or walk, and, what was more, threw upon the ratepayers, aided by grants of public money, the burden of providing teachers and accommodation for them in schools which were, in fact, nurseries and not schools. There was no country in Europe where the children were taken into primary schools before the age of six. He had in his hand a statement from the chief manager of a large school numbering 1,235 children, in which there were 146 infants under the age of five years. It was added—

“Every infant, even the youngest, is liable to be examined, if the Inspector chooses to do so. . . . Those under five have not been hitherto examined; but we are required to present every child for examination between the ages of five and seven.”

He would refer now, for a moment, to the position of voluntary schools. He need hardly remind their Lordships that there was a considerable number of persons in this country who had a conscientious objection to schools where religious instruction was not given, or given only in a very limited and indefinite manner; and that was not confined to one class of persons only; it was found to a great extent in all classes, and not the least in the poorer class. He might adopt the words of the Royal Commission to which he had before referred—

"That it is placed beyond all doubt that the great body of the population are determined that religion and education must be closely connected."

The semblance of religion in board schools did not satisfy the desire for Christian instruction. The proof of that lay in the fact of there being such a large number of voluntary schools. Now, he thought it clear that the development of the present system of board schools was not the legitimate result of the Education Act of 1870, which was not intended to supplant voluntary schools, but rather to supplement them. The action, however, of the Education Department tended to suppress them. Encouragement was given to pre-occupy districts with school boards, offering special advantages of a higher education, which voluntary schools could not afford; and he believed that prizes and scholarships were sometimes offered in board schools, while voluntary schools were excluded from this advantage. He was at a loss to know why the Education Department should make it their aim to encourage the board school to the detriment of the voluntary school, unless it was for the reason that distinct religious teaching was given in the one, while in the other, if any at all was given, it was of a decidedly negative character. And what was the result? Parents who desired to have their children educated as Christian children could not do so where there was only a board school, and that applied to a large number of persons in this country. It applied not only to members of the Church of England, but, in like manner, to Roman Catholics, to the numerous body of Wesleyans, and to all who believed that religious instruction was an essential part of education. And thus the school-board system was unjust in its present operation, inasmuch as those who, from conscientious motives, could not send their children to board schools, were, nevertheless, compelled to pay rates in support of them, while they were, at the same time, maintaining voluntary schools. Was there no way of meeting that difficulty? Surely, some consideration should be shown to those who were supporting efficient schools, and yet were compelled to pay rates for board schools. It was a matter which deserved the consideration of the Education Department, whether exemption from the payment of rates, or some

other mode of relief, could not be granted to those who were maintaining voluntary schools carried on under the rules of the Education Department, and where the children passed well through the examinations of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

LORD NORTON, in rising to call special attention to the effects of paying for education by grants on results, said, that the system was at the root of all the complaints which had been made with regard to over-pressure in connection with national education in this country. Provision for the education of all young children, under all circumstances, by a fixed scale of payment on specific results of teaching was not only absurd in itself, but a unique idea which had occurred to no other country but England, and one which could stand the test of neither reason nor experience. It was, in his opinion, high time it was reconsidered. Mr. Mundella's test of its success, in moving the Education Estimates a few days ago, was that one-sixth of the population had been brought under the system. The Vice President's argument only proved, however, that the limits as to the age and class of children to be educated at the public expense, which Parliament had laid down, had been largely exceeded. One-sixth of the population must include all children of every class within school age. The right hon. Gentleman said also, in speaking of the expenditure, he omitted the local and voluntary contributions and the many kinds of schools for poor children which came under the Estimates of other Departments; so that the sum of £3,000,000, which he asked the House to vote, was not half the amount of the public money expended on the education of children. The principle of payment by results was first started in the Revised Code of 1862. It was recommended, in order that good proof might be obtained of teachers doing their duty, and for the purpose of securing to the taxpayers a *quid pro quo* for their money. A general inspection of the recognized schools was thought too vague, and the individual examination of every child by minute and identical regulations was substituted. There was no higher authority upon this subject than the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Exeter). In a recent letter the right rev. Prelate pointed out that when he was engaged

in a very special inspection of schools before the Revised Code was brought out, he thought he found great negligence of grounding in the teaching, so that children in the top classes, pretending to advanced things, often did not understand the very elements of the subjects in which they were supposed to have been so highly educated. Other children were found leaving the school from the lower classes, not having risen at all. The right rev. Prelate was of opinion that payment by results had mitigated these evils. But he qualified his approval of the system most materially, by confessing that it had been drawn too tight, and that schools had suffered and were suffering from it. The right rev. Prelate stated that the Code compelled all scholars to learn at the same pace—an evenness of progress which was simply impossible; and, although he allowed that Mr. Mundella had been relaxing the system, he had not gone far enough. The right rev. Prelate further said that he constantly saw schools dislocated by an attempt to keep to the Standards. The sum of all this he (Lord Norton) took to be that though payment by results might have diminished from negligence, it was a Procrustean method, too rigid for a system which required for any realization of its object—that of training all sorts of children's faculties and characters—freedom to the teacher, adaptation to every case and circumstance, and independence of resources to carry on the entire work. Mr. Mundella informed some complainants that over-pressure was not the fault of the Code, but of its administration. "Be content," said he, "with small grants, and there need be no over-pressure." But as long as the income of a school is made up of grants on exhibited samples of work, the school will exert itself to the utmost to earn grants. Earning had become the usual phrase for the school administration and the test of educational success. Every fresh edition of the Code was appreciated by the amount of grants that might be earned by it. Teachers were valued by their earnings. Children were cared for in proportion to their grant-earning capacity. School-books were advertised as calculated to earn the Code grants. National education had become degraded to a lottery of Government prizes. The point for

which he contended was, however, being gradually conceded; but the system was so slow in its process of reform, that he feared it would leave permanent injury to National education behind it. In recent editions of the Code, the "merit grant," and payment on average attendance, were steps towards the more rational system of all other countries. However, the Revised Instructions to Inspectors, just circulated, admitted almost the whole of his argument. These minute Instructions were the climax of official complication. They carried precision down to the description of large hand, as writing three-eighths of an inch in height. If this system were to be continued, and such minute directions laid down, they might supersede personal inspection by some mechanical invention. He would specify some of the terms of the Revised Instructions. Examinations were to be by samples of classes, and not of all children individually. Again, as to "class subjects," Inspectors were simply to say whether a grant should be made in them or not. "Specific subjects" were said to be intended for a few only, and therefore only to be attempted in the larger schools. This was an admission that the 4th Schedule was absurd in village schools, and that rigid Standards were altogether absurd for all schools alike. The leading journal, with its instinct of the tendency of opinion, observed on these instructions that—

"The bold abandonment of individual examination on certain subjects, as now distinctly avowed, cannot fail both to save the Inspector's time, and to relieve the burden that weighs heavily on some children's minds,"

—in other words, they would relieve over-pressure. *The Times* also found in the limit put on specific subjects—

"A plain discouragement of pretentious pursuits of higher subjects."

In these admissions, he found confirmation of his repeated representations. What system of school-support, then, should take the place of abandoned payment on results? They could not do better than follow the terms of the new Government Instructions. The Inspectors should be experts, capable of going frequently and unexpectedly into schools, as the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Exeter) did, and examining samples of classes, noticing the mutual bearing of the children and the teachers, to report

simply whether each school was fit to continue on the recognized list for public payment or not. After due warning, a badly-reported school would cease to be recognized until efficiency became restored. This would terminate the fraud of educating by way of making "earnings;" the teachers would have fixed incomes with prizes for extra good service; and they would be free to exercise each their special talents in the best care and training of every child. They would cease making their pupils only a means to increase a precarious income. The further fraud of underhand attempts to stretch elementary education over higher science would lose both its incentive and its means, and pretentious pursuits would not occupy the place of elementary instruction. School Boards were obliged to have their own Inspectors, who reported, not in got-up results, but on the general features of education. One of them had just expressed an opinion that the fixed annual examinations are a fatal mistake. In one of his Reports, Mr. Matthew Arnold had said that—

"A decline of intellectual life was distinctly due to the mechanical mode of examination introduced by the Revised Code."

It was not jealousy of popular education that suggested these misgivings; but, on the contrary, it was a desire to save the people from the falsehood of an educational system which mistook a cram of scraps of evanescent knowledge for training the faculty of acquiring knowledge usefully.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in asking the Lord President of the Council, Whether he will sanction grants to schools belonging to school boards which are evading the law, as recently declared by the Law Courts respecting compulsory home lessons, by compelling by regulation the attendance of children beyond the statutory hours of attendance at school? said, that he should not have been surprised if the noble Lord the Lord President had objected to his Question, as implying that he would usurp that dispensing power, the claim to which had been one of the principal causes of James II. losing his Throne, but that the Lord President and the Education Office were constantly straining the law. Last Session the Lord President maintained the legality of home lessons; and the Education Office

was now, as at Staines, enforcing the spending of the ratepayers' money for children of the age of from 3 to 5, although the Act of 1870 only gave authority over children of from 5 to 13, and they had no right to provide Kindergartens [at the public expense. Since the legal discussion against home lessons, the Keighley and the Bradford School Boards had increased the hours of attendance in school; but the Bradford School Board had thought better of it, and decided to comply with the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench. The tide of over-pressure was rising, and now children and teachers were no longer the only victims to it, for to-day the newspapers had announced the unfortunate death of an assistant School Inspector, owing to overwork.

THE BISHOP OF EXETER said, that as the noble Lord opposite (Lord Norton) had referred to a letter of his, he should like to make a few observations on the question before the House. The noble Lord thought that payment by results had had a bad effect upon the schools, and that it was likely to have a still worse effect as time went on. He (the Bishop of Exeter) could only say, as far as his experience went, that it had seemed to him, and it still seemed to him, that the plan of payment by results very greatly improved schools. It greatly improved schools in two important particulars. In the first place, before the introduction of payment by results, there was, in a great many cases, a neglect of the more stupid boys. Very little pains were taken with those boys; because the master found that, taking the school altogether and presenting it to the Inspector for examination, the labour he had to spend in working up those duller children never brought him credit, and, consequently, never affected his personal interest very largely. In the second place, there was a tendency to neglect the lower classes; because the Inspectors generally confined their judgment of the school to what they saw of the upper classes. The system of payment by results produced two things—it led the master to see, as far as possible, that every boy, even the dullest, should be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; and, in the second place, it compelled the master to look to the younger children, because these children were compelled to be individually examined quite as much

as the children more favourably situated. A great change had come over the condition of schools in consequence of this system of examination, and in consequence of the method in use of payment by results. The system, however, required very careful watching. If they put a man under the system of payment by piece-work, instead of payment by day-work, there was a tendency to sacrifice the man to the work. The end of the matter was they made the man a mere grinder at one class of work; while, in the meanwhile, he himself was seriously hurt as a man, because he was confined in his scope, and his whole mind was made mechanical. If they made the master grind at one class of things, and nothing else, there was a tendency to make his mind mechanical. In the long run, he unfitted himself for the work he had to do, and that was the objection to the mode of payment by results. It had to be carefully watched; but he thought they were very far from the time when it would either be wise or safe to give up the system. There was another thing in the Code which required careful modification, and that was the rigidity of the Standards. If he were a schoolmaster, he should be perpetually fretting against the rules by which the promotion of boys from Standard to Standard was regulated. The master had to satisfy the Inspector that he had made the right promotion; but he (the Bishop of Exeter) maintained that the master ought to have the organization of the school and the promotion of the boys in his own hands. He admitted, however, that a great deal had been done in relaxation of this rigidity, and he was not at all inclined to complain that the Code had done mischief on that score. He thought, however, its working should be carefully watched. With regard to over-pressure, of which a great deal had been recently heard, he was afraid that there was some over-pressure; but he did not very well see how it could be avoided. But few children suffered from it, the chief sufferers being the pupil teachers and the masters. In making these remarks, however, he, at the same time, confessed that he thought the present system was working very well, and that all that was wanted was that the authorities should be kept alive to the necessity of making constant improvements. He could not fol-

low the noble Lord opposite in saying that payment by results ought to be given up as a principle. Of two things he felt sure. It would be a mistake to give up the system of individual examination. He advocated a closer and more thorough inspection; because he was of opinion that mere watching of a school was not sufficient for a thorough and reliable carrying out of the Act.

EARL FORTESCUE said, that, two years ago, he had said that the school system in England was in great danger of producing injurious effects on the rising generation. That he was not mistaken in the matter was proved by the fact that the complaints that had been made with regard to over-pressure appeared to be well-founded. He could not doubt that the over-pressure of children was very general, and still more general among pupil teachers, who were drawn from the wage-earning class to a far larger extent than he would wish to see. A distinguished physiologist had given him a reason for its telling with peculiar severity on 'children of the wage-class. The same wonderful transmission of hereditary faculties, natural or acquired, which made the pointer puppy to point and the retriever puppy to retrieve almost spontaneously, enabled the children of those who for generations had had the advantage of high culture to master abstract reasoning, such as involved in the study of grammar or algebra, with far more facility and at a much earlier age. And yet grammar was inflicted upon the poor children in our elementary schools at a very early age. He greatly rejoiced at the two recent decisions of the Judges; the one declaring that a schoolmaster had no legal authority to impose home-lessons, which were a grievous hardship to children in the thousands of cases where the whole family had only one room to work in, eat in, and sleep in, but which were in many other cases reasonable and desirable; and the other that the necessities of the child's family were a reasonable cause for its absence from school. He could not agree with his noble Friend opposite (Lord Norton) as to the evil of payment by results, and he was confirmed by the opinion of the right rev. Prelate; but he thought that grants should only be given for really elementary subjects. He was not at all opposed to poor children of extra-

ordinary and exceptional industry and ability being enabled to prosecute higher studies; but that should be done by means of scholarships to higher schools. It was not desirable that every school all over the country should be capable of teaching children up to the VIth and VIIth Standards, for this entailed a great share of the master's time and attention being devoted to the two or three clever children in his school. If a middle-class parent wanted his child, of no exceptional ability, to learn Latin and algebra, and so forth, why should he not pay for it? Why were the rate-payers and taxpayers of the country to go out of their way to provide education in these subjects for those who could well afford its cost? As a student of, and believer in, political economy, he believed that they ought to adhere more strictly in the matter of education to the general principle that a fair price was to be paid for the article, and that they ought not to help a man to obtain advantages which he could perfectly pay for, but rely instead upon the simple principle of supply and demand.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he rose for the purpose of calling their Lordships' attention to the case of Hayfield School, in Derbyshire, which was not of itself important, but was only material, because it threw a light on the course which the Education Department were at present pursuing, and because it indicated the danger to which the Department was exposing itself. The case of Hayfield, which had been sent to him by the vicar of the parish, signed by some 50 or 60 of the inhabitants, was, he was sorry to say, the old and ordinary case of a small country parish of 2,800 inhabitants, which had been somewhat harshly and oppressively dealt with by the Department. There was a question as to the sufficiency of the school accommodation, the Inspector deciding that more was required, and the inhabitants proposed to make an addition by building an Infant School, attached to the National School; but in consequence of the owner of the proposed site being abroad, the conveyance could not be completed, and the Education Department took the opportunity of enforcing a school board on the parish, which, he thought, was very sharp practice. He dared say the Department had statutory powers to do that; but it was a practice

which was likely to lead to ill effects. According to the proportion of school accommodation to the inhabitants, accommodation was required in this parish for something under 500, and the National School and the Wesleyan School together had accommodation for 596; yet, in spite of that, the Education Department insisted that a rate should be levied, and that additional school buildings should be raised. Of course, the inhabitants indignantly protested against the rate to be levied. These cases might seem a small matter, but were only large when often repeated, and they involved a large Constitutional question, as showing the spirit in which the Act was administered. It bore out what appeared to be the doctrine of the Education Department—that any contrivance or interpretation of the Act, however narrow and pedantic, and however harsh, was permissible, if the result would be to diminish the number of the Voluntary Schools and force the adoption of the School Boards. The leaning was always in that direction. He thought that was a very unfortunate tendency. He looked upon the Act of 1870, not as a thing that any of them liked in every respect, though they had all supported it. He himself had supported it; but it was a compromise between violently different opinions on the subject of education. He felt certain at the time that that compromise would not succeed, unless it was worked in the spirit in which it was originally introduced and recommended. This new spirit which was coming over the Education Department, this fanatical attachment to school boards; this contempt for the feelings of small parishes; this attempt to fasten school boards upon them—all these things discredited the Education Act. To his mind, the Education Department was being invaded by a policy of extremes; they were seized with a desire to push everything too far. On religious questions, voluntary schools were being squeezed out in order that school boards might be thrust in. They knew there had been constant pressure on the rates, resulting in great discontent at their continual increase, and that considerable invasion had had to be made on the rights of parents to secure education for their children; but if that was to be done without great discontent, it must be done with great

judgment and moderation. Then there was the question of pressure upon the children, as to which his noble Friend who had spoken on the subject (Earl De La Warr) had shown the danger had greatly increased in recent years. No doubt, they could not get children to learn without exercising a certain amount of force, and a certain amount of risk must be run; but it was evident that the danger was increasing. It was not that children's brains had grown softer, or that the subjects taught were harder than they were; but it was a fact that very many more now suffered from over-pressure than formerly. In this matter, the same fanatical spirit, regardless of all moderation, had got hold of the educational machine. It was also seen in the system of payment by result. In the early days, he thought that that system was worked with moderation and care by the Department. Now, however, there was a general feeling that it was being worked too hard; while the spirit of the Inspectors and the Department was in favour of a too severe pressure. Unless great care and moderation was shown, it was to be feared that, in this respect, great injury would be done. There was another question which was more important still, and of which he thought the Education Department had not heard the end, and that was the question of expense. There, again, an utter want of moderation had been shown. The rates had been pushed up higher and higher, in order to build magnificent buildings, to pay gigantic salaries; and in order to introduce the teaching of subjects which were never dreamt of when the Act itself was before the House. One excuse after another was being made by those who had the control of education; but the rates were rising higher and higher; and this was the important thing he wanted the Government to consider—that discontent was also rising higher and higher. A very well-known Liberal Peer had assured a friend of his (the Marquess of Salisbury) in the Northern counties the other day that if a man wished to contest the county, if he would only throw away all political principles to the winds, and declare himself neither Whig nor Tory, but would simply declare himself utterly opposed to education, he would carry the seat for the county. He suspected that the noble Lord who said so

was not very far out; and he feared that if the Education Department did not sufficiently reflect on the number of enemies with which their cause had to contend, as long as they acted with sagacity and moderation, and did not allow the fanatical and pedantic theories of some of their friends to press them too far, so long, he believed, little would be said, and they would be strong enough to maintain the compromise of 1870, and to push forward the great enterprise which that compromise contemplated. Their enemies were not dead. They were sleeping, and the sleep was being unfortunately disturbed. There was more discontent among the parents, the farmers, and employers of labour at the way in which children were withdrawn from employment than formerly; there was also more and more discontent amongst the ratepayers, on account of the large sums extracted from them and expended by school boards; and also amongst the religious Bodies, who looked with more and more jealousy at the apparent object and desire of the Education Department to thrust religious education out of the schools; and parents were more and more resenting interference with their rights. If the education authorities allowed themselves to swim further with the current which now appeared to be carrying them away, he feared that the expenditure incurred at present would become much greater, and that a result would come about which both sides of the House would equally regret, which was that the present progress of the system of education, which, on the whole, worked well, would be seriously injured.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) had asked the Education Department to think of the enemies with which it might have to contend. He could assure the noble Marquess that the Department did think of its possible enemies, among whom he feared, from the speech they had just heard, that the noble Marquess himself must be counted.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: No, no.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): Certainly, the tone of the speech of the noble Marquess might make them think so. The noble

Marquess had evolved almost every word of that speech out of the recesses of his own mind, a dangerous process, which might do with matters of opinion, but would not do with matters of fact. If he had studied the facts of the question, the acts of the Education Department, and the changes of the Codes, it would be impossible for him to have expressed some of the views he had stated. The line he had taken up was that the present authorities of the Department were a fanatical set of people, who were driving everything too hard in all directions in favour of board schools, against religious education, and in favour of ultra-education altogether. But whatever the merits or demerits of the Department might be, the truth was, that such had not been the course taken by the Department during the existence of the present Government, nor had it been the effect of the recent changes in the Code; and, therefore, these charges could not fairly be brought against it. The Codes, as recently revised, instead of pushing the system of results to excess and of increasing any tendency to over-pressure, had acted in a precisely opposite direction. Although the Department adhered to the principle of payment by results, which it believed to be necessary in order that the taxpayers of the country might get the worth of the enormous sums spent on education, it had in many respects mitigated the severity of the system. The noble Marquess talked about the perpetual increase of the rates; but that must have been evolved out of his own mind, for, as a matter of fact, the figures told a story precisely the reverse. The rates, instead of increasing, had been steadily decreasing.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: In London?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he was referring to the country generally. The payments of the ratepayers towards the expenses of school boards taken per child in average attendance amounted, in 1874, to £2 14s. 1d.; while in 1882 it amounted to £1 17s. 1d. Then, taking the cost of maintenance per child in average attendance, the proportion paid out of the rates in the year 1878 was over £1, and the annual grant was 15s. 1d.; whereas in 1883 the amount paid out of the rates was 16s. 1d.,

and the annual grant had increased to 16s. 7d.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: That did not show what the ratepayers paid.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): The figures showed how much was paid per child, and that had decreased; but the number of children had happily increased, of course. He also denied that the Department had insisted unduly upon the creation of school boards. In the particular case to which the noble Marquess had referred—that of Hayfield—it was not until a board school had been established that any controversy arose, and it was only then that the voluntary people began to think that they would rather have voluntary schools than pay an education rate. The people who were in favour of a voluntary school might, without difficulty, have established one before the introduction of a school board; but they did not do so. When once the board school had been set up it was not possible for the Education Department to interfere with the arrangement. To say that the Education Department was going out of its way to build board schools in order to supplant voluntary schools was not consistent with the facts of the case. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Stanley of Alderley) had asked him whether they would withdraw the grant in case of home lessons being required. They would not do so. There were no statutory hours of attendance; but a grant could not be earned without a minimum attendance, and that was all the Department had to do with the matter. Home lessons were, in very many cases, a useful part of school business, and half-an-hour would be about as much time as would be required for them. It would be, he believed, contrary to his duty to condemn home lessons as a rule; but there were children by whom, and there were homes, perhaps, consisting of single rooms, in which, it would be unreasonable to require that home lessons should be done. Every case must be treated by the Department upon its merits; and if it was found that there were school boards which were in that matter grossly unreasonable, or treated the children improperly in other respects, the Department had power to withdraw the grant. And now a word about the two speeches with which

that conversation began. Those speeches formed a curious phenomenon in the educational controversy. He did not know whether there were two other gentlemen in the country who would agree in condemning, as he understood the noble Lords (Earl De La Warr and Lord Norton) to do, the whole educational system from top to bottom. He would not now make a speech about payment by results. He heard his noble Friend's speech, and he had heard it before. He made a speech then in reply, and he did not propose to make it over again, especially after what had fallen with much greater weight than he could pretend to from the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Exeter). The higher subjects were taught only in a small minority of schools to a small minority of children; and that minority was not increasing, but diminishing very much. The question was, whether it was unwise of the ratepayers to furnish a minority of the children with something beyond the three R's, something which might enable them to pass on to those scholarships which his noble Friend (Earl Fortescue) would like the ripper children to obtain. But how were they to obtain them, if they were confined to the three R's? That was a part of the system, however, which ought not to be carried to excess. But the views of his noble Friend on the matter contrasted in the most curious way with the Scotch view. Scotch education was managed under a totally distinct Act, Code, and Department. It was as Scotch as if the Department had been moved out of the building at Whitehall. It was a remarkable feature of the Scotch system that Scotsmen would not tolerate their parish board schools being treated as mere primary schools. They were more than that. Scotsmen insisted, in regard to a great number of their board schools, that the higher subjects should be taught; and the result was that a large number of boys obtained an education at those schools which enabled them to pass on at once to the Universities. He (Lord Carlingford) did not ask English educationists to imitate this state of things, though it might be worthy of imitation; but that was the view of one of the best educated countries in the world. At the same time, it was impossible that they could give elementary school children the opportunity of getting

a higher education, if higher subjects were to be absolutely excluded. And now a word as to over-pressure. With all the means of information at his disposal, he felt a strong temptation to treat it as a mere spectre; but he would not do so. He believed there was some small residue of fact in this huge spectre, growing up in the mist of opinion on the subject. The large majority of Inspectors reported against the existence of over-pressure; and here was what one of the most eminent of them (Mr. Oakley) said the other day, at a great educational gathering in Manchester—

"He positively abhorred the notion of over-forcing and over-straining young children, and nothing of the kind would ever be required by the regulations of the Education Department, properly understood."

He (Lord Carlingford) could trace the alarm on the subject to nothing else than the novelty of the regulations, which might have unduly frightened some teachers and managers with regard to the amount of grant they were likely to get. But the present Code was far less likely to lead to those bad results than the former ones. The rigidity of the Standards, instead of being increased, had been relaxed. The Report of the Education and Management of Schools Committee of the Leeds School Board, on the question of charges of over-strain or pressure in the public elementary schools in this town, stated that, after a most careful examination of 45 children, referred to in the Schedules, there did not appear to be a single instance of clear and undeniable injury to the "health or physical well-being" of children by schoolwork or attendance, during a period of five years. It was further observed by the Committee that the children instanced in the Returns were, to a large extent, either infants, or in the very earliest Standards, and not more than 10 or 11 years of age. The Committee thought it should be borne in mind that the Government grant was paid for the dull and delicate children, withheld from examination, in exactly the same proportion as for the brightest; that the Standard grant was precisely the same for the lower as for the higher; so that there was not the slightest inducement to press children unduly forward; and that the grant was calculated on the average of children coming up to a minimum requirement in each Standard.

Lord Carlingford

As to payment on results, the Committee stated that the present system of individual examination of the children was the only guarantee of really effective instruction of the whole of the children, and of their yearly progress from Standard to Standard. Apart from such individual examination, the Committee said the children might be examined in classes. But what would be the result? The precocious might answer for the dull, and the children might remain in the same class for years without the least guarantee of progress. He would not detain their Lordships longer; but he must protest, on the part of the Education Department, and on the part of those who were interested in education in this country, against the extremely pessimist view taken by the two noble Lords who commenced the debate with regard to a system of education which, although much had yet to be done, they had considerable reason to be proud of.

LORD COLCHESTER called attention to one remark of the noble Lord who had just spoken, that they were bound to look to bringing all the children into the schools. He could not suppose that the noble Lord meant to refer to the board schools alone; but the bringing of children into voluntary schools could not affect the increase of the education rate to which he referred. The allusion of the noble Lord to the Scotch system appeared to cast a censure on what was now being established by public or private agency throughout England—a system of schools of different grades, where a clever boy might rise from one grade to another by scholarships, but which recognized the principle that an education intended to terminate very early should not be identical with the first years of a course intended to continue much longer.

NEWCASTLE CHAPTER BILL.—(No. 130.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Durham.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE BISHOP OF DURHAM, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that in the year 1878 an Act was passed for the creation of four new Bishoprics. Among the Sees affected by the provisions of that Act was the dio-

cese of Durham. The counties of Durham and Northumberland contributed a far larger sum than was necessary to provide the minimum endowment for a new Bishopric, as specified in the Act, and the Bishopric of Newcastle was accordingly created. That step had been followed, it must be allowed, by the most beneficial results. The Act provided that such arrangements as were immediately necessary for the working of the diocese might be carried out by an Order in Council. In accordance with its provisions, the whole of his (the Bishop of Durham's) patronage in the diocese of Newcastle was, with his full consent, handed over to the new Bishop. It was necessary, however, to provide for other matters, in order that the ecclesiastical framework of the diocese might be completed, and the Bill now before their Lordships dealt with those matters. The Bill proposed to create a Dean and Chapter for the diocese of Newcastle, and, as connected therewith, to transfer a canonry of the cathedral church of Durham, which was attached to the Archdeaconry of Northumberland, to the new diocese. That formed the main part of the Bill, which was framed on the lines of the Truro Chapter Act. This remark applied to the first 10 clauses, on which, therefore, it was unnecessary to dwell. The 11th clause of the Bill would empower the executors of certain deceased persons who had promised donations to the Newcastle Bishopric Endowment to give effect to their known intentions. The 12th clause would re-transfer to the See of Newcastle certain patronage which had been transferred about a quarter of a century ago from the See of Durham to Sees that were at that time more slenderly endowed with patronage than they were now. It likewise dealt with other transferences of patronage which were advisable. The 13th clause would allow the Archdeacon of Northumberland, who was at present required by virtue of his Archdeaconry to reside within the diocese of Newcastle, and by virtue of his Canonry to reside in the diocese of Durham, to retain his residence and stall in Durham, until, by the voluntary acceptance of some preferment in the diocese of Newcastle, he transferred himself thither. He would, in conclusion, move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"
—(*The Lord Bishop of Durham*).

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE said, that he was one who had felt it to be his duty to consent to the retransference of patronage proposed by the Bill.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Eight o'clock, to *Monday*
next, a quarter before
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 27th June, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—James Allanson Picton, esquire, for Leicester Borough.

PRIVATE BILLS (by Order)—*Third Reading*—Lea Bridge, Leyton, and Walthamstow Tramways Extensions*; Uxbridge and Rickmansworth Railway,* and passed.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Sea Fisheries Act (1868) Amendment* [265].

Second Reading—Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) [109], debate adjourned.

Report of Select Committee—Yorkshire Land Registries* [No. 243]; Yorkshire Registries* [No. 244]; Strensall Common* [No. 245].

Standing Committee on Law, &c.—Criminal Lunatics* [256], committed.

Committee—Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment* [231]—*r.p.*

Report—Yorkshire Land Registries* [24].

Third Reading—Colonial Attorneys Relief Act Amendment* [228], and passed.

QUESTIONS.

PORTUGAL—THE CONGO TREATY.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if he can give the House any information with regard to the Treaty with Portugal on the subject of the Congo?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: As I explained yesterday, I think it premature to give detailed information as to the arrangements in contemplation. It is an international arrangement relating to the river, similar to that which

relates to the Danube. The Commission has power on the river alone.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT: Then the territory will remain exactly as it is now?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The projected arrangement will in no manner, if it follows the lines of the Danube Commission, affect the territory.

POST OFFICE—SUNDAY WORK IN POST OFFICES.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Postmaster General, with reference to Sunday work in Post and Telegraph Offices in Scotland, Why such work is reckoned and paid for as overtime in London and not in Edinburgh and other parts of Scotland?

LORD ELCHO also asked, Whether it is not a fact that, while Sunday labour is now generally imposed upon Post Office clerks in large towns throughout the Country, the clerks in London alone receive any compensating privileges in the shape either of extra pay or extra leave; and, whether, if this is so, he is prepared to place the provincial clerks on the same footing as their more favoured London colleagues?

MR. FAWCETT: As I explained in answer to a similar Question a few days since, Sunday work in the Post Office in London has always been an exception, while in Provincial offices it has always existed. By the new classification, however, in 1881, the position of sorting clerks and telegraphists in the Provincial offices with regard to Sunday work was considerably improved, as they are not ordinarily called upon to do more than eight hours' work in four Sundays, and if employed for a longer period than this are paid for overtime.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, that the right hon. Gentleman, by his repetition of his answer of the former day, had not answered the Question which was on the Paper, which was, why Sunday work was reckoned exceptional in London and not exceptional in Scotland?

MR. FAWCETT replied, that there had always been so very much less Sunday work in London, and no Sunday deliveries in London, that the whole question of Sunday work in London and in Provincial towns had always rested on a different footing. The only change that had been introduced by the classification that had been made had been to

improve the position of the Provincial staff considerably.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—PORTPATRICK HARBOUR COMMISSION—TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, Why the evidence taken by the Commissioners to inspect and report on Portpatrick Harbour was not taken down in shorthand; whether the Report of the evidence and proceedings quoted from the local newspapers in the Commissioners' Report was taken from long-hand notes; whether the Commissioners asked the correspondents of two local newspapers to take the evidence in shorthand, but considered the terms, which were at the usual rate, too high; what was the difference between the rate proposed and that which the Board of Trade are prepared to accept; and, whether Mr. Trevor, one of the Commissioners, expressed the decision of Her Majesty's Government when he remarked, soon after the commencement of the inquiry, in hearing of those present, and again at a subsequent period, that "the Government did not intend to spend any more money at Portpatrick?"

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that the Commissioners appointed by him did make some inquiries with respect to a shorthand writer in connection with the inquiry which they were carrying on; but by his instruction they abandoned the idea of having shorthand notes, and they did so without any reference to any special charge which would be made locally, but on the general ground that it was contrary to precedent in inquiries of this kind to put the country to the expense of a full verbatim report. But he might inform the hon. Baronet that there was a report in one of the local newspapers which had been attached to the Papers put on the Table, which was sufficiently full, and a very fair, and a generally accurate account. As regarded the last paragraph of the Question, the hon. Member had been misinformed. Mr. Trevor told him that during the inquiry, and with special reference to the observations of one or more of the witnesses, he made a remark to the effect that he thought it might be taken for granted that, look-

ing to the Act of Parliament of 1873, which released the Government from liabilities with respect to the harbour, Government would not spend any more money in the permanent maintenance of the harbour works; and all that he and his Colleague had to inquire into was whether any injury had been caused to certain specified interests by certain specified works. With that remark he (Mr. Chamberlain) entirely concurred.

GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE COINAGE
—LOSS ON COINING.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will be good enough to explain to the House the reasons for the great variations in "loss in coining" for gold and silver respectively, as set forth under the head of "Expenses" in the Coinage Return, No. 206, lately presented by him to the House; and, further, if he will state the special reasons for the unusually heavy expenditure for the year 1882, under the two heads of "Salaries and Expenses," and "Expenses incurred by other Departments?"

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): In reply to the hon. Member's first Question, I have to say that the exact loss on any coinage can only be ascertained at the conclusion of the coinage, when the accounts are finally adjusted. In some of the years to which the Return refers large coinages of gold and silver were completed, and the whole balance of loss was brought to account, while in other years sums on account only were paid. As to the second Question, the hon. Member will probably recollect that in 1882 the Mint buildings and machinery were re-organized at a heavy cost, which formed part of the "expenses" of that year.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. EDWARD GREER.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Edward Greer, who has been appointed to act as Sub-Commissioner for the county of Armagh at Lurgan, Armagh, and Newry, is the gentleman of the same name who formerly practised as a solicitor in Newry, and acted in that capacity for several of the landlords of the counties of Armagh

and Down, and who was also Sessional Crown Solicitor for the county of Armagh; whether this gentleman's former partner in business, Mr. Robert A. Mullan, still practices in Newry, and appears before the Sub-Commissioners for county Armagh as solicitor for landlords; whether Mr. Greer was not formerly removed from county Down in consequence of local connections to a distant county; and, why has he now been appointed to a county with which he is even more closely connected than he was with Down?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the gentleman mentioned in the Question is a solicitor, who formerly practised for some time as a solicitor at Newry. He informs me that it is not the case that he acted for the landlords of Down and Fermanagh, his work being principally of a mercantile, and especially of a Parliamentary character. He was Sessional Crown Solicitor for Armagh for a short period, during which he abstained from any practice in the county. He has not practised for the landlords of Down or Armagh; and I have not made further inquiry into the circumstances.

MR. HEALY: How long has he been appointed, and who is now the Crown Solicitor for Armagh?

MR. TREVELYAN: Will the hon. Member give Notice?

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM — CREW OF THE "NISERO."

MR. GOURLEY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, upon representations being made to him by the Foreign Office, he will make an allowance to the impoverished families of the crew of the *Nisero*?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): I am afraid that I must, with every respect for him, absolutely decline to answer my hon. Friend's Question. Whatever representations the Foreign Office may make to the Treasury on this or any other question will receive our careful consideration.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Foreign Office, having stated that the crew of the *Nisero* are the victims of political complications, he is prepared to recommend the Chancellor

of the Exchequer to make an allowance to their families?

MR. STOREY asked, Whether our officials on the spot had objected to a Dutch expedition, conducted like the last, and to the Dutch proposal to employ Natives unfriendly to the Rajah to kidnap the crew, as methods calculated to result in disastrous failure, and have pointed out that the only way to rescue the captives is for the Dutch to carry out the terms of existing Treaties by granting free trade to the Natives; and, whether objections of this nature have been pressed upon the Dutch Government by our Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Foreign Office will be prepared to take into consideration any particular application which may be made in connection with this subject; but it is impossible to give any general pledge, or to fetter the discretion of the Treasury. With respect to the Question of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), the opinion of the British officials on the points referred to by the hon. Member are to the effect mentioned by him, and will be found in their Reports, which are comprised in the Papers laid before Parliament. These Reports have been communicated to the Netherlands Government; and Her Majesty's Government have strongly urged that, in their opinion, the re-establishment of the freedom of trade would be the most likely means of securing the liberation of the captives.

MR. GOURLEY asked whether application should be made by the families or the owners?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE replied, that each particular application would have to be considered separately.

POST OFFICE—ABSTRACTION OF EVICTION NOTICES, STONEYBRIDGE, SOUTH UIST.

DR. CAMERON asked the Postmaster General, Whether Alexander Lamont, ground officer of the proprietor of Stoneybridge, South Uist, recently obtained at the Post Office of Howmore registered letters containing eviction notices addressed to crofters at Stoneybridge, and served the notices on them; whether he gave the postmaster to understand that he was authorized by the addressees to receive their letters; and,

Mr. Biggar

whether the Law provides for the punishment of persons possessing themselves of letters which belong to other people without their sanction or authority?

MR. FAWCETT: In answer to the hon. Member, I have to state that, owing to the difficulty of communicating with the Island referred to, I have been obliged to rely on the telegraph for my information. It is not clear that fraudulent means were resorted to to obtain possession of the letters in question; but if it could be proved that such means were adopted, it would become a question for the Crown officers in Scotland to consider whether the persons who obtained the letters had not rendered themselves liable to prosecution.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CORONERSHIP OF LEITRIM.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Irish Executive has been drawn to the action of the Sheriff of Leitrim in fixing Carrick on Shannon as the place for the nomination of candidates, on next Monday, for the office of coroner for the northern division of that county, Carrick on Shannon not being situate in that district, but at a distance from it, said action of the Sheriff being in direct violation of the provision of the statute 9 and 10 Vic. c. 37, s. 3; and, what steps the Executive will take to compel the Sheriff to comply with the requirements of the Law?

MR. TREVELYAN: I received a detailed complaint on this subject a day or two ago, and at once telegraphed it in full to Dublin. The matter, I am advised, is not one in which the Government could interfere authoritatively; but the Sub-Sheriff was communicated with, and the provisions of the statute pointed out to him. So far as the short interval of time has allowed me to ascertain the facts, I understand that the Sub-Sheriff was, and still is, in some doubt as to the precise limits of the districts, and that search is being made among official records with a view to remove the doubts; but that, in the meantime, the Sheriff has determined to issue a new Proclamation fixing upon Manorhamilton, instead of Carrick-on-Shannon, as the place of nomination.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

MR. J. H. M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a statement made at the meeting of the Council of the Gaelic Union in Dublin on Saturday last, to the effect that—

"There was reason to believe that strong influence had been brought to bear on many National teachers to discourage the teaching of Irish;"

whether such influence had been used by any officials of the Government; and, whether the Government will take steps to insure that no such influence is brought to bear upon National teachers to discourage the teaching of the Irish language?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Commissioners of National Education are not aware, nor am I aware, of any influence being brought to bear upon any national teachers to discourage the teaching of Irish. The Commissioners, in a recent issue of the school programme, to which the special attention of their Inspectors has been called, have issued special instructions that if there are Irish-speaking pupils in a school the teacher, if acquainted with the Irish language, should, whenever practicable, employ the vernacular as an aid to the elucidation and acquisition of the English language.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—FERMANAGH—SENTENCE ON A CLERGYMAN.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government are prepared to make any inquiries in the sentence recently passed upon a Catholic clergyman by the Fermanagh magistrates?

MR. TREVELYAN: In this case the original decision of the magistrates was appealed against to the Quarter Sessions, the result being that the conviction was affirmed, but the sentence mitigated from imprisonment to a fine. These proceedings followed the ordinary course of the law, and I am not aware of any ground upon which the Government could institute inquiries. The Lord Lieutenant does not take into consideration individual sentences, except upon a Me-

morial being presented, which has not been done in this case.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—REV. JOHN B. FRITH, J.P., ENNISKILLEN.

MR. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, at the Enniskillen Quarter Sessions just held, the decision of the county court judge on a question of law, in a case in which a Catholic clergyman was concerned, was overruled by the other magistrates, all of whom were Protestants, and none of whom were persons acquainted with law; whether the Rev. John B. Frith, recently a plaintiff in an action for libel, and who has been declared by the verdict of a Derry jury to have acted corruptly in several cases, was one of the said other magistrates; whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure to prevent non-legal magistrates interfering with the decision of questions which are merely ones of law, or whether they will accept such a provision if brought forward as an Amendment to the County Courts Bill now before the House; and, whether the Lord Chancellor has yet taken any steps to appoint Catholic magistrates for the county Fermanagh, in which there has not been a single one except the resident magistrate, who is now stationed in another county?

VISCOUNT CRICHTON: Sir, in reference to the last paragraph of the Question, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the Lord Lieutenant of the county of Fermanagh recommended a Roman Catholic magistrate in the same Petty Sessions district in which a Roman Catholic clergyman was convicted for assaulting the police; and if it is not a fact that of the four magistrates who presided on the occasion two were stipendiaries?

MR. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, if it is the case that Lord Erne did recommend a Catholic magistrate, it was a fact that that was the first instance in 40 years that a noble Lord did so?

MR. TREVELYAN: I will answer the Question on the Paper, on which I have official information. The only information I have as to the alleged fact mentioned in the first paragraph of the Question is contained in the newspaper

reports, from which it appears that the County Court Judge simply announced the conclusion come to by the Court, of which he was a member, and declined to express an individual opinion. I understand that the Rev. Mr. Frith, who was in Court during the hearing of a part of the case, left before it was decided. It is not the intention of the Government to introduce any measure such as is suggested in the third paragraph of the Question. With regard to proposed appointments to the magistracy of the county of Fermanagh, the names of four Roman Catholic gentlemen have been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, and the consideration of these cases stands over, pending the necessary inquiries which the Lord Chancellor feels it his duty to make. The hon. Member is in error in supposing that the Roman Catholic Resident Magistrate stationed in the county has been removed.

MR. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has given us interesting information regarding the Lord Chancellor's work. I would ask if those inquiries are principally pursued by policemen?

MR. TREVELYAN: Oh, no, Sir. The Lord Chancellor takes great care to inform himself to his own satisfaction as to the position and antecedents, and, as far as he can, the personal character of the gentlemen reconsidered. The inquiries were extremely difficult to make, and that was the reason the appointment was made so slowly.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Lord Chancellor has come to any decision on the conduct of the Rev. John Frith, J.P. Enniskillen?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Lord Chancellor informs me that he has not thought it right to enter as yet upon the consideration of this case, which is still *sub judice*, the Common Pleas Division having only given its decision a week since, and Mr. Frith's time for appealing against the Order made not having expired.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN M'TERNAN, A RESIDENT MAGISTRATE.

VISCOUNT CRICHTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been

called to the Judgments delivered in the Court of Common Pleas in Dublin, on Thursday, 19th June, on the application for a new trial in the case of "*Frith v. Trimble*," on which occasion Mr. Justice Harrison is reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of Friday, 20th June, to have said, in delivering his Judgment:—

"The extraordinary evidence given by the resident magistrate, Captain M'Ternan, might have influenced the jury. He could conceive nothing more startling than that evidence. He said, on cross-examination, that the plaintiff was not straight, and acted corruptly and partially, and that his conduct was a pollution of the judgment seat. That evidence was in his (Mr. Justice Harrison's) opinion simply astounding."

And Chief Justice Morris is reported in the same paper to have said—

"He entirely agreed with Judge Harrison that, if he had been trying the case, he would have strongly advised the jury not to be in the least influenced by the evidence of Captain M'Ternan. That gentleman, to say the least of it, appeared to have had an arrogant opinion of himself. He divided his brother magistrates into knaves and fools; to one of them, Captain Collum, perhaps because he was a military man like himself, he gave the alternative of being either a knave or a fool (laughter). He thought his evidence most extravagant and indecent."

whether he is aware that Lord Chief Justice May, in his charge to the jury on the occasion of the first trial, commented upon Captain M'Ternan's evidence in similar terms; whether the Rev. J. B. Frith and the other magistrates referred to in Captain M'Ternan's evidence have asked for an inquiry into the charges brought against them; and, whether the Lord Chancellor will grant such an inquiry?

MR. TREVELYAN: The isolated passages from the Judgments of Chief Justice Morris and Mr. Justice Harrison, to which the Question refers, appear to be correctly quoted. But the Chief Justice agreed in the result of the Judgment of Mr. Justice Murphy, in whose Judgment no comment on Captain M'Ternan's evidence appears. I am aware that Chief Justice May, in his Charge, commented upon Captain M'Ternan's evidence; but the jury did not adopt his view. No such inquiry as is asked will be granted to review the decision of a Court and jury.

VISCOUNT CRICHTON: My Question related to the charge against the magistrate, and not the case of the Rev. Mr. Frith.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)— COLONEL HOPE'S GUNS.

MR. FRENCH-BREWSTER asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, with reference to Colonel Hope's offer to supply the Government with certain guns, Whether, if these guns performed all that their inventor claimed for them, the result would be a large saving of expense to the Country, and an increase to the power of the armament carried by Her Majesty's ships; whether it was distinctly stated in Colonel Hope's offer to the Government that, if his guns, or any one of them, failed in fulfilling the specification contained in that offer, he would himself bear all the expense of the manufacture, ammunition, and trial of such failing gun or guns; and, whether it was further stated in Colonel Hope's offer that he—

"Accepted in advance any further conditions of trial within the energies stated,"

and that, regarding—

"All unforeseen objections that may be raised by either the Artillery or the Navy,"

he (Colonel Hope) was willing that in his contract with Government—

"General Lord Wolseley should be named sole arbitrator without appeal?"

MR. BRAND: It is true that Colonel Hope has claimed for his guns the advantage that they would save a large expense and increase the power of the armament of ships. It is also true that Colonel Hope offered to bear all the expenses of construction in case of the failure of his guns, and to accept Lord Wolseley as arbitrator in the event of any difference arising between himself and the Department. Colonel Hope has been told that if he will produce a gun the War Office will give it a full trial; but the Secretary of State for War is not prepared to accept arbitration upon any question of difference arising respecting matters upon which he receives sufficient advice from a Committee composed of competent military and naval officers, assisted by two eminent civil engineers.

EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE.

MR. CHAPLIN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, in reference to the following statements—

"That the Government have arrived at this conclusion, that they could undertake and en-

gage, in the event of any common understanding with France, of consultation with the Powers, and of any plan resulting from those communications, that those results and the whole conclusion which they arrived at should be presented to Parliament before the Conference met ; ”

and also, in reference to the former statement—

“ That the Government had spoken, not of laying an arrangement with France, but of laying an arrangement with the Powers before the House at a date anterior to the Conference ; ”

whether those statements have been correctly attributed to him ; and, if so, whether he is in a position, and is prepared, to lay any such arrangement with the Powers before the House, in accordance with the engagement of the Government, at a date anterior to the meeting of the Conference ? The hon. Member added : I am in somewhat of a difficulty with regard to the Question which stands in my name on the Paper, because I received a communication from the Prime Minister in which he asked me to postpone my Question till Monday, not being able to make the necessary reference. I am sure the Prime Minister will acquit me of any want of respect to him ; but the whole pith of this Question is to ask the Prime Minister whether he is prepared—as I contend he is bound—to lay the results of certain consultations with the Powers before the House of Commons before the Conference meets ? The Conference, we are informed, is to meet to-morrow ; and therefore, if I accede to the proposition of the Prime Minister to postpone my Question, it must fail in its object. With every desire to convenience the Prime Minister, I am afraid I must press for an answer.

MR. GLADSTONE : The answer the hon. Member desires me to give would have necessarily been founded on an investigation of a number of Reports ; and as I have been lately compelled to spend a good part of my time in attending Cabinet Councils I have not had time to pursue those investigations. The hon. Member appears to think that the Conference may be postponed in consequence of my not answering his Question ; but that would be entirely beyond our power. I may, however, state that our promise to the House was, that we should conclude, if we could, our negotiations with France ; consult

the Powers ; and communicate the whole result, as far as lay within our power, to the House, before the meeting of the Conference. That, I believe, was the substance of the engagement. We have received no definitive answer from the Powers. No objection has been taken in such answers as we have received ; but I think it appears that the Powers probably might make no definite answer until they became cognizant of the matters to be transacted in the Conference. I never entertained for a moment the idea that the question for the Conference and the communications with France were parts of one consecutive series of transactions ; because, on the contrary, I was constantly questioned to know whether the Conference and the communications with France were distinct. I stated that the subject-matter of the two was distinct ; but that we should consult the Powers on the communications with France. The Conference arose out of the absolute financial necessities of Egypt. France interposed the necessity of certain preliminary communications. The Powers interposed no such necessity. They had given their agreement to enter a Conference before they were cognizant of these communications. Since they have become cognizant of these communications they have not withdrawn their agreement to enter the Conference, and are now prepared to appear there.

MR. CHAPLIN : Did the Prime Minister not inform the House some time ago that there were two steps that must be preliminary to the Conference ? One was the conclusion of an agreement with France ; and on the conclusion of that agreement there was then to take place a consultation with the Powers ; and the Prime Minister distinctly stated to the House that he would lay the result of that consultation before the House before the Conference met. Am I correct in saying that ?

MR. GLADSTONE : No.

MR. CHAPLIN : If the right hon. Gentleman has not received a reply from the Powers, and is not able to place the result of these consultations before the House to-day, I want to know how he is to fulfil his engagement ?

MR. GLADSTONE : I never made such an engagement as to await all the replies of the Powers upon the communications with France before the Confer-

Mr. Chaplin

encemet. It would have been suicidal and absurd to do so. The Conference grew out of the financial necessities of Egypt; but the Powers did not regard the communications with France as immediately connected with the financial necessities of Egypt—at least, they have accepted the agreement to meet in Conference to-morrow, after they were cognizant of these communications. What I undertook to communicate was everything that depended on us—that is to say, our arrangements with France and our consultation with the Powers. All that depended upon us has been done, and the whole of it has been made known to the House.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question, in order to remove a misconception with regard to the statement which he made the other day. I wish to ask him whether he is correctly reported to have used the following language, in reply to a Question put by the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners):—

“With respect to the action on the part of the Powers of Europe in regard to the evacuation of Egypt by a given date the despatch of Earl Granville states ‘provided that the Powers are then of opinion that such withdrawal can take place without risk to peace and order.’ Then the noble Lord asked whether it means one Power, two Powers, or three Powers. Well, Sir, my answer to that is that the phrase ‘reference to the Powers of Europe,’ is one perfectly known to diplomatic practice and history. European questions have been decided under shelter of that phrase for half a century and more, and nothing could be more invidious than to presume a division of the Powers into separate lobbies or separate parties in such matters. We think it our duty to take the phrase which is known to diplomacy, and we are perfectly confident in its operation.”

I should also like to ask the Prime Minister whether, in the authenticated version of the speech of M. Ferry in the French Chamber, from which the right hon. Gentleman quoted the other day, the following passage occurred:—

“It has been said in the English newspapers, and repeated in the French, that this engagement of evacuation was potential, and that opposition to the evacuation on the part of a single Power would suffice to give England the right to remain in Egypt. This singular idea of a sort of veto, borrowed from the traditions of Polish Diets, is a construction as false as it is ridiculous. When the Powers meet in Congress or in Conference the caprice of one of them cannot paralyze their decision; and if the Representative of the Republic, who was in this

instance the mouthpiece of European interests, had had the weakness to lend himself to such a comedy, the Great Powers would certainly not have ratified it. They will be consulted in 1888, and it is they who will decide whether the situation in Egypt presents sufficient danger to warrant a prolongation of the English occupation beyond the 1st of January, 1888.”

MR. GLADSTONE: I think if the right hon. Gentleman wishes me to put a construction of my own on the words of M. Ferry in the French Chamber he ought to have given me Notice; but I will do all I can to answer the Question he has put to me. He has read a passage from an answer of mine to the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire, and as far as I could follow him the Report is singularly accurate and exact. With regard to the statements attributed to M. Ferry, I have not in my possession at this moment the document to which I referred yesterday. With regard to what the right hon. Gentleman now read, I cannot be understood to affirm or deny its accuracy, for my memory would not serve me to such an extent; but I notice one observation ascribed to M. Ferry, that the caprice of one of the Powers would not suffice to defeat the general view that might be entertained by the Powers assembled in Conference. I should think there is no case on record in which the caprice of one of the Powers has sufficed to prevent the general view of the other Powers from taking effect; and the mode in which the question has always been dealt with is this—that the caprice of one of the Powers has always given way upon discussion in the Conference or Congress, and that unanimous conclusions have been arrived at. On the other hand, I think I am correct, speaking of the diplomatic history of this important question, in saying that no Power has ever, before going into a Conference or Congress, abdicated its right of individual action.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, with regard to the important answer which the Prime Minister had given, whether the House was to understand from his reply that the terms of the proposed Anglo-French Agreement would have no binding force between this country and France in future, supposing it was rejected by the Conference, or by a majority of the Powers, because such a construction might be put on his language? Another question was, whether

they were now to understand that the French Government did insist that there should be a preliminary arrangement between this country and themselves before the Conference was held? He understood from the speech of the Prime Minister the other day that they did not; but now he understood from the right hon. Gentleman's reply that they did.

MR. GLADSTONE: The French Government, in every strictness of speech, never, to my knowledge, made it a matter of necessity that there should be these communications; but they expressed a desire for them, and that desire was recognized by the British Government as altogether legitimate, and other communications arising out of them, necessarily occupying a certain amount of time, prevented the British Government, down to a certain date, from issuing invitations fixing the date of the meeting of the Conference. They exhausted the time that the necessities of Egyptian finance left them in that way in a useful mode, as we think. With regard to the previous Question, I think the House has clearly understood that the Anglo-French communications are absolutely dependent, in the first place, on the action of the Conference, and then, with the action of the Conference, absolutely dependent on the vote of Parliament.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—EVENING SITTING—DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO KEEP A HOUSE.

MR. MACFARLANE called the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that his Motion with reference to the Crofters' Commission was first on the Paper for the Evening Sitting; and, reminding the right hon. Gentleman that the same subject was prevented from being discussed on the night of the adjournment of the House for the Whitsun Recess, asked, Whether the Government would undertake to keep a House?

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Government would endeavour to fulfil their general obligation to make and keep a House on Friday evenings, certainly not without a recollection that the question which the hon. Member desired to bring forward was a question which very clearly called for discussion.

MOTION.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL, THIRD READING (ENTRY IN THE VOTES).

MR. PELL: I desire, Mr. Speaker, to call your attention to a point of Order, and to take your advice upon it. Some time between a quarter and half-past 8 last night, as you are aware, the Motion was put to the House that the Representation of the People Bill be read a third time. There were very few Members upon this side of the House at the moment; but the Treasury Bench was crowded. The cry for the "Ayes" was made in a very marked and distinct manner; but a challenge was made on this side of the House by myself—I am free to admit in a rather low tone—but a challenge was also made by my hon. Friend the Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) in a very emphatic manner, who desires, as he is unable to be here himself, that I should say so much for him—namely, that he clearly and distinctly challenged your decision. Well, Sir, you decided that the "Ayes" had it. I was not aware that it was my duty to challenge your decision again; and, of course, when the Question was put a second time, it may be said that I assented to it, and that in that way the Bill passed through the House. I certainly did not know that it was my duty to repeat my challenge, and to that extent I assented to your decision, that the "Ayes" had it. After that had taken place, and you had said that the "Ayes" had it, a remarkable scene occurred in the House. The Prime Minister rose in his place as the House was breaking up anxious to go to dinner, and attempted to call your attention to the fact that he was standing at the Table. The right hon. Gentleman had some difficulty in attracting your attention; and his supporters, no doubt eager for dinner, were passing away from the House in a perfect spirit of gaiety. Ultimately the right hon. Gentleman did succeed in attracting your attention; and I believe he requested you—I do not profess to give the precise words—to make a record in the Journals of the House that the Bill had passed *nomine contradicente*. I may be wrong; but I did not know that it was my duty to challenge a

second time, or to call your attention to the fact that a challenge had been made on this side of the House. I want to know, Sir, what steps hon. Members are to take in order to prevent a similar occurrence again? I believe that the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) is ready to corroborate what I have stated; but I may add that I have taken the liberty of asking one or two Members on the other side of the House if my challenge was audible or not, and I have been assured by one hon. Member that he heard it, but that he heard no second challenge. As a matter of fact, I made no second challenge, and I am unaware whether my hon. Friend did. Now, after an experience of 16 years in the House, and having been a pretty regular attendant, I never witnessed a scene of this kind before, nor have I heard of anything like it. I, therefore, wish, Sir, to know in the interests of my constituents, should they return me again, how I am to act under similar circumstances, if they should arise in the future?

MR. SPEAKER: I think I ought to explain to the House what occurred, as far as my action is concerned in the matter. When I put the Question, that this Bill be now read a third time, I certainly heard no dissentient voice in any part of the House. I am willing to accept the statement of the hon. Member, that he and another hon. Member did make use of dissentient exclamations; but when I put the Question that the "Ayes" had it I was satisfied, as far as my hearing goes, that no dissentient voice was raised. After the Question had been decided that the "Ayes" had it, and as hon. Members were leaving the House, the Prime Minister rose, and I called, in a voice sufficiently loud to be heard throughout the House, "Order, Order!" in order to direct the attention of the House to the action which the Prime Minister was about to take. The Prime Minister then said that he wished it to be recorded that the Bill had passed its third reading *nemine contradicente*. That wish was expressed a second time by the Prime Minister, and the House, as far as I am aware, distinctly heard the proposition made by the right hon. Gentleman. I then, amid silence throughout the House, put distinctly to the House the statement that this Bill was read a third time

nemine contradicente, and to that statement no contradiction was made, and no dissentient voice was raised. I am aware, of course, that the circumstance was unusual. [An hon. MEMBER: Most unusual.] But I was of opinion that it was not without precedent. I was also of opinion that there was nothing whatever in the Rules, or Precedents, or Orders of this House to restrain the discretion of the House from recording a fact of that nature on an occasion of such importance. This is what occurred. Of course, I am in the hands of the House. I did not think it proper to refuse the application made to me—that the fact should be recorded on the Journals—and having put the Question, and there being no dissentient voice raised that I heard, the matter was recorded and was entered upon the Journals of the House. I now leave the matter to the discretion of the House.

MR. PELL: May I ask whether the only course I and my hon. Friend the Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) could have pursued, under the circumstances, in order to prevent this entry appearing upon the Votes, was to have challenged your decision, and to have gone to a Division; or whether we should merely have objected, at the last stage, when you put the statement that the Bill was read a third time *nemine contradicente*?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member had expressed his dissent to that last Question, the words would not have been added.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker—because this is a new procedure—I wish to ask whether there is any precedent for the words *nemine contradicente* having been added to the record of the passing of any Bill which had been of a contentious character, and the subject of frequent debates, and of frequent Divisions during its passage through the House? We have had many instances, of course, of Votes of Thanks, of Addresses to the Crown, and of other Motions of that kind, and also of Bills of a character such as making allowances to retiring Speakers, which have been passed with perfect unanimity, and with regard to which it has been the desire of the House that its unanimity should be recorded in a particular manner by the words *nemine contradicente* being added.

But I wish to ask you, Sir, whether there is any record of any occasion on which any measure of a contentious character, which has been a matter of controversy, has been passed with these words?

MR. GLADSTONE (who, on rising, was received with cries of "Order!") said: I wish to make an explanation. I wish to state the view upon which I acted, if it is the pleasure of the House that I should do so. The painful reflection impresses itself upon my mind, after hearing the hon. Gentleman opposite, and on comparing his statement with my own experience, that the ordinary faculties of hon. Members appear to become dull as men advance in life, because I totally failed to hear the challenge of the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell), which he says was not low, and that of the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read), which he says was loud. Therefore, I am utterly convicted of incapacity to hear; and the hon. Member is not wholly without blame, for, undoubtedly, I did state as audibly as I could, and twice over, the purpose for which I rose.

MR. PELL: I must have expressed myself incorrectly, or the Prime Minister did not hear what I said. I distinctly intended to say that my challenge was not loud, but that that of the hon. Member for West Norfolk was most emphatic.

MR. GLADSTONE: I thought that the words used by the hon. Member were, "not low." The hon. Member will, I am sure, understand that I had not the slightest idea that he or any other hon. Member had challenged the third reading of the Bill, either when you, Mr. Speaker, said, "Those who are of the contrary opinion will say no;" or on the second occasion, when you said, "The Ayes have it." I should never have dreamt of perpetrating an error of so absurd and gross a character, nor should I have taken any steps had a single voice within my hearing been raised in an adverse sense. But the question is one of interest and importance, and perhaps I may be allowed to state what was the view of the matter upon which I ventured to act. It has been correctly stated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the proceeding was not a usual proceeding. My view of the matter is this. We all

know that the great bulk of the decisions of this House are unanimous decisions, and are decisions come to *nemine contradicente*. If we run through the Votes we shall see how far the bulk of our decisions are actually made *nemine contradicente*; but it would be totally out of keeping with custom, propriety, and good sense to record that they were arrived at *nemine contradicente* in all cases. What I understand is that, upon certain rare occasions, when it is desired to give a peculiar significance, then, if there be no opposing voice, after notice has been taken—not by way of Motion, but by suggestion—of the fact, this entry of *nemine contradicente* is made. What I am responsible for is this—for having believed, in the first place—and in this I am confirmed by what was stated by yourself, Mr. Speaker, in the Chair—that there is no Rule binding the discretion of the House in the matter; and, in the second place, that the occasion was one worthy of this proceeding. It appeared to me to be eminently worthy of it, because here was the very peculiar case of a Bill upon which the House had spent—I am speaking from memory—some 18 or 20 nights, but with regard to which we were constantly assured by numbers of speakers opposite that they objected, not to the enactments contained in it, but to the passing of the Bill, because of something it did not contain. Under these circumstances, it appeared to me to be most important, at a time when the opposition had already ceased, when a great change was going to be made by the admission of 2,000,000 of persons to the franchise, that that unanimous assent of the House to the third reading of the Bill should be marked. It is said to be an unusual proceeding. Certainly it is; and such a Bill as the Representation of the People Bill is an unusual Bill. The introduction of such a Bill rarely happens. There has been only one Bill of the kind in the present century with regard to which such a proceeding would have been appropriate—I mean the Reform Act of 1832. But the proceeding could not then have taken place, because the Bill was opposed to the last, and a Division was taken on the third reading. But on the last great Constitutional occasion before that—namely, the passing of the Bill of Rights—although there was a debate on that Bill, the very same pro-

ceeding took place, and the passing of the third reading of the measure was recorded as having taken place *nemine contradicente*. I am extremely sorry if there has been a mistake as to the fact of the original challenge, and that any error should have arisen in consequence. That I deeply regret; but, taking the facts as I and others believe them to be, I am not prepared to say that upon an occasion so remarkable, so peculiar, and so important, the suggestion ought not to have been made for recording the very significant fact that no person thought fit to challenge the Motion for the third reading of the Bill.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I do not rise for the purpose of dealing, or attempting to deal, with the latter part of the right hon. Gentleman's observations, because we can perfectly well understand his reason for desiring to record the fact that the Bill was read a third time *nemine contradicente*; although, for my own part, I am bound to say I do not think that that fact has very much improved the position of the Bill. What I venture to ask your opinion upon, Mr. Speaker, is this. The Prime Minister has himself admitted that if he had heard opposing voices raised against the third reading of the Bill, he would not have asked you to state that the Bill had been read a third time *nemine contradicente*. We also have it from yourself, Mr. Speaker, that if when you, Sir, asked the House whether *nemine contradicente* should be recorded, the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) had called attention to the fact that he had said "No," the record that the Bill had been read a third time *nemine contradicente* would not have been made, and the declaration would not have been entered upon the Journals of the House. The question I venture to ask of you is this. It is clear that the record that the Bill was read a third time *nemine contradicente* was made under a false impression, because no one in this House can doubt for a moment the accuracy of the statement made by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) on his own behalf, and on behalf of the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read), that they did say "No." The Prime Minister does not doubt the fact that they did so; and I do not suppose that anyone else will question it. You have stated that if your attention had

been called to this fact yesterday, you would not have allowed the record to be made. I wish to know, then, whether, Sir, you will not direct the Minutes of the Proceedings of the House to be amended by expunging the words which declare that the Bill was read a third time *nemine contradicente*?

MR. SPEAKER: I am altogether in the hands of the House in the matter, and I shall, of course, take their directions upon the subject. As I said before, I accept most fully the statement of the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) that both he and another hon. Member did raise a dissentient voice. Therefore, I am in the hands of the House, and I am prepared to do whatever the House may direct.

MR. GLADSTONE: I give the fullest credit to the statement of the hon. Member; and I am content to take it that he did raise a dissentient voice when the Question was put, and that he omitted to make a second challenge. But I twice distinctly made the suggestion that the fact should be recorded. In the event of any alteration of the record being decided upon now, I am bound to say that I should desire that the record be altered on the ground of a new discovery as to a matter of fact, rather than in such a way as to restrain the discretion of the House on any similar occasion.

MR. HEALY: I will ask you, Sir, as a point of Order, whether the entry in the Journals ought not to contain an addition that the alteration is made at the instance of the Tory Party?

MR. J. LOWTHER: I understand that the right hon. Gentleman will himself make the Motion. ["No, no!"]

MR. SPEAKER: It would be necessary that a Motion to that effect should be made.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am perfectly ready to make the Motion, because I am sure there has been a complete misunderstanding. A good many Members were absent who, if they had supposed that their absence would have led to such a result, would have been here. They were absent because they considered that the matter was really at an end, and they did not think the time of the House should be taken up with a Division. I venture to make the Motion which has been suggested.

MR. GLADSTONE: It might be convenient that the Motion should be made

on the ground of the matter of fact without the smallest addition.

MR. HEALY: I presume that in a matter of this kind it is competent not only for hon. Members to assent to the Motion, but for other hon. Members to object, and, if necessary, to divide upon the Motion. Of course, in that case, the Government must make up their minds which Lobby they will go into.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: May I ask what the words of the Motion are?

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I should propose, as a matter of form, that the entry of the words *namine contradicente* in the Votes of yesterday should be read, in order that those words may be expunged, it having been stated that they were introduced under a misapprehension of the facts.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: Perhaps it would be better to let the record stand as it is, with merely an addition that the only dissentients were two Tories.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: I was present when the Question was put, and I distinctly heard the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) challenge the first decision. The last, however, was not challenged. I have only risen, however, to ask if it is not really trifling with the House to bring forward a matter of this kind? Unquestionably the decision was unanimous. There were only four Conservatives in the House at the time. As the hon. Member has now called attention to the circumstances, the public will be perfectly conscious of them, and is it necessary to put the House to further trouble in the matter?

MR. PELL: I really must ask the permission of the House to make one remark after the observations of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen). He has expressed an opinion that in bringing forward the matter I am only trifling with the House. I can hardly consider the question as one in which the House is being trifled with, when the Prime Minister himself went out of his way to desire that the entry should be made in the Journals of the House.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I think the House must consider whether, by adopting this Motion, we may not establish a rather inconvenient precedent. Occasionally there have arisen doubts whether the Speaker has heard a negative given. I have always understood that

the discretion rested with you, Sir, and we have had full confidence that you would decide to the best of your ability. But it appears to me that if we place any Motion on record, it would be a precedent for re-opening the Speaker's decision in almost all cases. I think it has been generally understood that if an hon. Member has not said "No" in a way that reaches you, the House is always ready to abide by the decision of the Chair. In this particular case it appears that only one other Member besides the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) said "No" when the Question was first put, and did not say it afterwards. Therefore the dissent was not continued, and the House would be re-opening a decision in a way which is not desirable, and might be found inconvenient in future. The hon. Member did not speak in a loud voice, or in a voice which was heard by the Speaker; and I think he ought to be content with making known the fact that there were only a very small number of Conservative Members present, and that two of them did object.

MR. CHAPLIN: I differ entirely from the right hon. Gentleman, and I must confess that I think there is no alternative but to expunge the words *namine contradicente*. What we are discussing is a matter of fact. As was said just now by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), it is competent for any person to take a Division on the Question of the omission of these words. But the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) has stated publicly in the House that he did challenge Mr. Speaker's decision, and the Prime Minister has accepted the statement that he did challenge the decision when the Question was put.

MR. HEALY: Not the second time.

MR. CHAPLIN: Whether the hon. Member did it once or twice is not the question. He did challenge the decision, and we have now placed on the Journals of the House something which is diametrically opposed to the fact. I cannot conceive that there can be two opinions upon the matter. Either the Question was challenged or it was not. If it was challenged, then undoubtedly these words ought to be expunged. If it was not challenged, they are perfectly correct. The hon. Member distinctly states that he did challenge it, and under

the circumstances, I cannot conceive how the House of Commons can be parties to a record which is contrary to the fact.

MR. DILLWYN: I do not think that an interval should have been allowed to elapse before the objection to the entry was taken, but it should have been taken when the words *nemine contradicente* were proposed to be recorded. My hon. Friend should have stated then that the third reading had not been passed *nemine contradicente*; and in that case it would not have been so recorded. But having been formally and duly recorded, I think it is too late to raise an objection now. Having said so much, I must confirm the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell). I was present, and I did hear him, in a low tone of voice, say "No;" but only once.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I think that the House had been placed in a false position in the matter by the Government and the Leader of the Opposition. My hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) has said that it will be competent for any Member to oppose the Motion for altering the Journals of the House; and I wish to give both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition notice that I will offer the strongest opposition to any such Motion. I am quite prepared to lay before the House the reasons why I am antagonistic to the Motion. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) has put the matter unfairly and incorrectly before the House. [MR. CHAPLIN: Why?] I will tell the hon. Member why. Nobody intends to cast the slightest doubt upon the words of the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell). But that is not the question which is now raised. The question is, whether the words *nemine contradicente* are correct or not; and I maintain that the hon. Member for South Leicestershire has himself given the strongest proof that the words *nemine contradicente* are accurate. The final, and actual, and recorded challenge is not when the Question is put the first time, but when it is put the second or final time. Therefore, the hon. Gentleman has himself borne testimony to the accuracy of the entry. When a Question is put by you, Sir, or by the Chairman of Committees, everybody knows that it is put twice. After the Question is put a first time, the House is cleared for a

Division, and it is only the second time the Question is put that has anything of a final character. There was no second dissent on this occasion; and, therefore, the third reading was passed *nemine contradicente*. Secondly, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster) has drawn attention to what is, after all, the central part of the question. You, Sir, are the authority to decide, by the Rules of the House, whether or not dissent had been expressed. If such dissent did not reach your ear, no dissent, as a matter of fact, was expressed. That has been established as a complete and unalterable precedent. As to the assertion that your action in the matter was unprecedented, I would call the attention of the House to the circumstance that, when your Predecessor was in the Chair, and summarily closed a debate, the House unanimously declared that the fact that the Speaker's decision was unprecedented was rather a recommendation than otherwise.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There is no Question before the House.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I wish to ask, Sir, whether, in regard to the second Question—which was the Question to which the Prime Minister's Notice referred—the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) has not distinctly stated that he made no challenge; and, that being taken in connection with your directions for the entry to be made, whether, under the circumstances, the statement of the hon. Member coinciding with your own statement, the question can be reopened?

MR. SPEAKER: The House is in full possession of the circumstances; and I prefer to leave the question to the discretion of the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Would it not be better to have some Motion before the House? At present there is no Motion.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: rose—

MR. HEALY: I rise to a point of Order. We have hitherto been discussing the question without a Motion before the House, and every Member has been heard who was desirous of being heard. It might occur to the right hon. Gentleman that it would be undesirable to put his Motion, because it might be afterwards regarded as unfortunate that any Motion of the kind should be re-

corded on the Journals of the House of Commons, even although it were defeated. As the discussion has hitherto been allowed to proceed without a Motion, I would suggest that the discussion should continue to go on without a Motion, in order to give the right hon. Gentleman a *locus penitentie*.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE rose—

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I rise to a point of Order. I wish to know whether it is usual to allow proceedings of this kind at the commencement of Business? There has been a full previous opportunity of correcting the error. I was in the House myself at the time the Prime Minister proposed the entry of the words *namine contradicente*, and I carefully watched the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) and the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read), who was by his side. They sat still, and made no objection for a long time until the cheering subsided. The only ground, therefore, could be that the hon. Member did not understand the Latin language, because the Motion was expressed in the clearest way.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I rise to Order. The right hon. Gentleman said he rose to a point of Order; but he is not raising a point of Order, but entering into a discussion.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: There has been a double opportunity of correcting the error—namely, when the Question was put that—"The Ayes have it," and subsequently when the suggestion of the Prime Minister was put from the Chair that the entry *namine contradicente* be made. I ask, therefore, whether, if the matter is to be further dealt with, it ought not to be after Notice?

MR. RITCHIE: How is it possible for an hon. Member to have an opportunity of correcting the Journals of the House until the record of its proceedings has been distributed?

MR. SPEAKER: In my view, the unusual circumstance of an entry in the Journals of the House having been made that a Bill was read *namine contradicente* justified the interference of an hon. Member at this stage. If, therefore, any hon. Member wishes to propose a Motion on the subject, I consider that, under the special circumstances of the case, he might be allowed to do so.

Mr. Healy

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to make such a Motion, because I think it is an entirely new practice to place on the Journals of the House the words *namine contradicente* in the case of a Bill which has been a contentious one throughout, and as to which there obviously had been no agreement of opinion on the part of the whole House. The Prime Minister says it has been occasionally the practice to insert the words *namine contradicente*, when the Bill was of such importance that it was desirable to have such a special record. Now, I would put it to you, Sir, whether there are any precedents later than the Bill of Rights in which those words have been added in regard to the third reading of a Bill which has been the subject of contention in the House? The cases in which it was usual for those words to be inserted were cases in which there was a unanimous feeling in the House, and when it was desirable to mark that unanimity—as, for example, in respect to Votes of Congratulation to the Royal Family, or of Condolence on the decease of distinguished persons. But if we were to introduce that new practice, it would not be confined to the Prime Minister; but any hon. Member might move, after a contentious Bill had been read a third time, that it should be recorded that it had been passed *namine contradicente*, and confusion would arise. I would therefore now propose—

"That, the honourable Member for South Leicestershire having called attention to the fact that the Question, that the Representation of the People Bill be read the third time, was challenged by him, the entry in the Votes of the proceedings on the Third Reading of the Bill be corrected by omitting from the Votes the words 'Namine Contradicente.'"

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the honourable Member for South Leicestershire having called attention to the fact that the Question, that the Representation of the People Bill be read the third time, was challenged by him, the entry in the Votes of the proceedings on the Third Reading of the Bill be corrected by omitting from the Votes the words 'Namine Contradicente.'"—(*Sir Stafford Northcote*.)

MR. SPEAKER: In answer to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that I believe it is a fact that Bills which have been opposed during part of their progress through this House, on passing their final stage without opposition, have the words *namine contradicente* appended to the

entry relating to them. I believe the fact to be that the term *nemine contradicente* applies not to what has passed on every stage during the progress of the Bill, but to the final stage. A Bill might be opposed at one stage, or at another stage; but if on reaching the final stage it passes without opposition, the words *nemine contradicente* are appended. I stated before that I was not aware I was bound by any precedent or Order of this House to decline to have entered in the Minutes the words I have referred to under the circumstances in which the Bill passed its final stage.

MR. PELL: I should like the Question, as put from the Chair, to be amended by the addition, after the word "him," of the words 'and another Member.

MR. HEALY: I rise to Order. I wish to submit to you, Sir, whether, if the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman is allowed, it should not be brought forward as a separate Motion? You have now put the Question from the Chair, and no one has any power to amend the Motion. Mr. Speaker cannot amend any Motion in his hands. Therefore, I submit that if this Amendment is put, it should be made the subject of a separate Division.

MR. SPEAKER: I understand that it is simply proposed to move an Amendment to the Motion, and the hon. Member in doing that is perfectly in Order. He proposes to move, after the words "by him," the insertion of the words, "and by another hon. Member."

Amendment proposed, to insert after the word "him," the words "and by another Member."—(*Mr. Pell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope that the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) will not press his Amendment. A single "No" is as good as 100 for this purpose. Moreover, I do not think it would be regular for the hon. Member to appear as sponsor for another Member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is that the words "and by another Member" be here added to the Amendment.

Several hon. MEMBERS: Withdraw, withdraw!

MR. PELL: I withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

DR. LYONS: I rise to move an Amendment to this Motion. This is a very important matter as affecting our procedure, and a matter that may involve us in very great difficulty in the future, unless we proceed with care. Therefore I rise for the purpose of moving that a small Select Committee be appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the facts of the case, with instructions from the House to search the Journals and consider all precedents believed to be applicable. I happen to be tolerably familiar, owing to researches I have made, with the history of the action of this House; and I can state what is, perhaps, known to many Members, that the addition of the words *nemine contradicente* is a thing constantly taking place. It is repeatedly to be found in the Journals of the House. There are, no doubt, restrictions to the use of this phrase; but I believe myself that this was one of the occasions when it was proper for the addition to be made. It is clear that although the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) may have challenged the final stage when the Question was first put, he did not challenge it when the Question was put the second time, when Mr. Speaker said—"The Ayes have it," or at any rate that if he did, he did not do it in an efficient manner. It is on the Question being put the second time that the vote is taken, if there is a Division, and the record entered upon the Minutes is the record of the decision of the House on that last formal Question as it reaches your ear. It is the duty of any hon. Member who differs from the general sense of the House, if he wishes such difference to be recorded, to take care that his dissent reaches your ear. I would put this point to the House, whether the real and proper object which the hon. Member has in view is not fully met by the fact that he has raised this discussion to-day, because the Motion put will appear on the records of the House, and from them it will be seen that the Bill was not passed unanimously. If the hon. Member wishes to occupy the unenviable position—a position which probably some day he might find reason to regret—of being one of the few persons who opposed this Bill when the House was practically unanimous, let him occupy that position. Had he sub-

mitted to the example of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), who delivered himself at the end of the proceedings, who kept his position resolutely and firmly, and left the House before the Bill passed, I could have had some sympathy with him; but the man who challenges a Division ostentatiously when the Question is first put, and does not challenge on the second formal occasion, cannot be considered a very strong partizan. It is evident that the action of the hon. Member (Mr. Pell) does not emanate from his desire to record his vote, but is the result of a mere after-thought, and is an attempt on the part of the right hon. Baronet opposite to secure some public recognition of the fact that the House was not unanimous. The right hon. Baronet fears that what happened yesterday would otherwise be very conspicuous and remarkable—that is to say, the abstention of the Opposition from taking a Division against the third reading of the Bill. Everyone had an intimation that the debate was to close last evening, so that nobody could complain of surprise; and if hon. Members opposite had wished to enter any protest against the decision about to be taken, it was their business to be present to record their votes. But they knew perfectly well that it was desirable that in the future they should be free from the charge of having voted against the Bill. I have no hesitation in saying that this is really a Party after-thought; an action taken with the view of recovering the position lost last night through the Opposition not being present to stand to their guns when the last fight on the Bill was to take place. I do not intend, so far as my vote goes, to support the Opposition in that side-wind of credit which they seem desirous of obtaining, looking at the enormous danger that would be threatening this House if decisions from the Chair formally given, and not challenged a second time, or, at any rate, if challenged, only challenged in a half-hearted manner, were allowed to be altered on the following day upon the whim of such a Member. I repeat that this is a Party move, the result of a second consideration, an after-thought, with a view of affecting “another place,” to enable that “other place” to say, as they could now only say in a very formal manner, that this House was not unanimous. If the Op-

position had desired to challenge the vote in a very distinct manner, it was their business to be in their places, and to take care that their challenge was recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member move?

DR. LYONS: I move that a Select Committee be appointed to consider the facts of the case, with power to search the Journals of the House, and to inquire into precedents.

MR. SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second the Motion?

An hon. MEMBER: Write down the Motion.

DR. LYONS: If it is not seconded, it will be unnecessary to write it down.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: Sir, I have heard a great deal from time to time of what I may call the high crime and misdemeanour of wasting the time of this House. I should like to ask if any hon. Member present ever witnessed a finer specimen of that performance than that to which the House has just been treated. What happened last night, Sir? Why, the Members of the Conservative Party, almost to a man, quitted this House when the Question for the third reading of the Representation of the People Bill was about to be put; and, therefore, their plain intention was to let the third reading pass *nemine contradicente*. I said they left the House almost to a man. I think, however, that two Gentlemen remained; and one of those Gentlemen, or both, challenged the Division in somewhat of a feeble voice—in a voice that was inaudible to a great many in this House, and to Mr. Speaker in the Chair. Well, the Members of the Conservative Party this morning find that a solitary Member, or two Members of their body, who remained, did in some feeble manner challenge the third reading; so they came down here, as we may say, in their thousands to-day, to raise a discussion and waste the time of this Assembly with a paltry question as to whether your decision, Sir, was challenged or not. Is that a policy which befits the great Conservative Party? Certainly, I had thought that they had intended to try out this question of the Representation of the People Bill on broader grounds than this. I thought the whole country was to be convulsed with the question that was to be raised upon it—

that the whole Conservative Party were to be called to support the resistance to this grave infraction of the liberties of the English people—for so it has been described. But, instead of trying the question out on this ground, they came down with this twopenny-halfpenny Motion, wasting the time of the House, and peddling in the most paltry way. The House, no doubt, desires that this matter should now entirely drop, and that we should proceed to the consideration of the Business on the Paper.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I think there is one conclusion which can be arrived at from the discussion that has taken place this afternoon—namely, that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and many hon. Gentlemen sitting on the same side of the House, have deliberately entered into a conspiracy with those Gentlemen who do not approve of Sunday closing in Ireland. I do not think I ever, in the whole course of my life, witnessed anything so despicable as the course adopted by the hon. Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons) in getting up and talking for a great length of time on a matter which could not have interested him in the slightest degree, merely for the purpose of obstructing useful legislation. I am opposed to the Bill that will come on this afternoon for Sunday closing in Ireland; but still, I do not think it is at all in accordance with the spirit of fair politics that Gentlemen of experience should stand up in this House and place themselves in the very despicable position of obstructing, and deliberately obstructing, useful legislation, by speaking upon matters of no importance. I trust nobody in this House will continue this discussion. If they do we can only believe that their object is the obstruction of useful legislation.

MR. KENNY: I only wish to make one reference to the Motion of the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition. I understand that it is said that the Motion last night was challenged. Well, Sir, I was in the House at the time when you put the Question, and I recollect that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) both said "No." But when you gave your final decision, and when the time came for challenging that decision, these

Gentlemen sank into silence and said nothing. It would be absurd, I think, for any hon. Gentleman to support a Motion like this, brought before us for the purpose of setting out a false principle.

MR. MACLIVER: I object to this Motion, Mr. Speaker, because it contradicts the facts of the case, and because it is a revision of your decision as Speaker. Instead of omitting the words which the right hon. Baronet opposite has proposed to omit, I think the House ought to retain the words, and add these—"On the following day, June 27th, this fact was objected to by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell), who said that he and another hon. Member challenged the vote, though they had not been heard by Mr Speaker." I think that would put the matter in chronological order, and would satisfy all parties.

MR. RAMSAY: I feel in some difficulty in agreeing to this Motion—difficulty arising from this fact. I understand you, Sir, to say, that the proposal made by the Prime Minister that the words *nemine contradicente* should be placed on record should be assented to by the House, and recorded by you on the Journals in accordance with the terms of the Motion of the Prime Minister. Now, I think it would be a strong measure, and one which I think hon. Gentlemen opposite would shrink from taking, to alter the Votes of this House on a question as to whether some hon. Gentlemen had cried "No" when you put the Question. Two hon. Gentlemen cried "No!" as they say; but as they did not challenge your decision on the second occasion, as they were silent, I fail to see on what ground it is that this House is asked to strike out from the Journals the words *nemine contradicente*, which were formally assented to as a distinct Motion in themselves. As I understand it, the Motion did not imply that there had been no previous opposition. Our Journals sufficiently show that a great body of Members were opposed to the Representation of the People Bill. Why we should strike out the words *nemine contradicente* I do not know, and I cannot but regret that so much time should have been wasted upon a question of the propriety of altering the Journals in respect of a Motion formally carried in the usual way,

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT: With all submission to the hon. Member, I think the real question is this—is the entry true as a matter of fact? Was there any dissension in the House? Mr. Speaker puts the Question in this way—"As many as are of that opinion will say 'Aye,' the contrary 'No;'" and then he may say—"I think the 'Ayes' have it." He puts that to be challenged when he thinks the Ayes are in a majority. If he thinks the "Noes" are in a majority, he says—"I think the 'Noes' have it." If there are dissentients, Mr. Speaker's decision is challenged. It was challenged yesterday, and the voices of the hon. Members who challenged it were heard by hon. Members on the other side as well as on this side of the House, though the voices may not have reached Mr. Speaker. It is allowed that those hon. Members did dissent. Then, if that is so, how can you put *nemine contradicente* on the Votes? How can you put that down when you heard the challenge yourselves? The question, I say, is—was there any Member dissenting, any Member contradicting the statement "The 'Ayes' have it"? The hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) was heard to do so by Members behind him and Members opposite to him; and I am surprised and astounded that now, when it is pointed out to hon. Members opposite that these words were entered on the Journals of the House through a mistaken interpretation, they should get up and say—"We will insist on keeping this false statement on the Journals."

MR. HEALY: I think it must now be evident to the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) that he has made the greatest mistake of his whole life. He finds himself made the instrument of the Party with which, apparently, he does not wish to seem to have the smallest connection. I warned him of that; I advised him to let the discussion proceed without trying to put the Motion, because, as I pointed out, it would be irrevocable. However, he persisted, and the Motion is now the sport of the House. He cannot withdraw from it, for if he did he, too, would be the laughing-stock of the House. I do not charge him with belonging to it; but we know that the Tory Party have been charged with being, to a large extent, the pub-

lican Party of the country. Is it consistent with the right hon. Baronet's position that he should lay himself open to the taunt that on a question of great Constitutional importance, on a question involving a most important principle and an action which has not been taken for centuries—ever since the Bill of Rights—he makes a Motion merely to assist the cause of the publicans? I do not charge him with doing this; but we know how unscrupulous the Radical Party are. He has made that Motion, and now, above him and behind him, he sees his young barbarians here at play, and he is unable to do anything to restrain their gambolings. Looking at the unfortunate and ridiculous position of the Leader of the Opposition, I must say he would have acted wisely if he had taken the advice of even so young and inexperienced a Member as I am. He made the Motion, however, and now he cannot help its being dragged in for other purposes. Thus we have the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition exposed to a series of taunts, and placed in such a false position that I do not think anyone occupying his power and influence was ever placed in before.

MR. BIGGAR: I am very sorry on this occasion to be obliged to differ from a great many of my hon. Colleagues. Something has struck me as being very peculiar in this discussion; the sight of the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Kenny), and the hon. Member for Wexford County (Mr. W. Redmond) objecting to hon. Members wasting the time of the House through antagonism to the Irish Sunday Closing Bill, and yet themselves occupying time by making speeches. I am of opinion that it is of the greatest importance that the Journals of the House should accurately state the facts of the case. It must be manifest to all present that, in point of fact, from some cause or other—I do not pretend to say what—the Journals of the House do not correctly state the facts as they really are. I think that, for that reason, it is very desirable that the Motion should be carried. I blame the Prime Minister very much for what he has done. No doubt he believed he was doing a very sharp thing last night when he asked us to put these words on the Paper. He did it in the absence of a large proportion of the Members of the Opposition, and he spoke in a foreign language. If

the right hon. Gentleman had spoken in English I could have formed some idea of what he meant. I had considerable difficulty in knowing what he intended to convey. I may say for my Irish Colleagues that it is of the greatest importance that this precedent should be set, and that the Journals, being wrong, should be corrected. There have been cases in which we, the Irish Members, have disputed the Records, and in which a majority of the House has decided in a manner contrary to the real facts of the case. If we are able to get the House to decide in strict accordance with the facts, it is probable that at no remote time we may have an opportunity of getting statements that appear on the Records changed in such a way that they will actually do justice to our Party.

MR. SPEAKER: Before I put the Question I wish to correct a misconception which seems to prevail in the minds of some hon. Members. The term "the decision of the Speaker" has been used more than once. I wish to point out that it was not "the decision of the Speaker," but the decision of the House. The decision "That the words *nemine contradicente* appear on the Journals of the House" was no decision of mine. The Question practically was "Is it your pleasure that these words appear on the Journals?" and a single dissentient voice would have prevented them being added.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 82; Noes 125: Majority 43.

AYES.

Barttelot, Sir W. B.	Eckersley, N.
Beach, right hon. Sir	Egerton, hon. A. F.
M. E. Hicks-	Elton, C. I.
Beresford, G. De la P.	Estcourt, G. S.
Biggar, J. G.	Ewart, W.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.	Ewing, A. O.
Broadley, W. H. H.	Floyer, J.
Brodrick, hon. W. St.	Folkestone, Viscount
J. F.	Fremantle, hon. T. F.
Bruce, Sir H. H.	Gibson, right hon. E.
Campbell, J. A.	Gladstone, rt.hn. W.E.
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.	Greene, E.
Cotes, C. C.	Gregory, G. B.
Courtney, L. H.	Grosvenor, right hon.
Crichton, Viscount	Lord R.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.	Hamilton, right hon.
Curzon, Major hon. M.	Lord G.
Dalrymple, C.	Hamilton, I. T.
De Worms, Baron H.	Harris, W. J.
Digby, Colonel hon. E.	Hay, rt. hon. Admiral
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.	Sir J. C. D.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.	Herbert, hon. S.
Douglas, A. Akers-	Hill, Lord A. W.
Ebrington, Viscount	Hill, A. S.

Holland, Sir H. T.	Northcote, rt. hon. Sir
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.	S. H.
Jerningham, H. E. H.	Otway, Sir A. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.	Paget, R. H.
King-Harman, Colonel	Patrick, R. W. Coch-
E. R.	ran-
Knight, F. W.	Pell, A.
Leatham, W. H.	Phipps, P.
Leighton, S.	Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Lennox, rt. hon. Lord	Repton, G. W.
H. G. C. G.	Ritchie, C. T.
Lewisham, Viscount	Ross, A. H.
Long, W. H.	Round, J.
Lowther, J. W.	Slater-Booth, rt.hn.G.
Mac Iver, D.	Scott, M. D.
Mackintosh, C. F.	Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Makins, Colonel W.	Tomlinson, W. E. M.
T.	Wallace, Sir R.
March, Earl of	Warton, C. N.
Marriott, W. T.	Whitley, E.
Master, T. W. C.	
Mulholland, J.	
Muntz, P. H.	
Nicholson, W. N.	

TELLERS.

Thornhill, T.
Winn, R.

NOES.

Allen, H. G.	Fry, T.
Allman, R. L.	Gabbett, D. F.
Anderson, G.	Gladstone, H. J.
Armitstead, G.	Gordon, Sir A.
Arnold, A.	Gourley, E. T.
Balfour, Sir G.	Grafton, F. W.
Barclay, J. W.	Grant, A.
Barnes, A.	Harrington, T.
Barran, J.	Hayter, Sir A. D.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.	Healy, T. M.
Blake, J. A.	Hill, T. R.
Bolton, J. C.	Holden, I.
Borlase, W. C.	Holland, J. R.
Brassey, Sir T.	Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Bright, J.	Kenny, M. J.
Broadhurst, H.	Kinnear, J.
Bryce, J.	Lawson, Sir W.
Buchanan, T. R.	Leahy, J.
Buszard, M. C.	Leamy, E.
Buxton, F. W.	Leatham, E. A.
Caine, W. S.	Lusk, Sir A.
Cameron, C.	Lyons, R. D.
Campbell, R. F. F.	Macfarlane, D. H.
Campbell-Bannerman,	MacIver, P. S.
H.	M'Arthur, A.
Cartwright, W. C.	M'Carthy, J. H.
Causton, R. K.	M'Clure, Sir T.
Clark, S.	M'Lagan, P.
Collings, J.	Mappin, F. T.
Collins, E.	Maskelyne, M. H. N.
Cowen, J.	Story-
Cropper, J.	Meldon, C. H.
Cross, J. K.	Molloy, B. C.
Davies, R.	Monk, C. J.
Davies, W.	Moore, A.
Deasy, J.	Morley, A.
Dickson, T. A.	O'Brien, W.
Dodds, J.	O'Connor, T. P.
Fairbairn, Sir A.	Palmer, C. M.
Farquharson, Dr. R.	Palmer, G.
Ferguson, R.	Parker, C. S.
Findlater, W.	Parnell, C. S.
Foljambe, C. G. S.	Pease, Sir J. W.
Forster, Sir C.	Pease, A.
Forster, rt. hon. W. E.	Peddie, J. D.
Fry, L.	Pennington, F.

Picton, J. A.	Spencer, hon. C. R.
Playfair, rt. hn. Sir L.	Stafford, Marquess of
Potter, T. B.	Stevenson, J. C.
Powell, W. R. H.	Stewart, J.
Powder, J. O'C.	Stuart, H. V.
Price, Sir R. G.	Sullivan, T. D.
Pugh, L. P.	Thompson, T. C.
Ralli, P.	Vivian, Sir H. H.
Ramsay, J.	Vivian, A. P.
Redmond, W. H. K.	Waugh, E.
Richard, H.	Webster, J.
Roe, T.	Williamson, S.
Ruston, J.	Wills, W. H.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.	Wilson, Sir M.
Sellar, A. C.	Wilson, C. H.
Sheil, E.	
Simon, Serjeant J.	TELLERS.
Small, J. F.	Dillwyn, L. L.
Smith, S.	Noel, E.
Smyth, P. J.	

MR. HEALY: Mr. Speaker, there is one question I wish to ask with reference to this subject. It has hitherto been usual, especially in the case of great Bills, to put, after the third reading, the Question "That the Bill do now pass." Such a Question was put by the late Speaker in the case of the Irish Coercion Bill; and I wish to ask whether, if a case of this kind occurs in the future much contention would not be saved if the Motion "That the Bill do now pass" were put from the Chair?

MR. SPEAKER: The putting of the Question, after the third reading, "That the Bill do now pass," has of late years fallen into desuetude, and has become, practically, obsolete. I do not think that it is the pleasure of the House that the putting of such a Question should be revived.

MR. HEALY: It is not three years ago that Mr. Brand, the late Speaker, put such a Question in the case of the Irish Coercion Bill.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 109.]

(Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE].

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [20th June], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. WARTON said, that, on the last occasion when the Bill was before the

House, they had the unusual honour of the Prime Minister coming in late in the debate, having no doubt been necessarily detained elsewhere; and, in a few earnest words, urging very strongly upon the House the importance of coming to an immediate decision. Being anxious, as he (Mr. Warton) always was, to treat every suggestion of the Prime Minister's with all possible respect, he might be permitted to remark that the right hon. Gentleman, on that occasion, had not heard the extraordinary arguments and the strange figures put forward by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He (Mr. Warton) was quite sure that the Prime Minister was as anxious as he was that the House should not come to a conclusion on that very important question hastily; that it should not come to a conclusion under a misapprehension; and that it should not come to a conclusion based upon figures which were misleading, if not absolutely false. It would be within the recollection of the House that the Chief Secretary for Ireland made use of a most extraordinary argument. It was this—that, where the Act was in force, there was only one case of Sunday drunkenness against 17 on week days. That constituted a specific allegation which he (Mr. Warton) wished to take this opportunity of challenging. The statement made by the right hon. Gentleman did not represent what was actually the case. Anyone who had read the Returns would see that a misapprehension existed in the mind of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was, no doubt, led into the mistake by starting from a perfectly erroneous assumption—that erroneous assumption being, that the number of persons who had been taken up for drunkenness in the year ending April 29th, 1883, was 2,923 in the exempted cities; whereas, in truth and in fact, the number so taken up—as shown in a Return ordered on the Motion of the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. Ewart)—was not 2,923, but 1,248.

MR. TREVELYAN: I hope I am not out of Order in correcting the hon. Member.

MR. WARTON: I think you are. ["Order!"]

MR. TREVELYAN: On a question of fact, I stated that my figures were drawn not from the Return which the

hon. and learned Member quotes, but from the Return of persons arrested for drunkenness, for being drunk and disorderly, and for crimes connected with drunkenness. That makes the whole difference.

MR. WARTON said, he accepted the correction of the right hon. Gentleman, but only to a limited extent. He protested against that new set of figures being sprung upon the House simply because of some complication that existed in the mind of the Chief Secretary for Ireland in mixing up arrests for drunkenness with arrests for crimes connected with drunkenness. It was a little too bad for the right hon. Gentleman to avoid dealing with Returns officially laid before Parliament, which perhaps he feared to face, and to spring upon the House a set of perfectly new figures which were not based on a correct standard. He was, therefore, perfectly correct when he said that the right hon. Gentleman proceeded upon an entirely false basis. He had no right, when dealing with the question of arrests on Sunday for drunkenness, to mix up with that question some imaginary number, derived he (Mr. Warton) knew not whence, and crimes connected with drunkenness. He should therefore stick to the test which he considered a right one—namely, that of arrests for drunkenness. He should proceed upon approved figures and upon acknowledged facts. The Chief Secretary had startled the House by drawing an alarming comparison between the one to 17 cases of Sunday drunkenness in the country with the one to six cases in the exempted cities. That was an utterly fallacious comparison; and the results could only have been obtained by the extraordinary process which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had now had the fairness to reveal. Taking a fair comparison of the figures, it proved that the proportion of arrests for Sunday drunkenness in the excepted cities was but one in 17 arrests, as against one in 15½ in the districts to which the Act applied. Therefore, the contrast was not very alarming. Moreover, the comparison was in itself somewhat unfair; because in the cities there were readier means of arrest than in the country. A man might be drunk for hours in a country place before he was taken notice of by the police; but in a city like

Waterford or Limerick he would very soon be arrested. The difference in the ratio of arrests was more than accounted for in this way. In Scotland, where Sunday closing prevailed all over the country, the proportion of arrests for Sunday drunkenness was one in 680 of the population in the towns, and only one in 8,333 of the population in the country. Therefore, the chances of arrest in a Scotch burgh were about 12 times as great as in a country district; and, looking at the Irish statistics from that point of view, he held that the comparison was really strongly in favour of the cities. He would now institute a comparison between the state of Ireland 10 years ago and the present time. He was sorry to trouble the House with the figures; but those figures which had been already quoted by the promoters of the Bill were false both in their sources and in their application. He would compare the years 1872-3 with the years 1862-3, which would show the real results of the Sunday Closing Act, and the figures he should give would be perfectly authentic. In 1872 the total number of arrests outside the five cities which were now excepted from the operation of the Act was 55,775, and in the cities 27,514. In 1873 the numbers were 62,516 and 33,107. The total for the two years in the country was 118,291 arrests. In 1882 the arrests were 68,482 in the country, and 19,015 in the cities; and in 1883 there were 68,903 in the country, and 20,623 in the cities. These figures gave a total for the non-excepted portion of the country during the two years of 137,385, as compared with 118,291 in 1872-3. The startling fact was here disclosed that there was an increase of 19,094 arrests under the operation of the Act. On the other hand, in the excepted cities, where drink was obtainable in an honest and honourable way, drunkenness had decreased. The arrests in those cities during the two years 1872-3 numbered 60,621; but in the two years 1872-3 they diminished to 39,638, showing a decrease of 20,983. The result of this Sunday closing legislation, therefore, had been what every student of human nature would expect—namely, that whilst there had been an increase of drunkenness in places where prohibition prevailed, there had been a decrease where the same interference was not permitted. Nothing

disposed him more to be angry than to think of the utter ignorance of human nature which was displayed by those who brought forward these Bills. They knew very well that "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant," and that when men were forbidden a thing, that was the very thing they proceeded to want. He recommended hon. Gentlemen to study the fables of their youth. There was, for instance, the fable of the chicken, who was told by its mother not to go near a well, and, of course, did so on the first opportunity. In dying accents the hapless chicken exclaimed—"Had it not been for the prohibition, I ne'er had been in this condition." The result of the prohibition of Sunday drinking was, that instead of drinking in proper and decent licensed houses, men were driven to get the drink they wanted, and for that purpose would have to resort to unlicensed and ill-regulated houses. That had been the case in Scotland, where shebeens had increased by many dozens, and in Ireland, where he believed the increase was even greater. Therefore, when hon. Members talked about the arrests—strong though that argument was—they must look carefully at what was known to be generally going on—namely, the determination of those who were not allowed to get honest liquor in an honest way, to get dishonest liquor in a dishonest way. Of course, people did not get such good liquor in the shebeens, because the keepers of those places, being subject to prosecution, must make great profits, and would not be likely to keep good liquors; and thus Parliament was creating, for no good purpose whatever, except the folly of some amiable enthusiasts, a class of men who were compelled to be law breakers. He had always admired the merciful spirit of our Criminal Law; but nothing could be more unmerciful than imposing extreme and unnecessary restrictions of this kind, which compelled people to break the law in defence of their honest rights. The House had been flooded with 13 or 14 county Bills for Sunday closing; and, in the debate on the Cornwall Bill, he gave a number of extracts to show how Sunday closing had operated in Wales. He would now boldly assert that the great majority of local and representative bodies in Wales, and all the associations entitled to re-

spect, had testified their abhorrence of Sunday closing wherever they had experienced it. Town Council after Town Council had passed resolutions to that effect. Many who were ardent supporters of Sunday closing in Wales when it was only in prospect were now its determined opponents; and, when the next General Election came, many hon. Members who thought to retain their seats by the aid of Sunday closing would find it necessary to reconsider the matter, and to recognize that public opinion had changed. In Cardiff there had been a great establishment of spurious clubs since Sunday closing was instituted. He (Mr. Warton) was not opposed to honest and respectable working men's clubs, and did not see why working men should not have clubs as well as other people. But he did object to clubs that were merely irregular and unlicensed drinking clubs, with a 6d. subscription, and power to take in any number of friends at any hour of the day or night; and that was the sort of club which had been established in Cardiff and Swansea since Sunday closing came into vogue. The police in those towns knew all about it, and Inspector after Inspector would tell you the same. Talking of Inspectors, he mistrusted the reports which were made by Inspectors in Ireland to the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to the results of Sunday closing. When it was known that the head of a Department was so strong and bigoted a partizan, he would be sure to get reports of the nature he wished for. Moreover, it was not likely that these Inspectors would throw dirt at themselves by admitting that drunkenness had considerably increased in their districts. However, the Chief Secretary for Ireland would not be able to upset or explain away the figures which he (Mr. Warton) had given, and which showed that, whilst drunkenness had increased in the prohibited districts, it had decreased in the excepted cities. It was, however, just possible that in the whole of Ireland there was a large temperance population. Well, he wished to see a decrease of drunkenness everywhere; but he observed that there was more hope of that in the removal than in the imposition of absurd restrictions, and in letting people get their liquor quietly and without any fuss and intrigue. He hoped to live to see the

day when, amongst the humblest classes as amongst the highest, it would be considered a disgraceful thing to get drunk; but Bills of this kind would not advance that end one jot. In fact, this kind of legislation had a very bad effect. It inculcated the notion that a man need not look after his own morals, but must have them attended to by a grand-motherly Government, who would keep him straight under all circumstances. That feeling crippled the moral strength of a man and degraded him. The principle was that adopted by the mother of Mr. Verdant Green, who wrote to the Vice Chancellor of the University, asking that her son should be always in bed by 9 o'clock. In the same way these Sunday closing people said—"You must not drink on Sunday, because we think it wrong for you to do so. In our superior wisdom and sanctity we shall dictate to you and make you feel our power." Surely, it was a very moderate thing to have the public-houses shut from 2 to 7 on a Sunday; but all these matters were subject to compromises. There were extremists belonging to every Party. On one side, in this matter, there were many virtuous and high-toned, but narrow-minded men. On the other side, there were many who were dissolute, unthinking, and careless. But between the two extremes were the men of moderation. They were neither saints nor sinners, and they generally got their way. Personally, he was as much opposed to the attempt of the saints to inflict their notions upon him as he should be to any attempt of the sinners; he liked to steer with an even keel between the two classes of fanatics. He hardly knew whether the well-meaning fanatics did the most harm, or the evil ones. Now, the Chief Secretary for Ireland had given the House some figures, and he (Mr. Warton) had given them some others, which he believed to be worthy of more attention. The fair and proper thing would be to investigate the matter fully and carefully. An experiment having been made, it would be more statesmanlike to appoint a strong Committee to inquire into its working and its results, than to precipitately legislate with a view to its extension and permanency again before the facts were thoroughly known. He was altogether opposed to Sunday closing; but, as a compromise, he would

agree to have the experiment tried a little longer; but he objected to have this iron measure rivetted on Ireland until it was fully proved to be for the good of the country. He objected also altogether to the proposal to include the five hitherto exempted cities. Doubtless, there had been some agitation in favour of the measure; but that was an age when agitations were very easily got up. Men herded together in societies and associations; and very few took the trouble to think for themselves, and to carefully examine both sides of a question. They believed what they were told by a few active and unscrupulous agents, and so a popular cry was worked up. This Bill had been hastily concocted to gratify those who did not take the trouble to think, and who were anxious to press upon others regulations to which they did not conform, and to lay upon others burdens which they did not themselves have to bear.

Mr. MUNTZ said, that, as an English Member, he must apologize for interposing in the discussion, because he considered that an Irish local question should be settled by Irish Members themselves. He would, therefore, have left all the talking upon the Bill to them; but to his surprise, however, he found that not only were the Irish Members not unanimous on the question, but a large majority who had spoken in the debate were going to vote against it. [Mr. GIBSON: We do not want to talk it out.] The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) said he would vote for the Bill, not because he was in favour of it, but because he had promised to support it.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, the hon. Member was under a misapprehension, and he was not opposed to the Bill.

Mr. MUNTZ said, that from everything he had heard, and considering the fact that a majority of the Irish Members were about to vote against the Bill, he thought he was justified in assuming that they were opposed to it. Were they or were they not in favour of it? [An Irish Liberal MEMBER: In favour of it all over Ireland.] Then he wanted to know why the Irish Members were not in favour of it? He was bound to say that he had seen no evidence of the measure being desired by the Irish people. On the contrary, although Peti-

tions signed by many influential persons had been presented in favour of the Bill, he doubted whether, if the question was put to the vote of the Irish people to-morrow, they would find a majority in favour of it. He understood the hon. Members for Dublin were opposed to it, and the hon. Members for Cork and Limerick were not in its favour. He heard a great deal in favour of Sunday closing; but what he wanted to know was, why there should be a difference between closing public-houses on Sunday and on any other day of the week? He could quite understand the position of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who was opposed to drinking at all times. The principle of the hon. Baronet was straightforward and plain; but he was at a loss to understand what principle there was in preventing all drinking on Sunday; and much less could he see why, if such a principle was good, it should not be applied to the whole Empire, and especially to England. In London they knew it had been tried, and they also knew with what result. If they were in earnest in putting down drink, the way to do so was by setting a good example. Let them begin in that House by putting down the bar and withdrawing from their clubs. Why were the Lords and Bishops and rich men, who had well-stocked cellars, to enjoy their wine on a Sunday, and the poor man not to have the right of obtaining a glass of ale? The prohibition then should apply to the club of the gentleman, and no private drinking should be tolerated. He could see no reason whatever in favour of the measure; and if the hon. Member proposed his Amendment he should certainly vote with him.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, that in Ireland there was a general anxiety that the Sunday Closing Act should be made permanent. There had been no change of opinion on this subject. ["Oh, oh!"] He believed he was right in saying that fully four-fifths of the Irish people were in favour of Sunday closing, and that a majority of the Irish Members would be found voting in favour of the Bill. ["No, no!"] He had attended scores of public meetings in Ireland, and found that the working classes were thoroughly in favour of Sunday closing. He would ask the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz),

and others who opposed the Bill, to allow a Division to be taken upon it, so as to test the feeling the House. In that case he believed that the Irish Members would not go into the Lobby against it. Indeed, he doubted if 10 Irish Members would vote against it, if they were allowed to go to a Division. It was absurd to say that the Irish people were not in favour of the principle, seeing that it had been in partial operation during the last six years, and that it had been admittedly a great success in repressing drunkenness. He would not waste time further in discussing the Bill; all he asked was that the House should be allowed to express its feeling upon the question by going to a Division.

Mr. LEAMY said, he must complain that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had taken good care not to give an opportunity to the Irish Members to express their opinions. If the Bill had been in charge of a private Member, he (Mr. Leamy) could have understood that he would seize any opportunity of bringing it under discussion; but this was a Government Bill, and he thought it was not fair that it should be taken at a time when the right hon. Gentleman knew very well that those who were opposed to it were absent, and had not, on account of the short notice, an opportunity of being present. The hon. Member who spoke last (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had stated—and he (Mr. Leamy) would like to know how he obtained the information—that four-fifths of the Irish people were in favour of the measure; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland also stated that the Government had investigated the matter, and also found that the people were in favour of it. They were now made aware how the Government had arrived at that conclusion. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said the Executive had made inquiry of the Resident Magistrates and of the Local Government Board. He also spoke of the Report of Dr. McCabe, who said he had spoken to many persons well acquainted with the feelings of the artisan classes in Dublin, and Dr. McCabe said the artisans and labourers might be divided into three classes, one of which he described as an honest class, and he said the honest working men were in favour of it. The Chief Secretary for

Ireland had stated that he did not approve of that description; but the Report went on to say that there was a certain portion of the working classes of Ireland, hard drinkers, who desired to have public-houses open, and who would get drunk whether the houses were closed or not. Of that there could be no doubt. Upon that the right hon. Gentleman remarked that the Bill would certainly put difficulties in the way of such people. Did the right hon. Gentleman not think that there were many people in England suffering from the same temptation, that he should go to Ireland in order to teach them not only how to obey the laws of England, but also the laws of God? The right hon. Gentleman quoted statistics in regard to Sunday arrests for drunkenness before and after the passing of the present Act. What he (Mr. Leamy) should like to know was, whether there was any means of ascertaining at what hour these arrests were made? Was it quite clear that some of them were not the results of Saturday's drinking? The arrests on Sunday were really no test at all, because arrests made after 12 o'clock on Saturday might be set down as Sunday drinking—whereas, as a matter of fact, the drinking took place on Saturday. He would submit that they should be arrests made after the time of opening public-houses on Sunday; because, if they did not, they must include a number of arrests which could not have been produced during the five hours the public-houses were open. He believed it would be found that this had not been done, and the Return was, therefore, worthless for the purpose it was quoted. The right hon. Gentleman referred to Scotland as an example in favour of the Bill. All he (Mr. Leamy) could say was that he saw a statement made a short time ago, that, in Scotland, they were doing a roaring trade on Sunday, not in public-houses, but in mock clubs. He saw a statement the other day, that the police had been occupied lately in arresting the people who made use of these clubs as they went out. Then, in regard to Wales, he saw that at a meeting lately, the Mayor, he thought, of Wrexham, stated that there had been more drunkenness in Wrexham since the passing of the Sunday Closing Act in Wales than on any other day of the week. The right hon. Gentleman had

asked the question, if Sunday closing would lead to a decrease of Sunday drinking; and, out of 74 who answered, 25 were in the negative and 20 in the affirmative, and there were a good many answers which could not be classed as either affirmative or negative. It was clear that there was no unanimity on the subject. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman had admitted that Sunday closing gave rise to unlawful drinking houses; and, if so, what was the good of the Act? Then the right hon. Gentleman asked if the closing would be likely to lead to illicit distillation; and on that question three answered in the negative; but he (Mr. Leamy) found that while illicit distillation in England and Scotland was very small, there being only 16 in England, and 14 in Scotland, in Ireland no fewer than 883 cases were reported last year. He thought that was not very satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman had hardly treated the House fairly in regard to this question. He knew very well that when the Act was first passed, it was only passed for a certain number of years, in order to see how it would work. Now it was proposed to make the Bill perpetual, not only in regard to the country embraced in the former Bill, but also in regard to the case of the other five cities. That was surely entirely unfair. Before they proposed to make the Act perpetual for the five cities they ought surely to see how it would work, as they had done in the counties. Then the right hon. Gentleman, who had professed his desire to carry out the wishes of the Irish people, might have waited until the Franchise Bill had been extended to Ireland. At present, the franchise was not such as to indicate the feeling of the people of Ireland on this matter. The people who now gave an opinion were, to a large extent, those who would not be affected by the Bill; but the majority of the people who would be affected had no means of giving effect to their opinions. It had been said that the priests of Ireland were in favour of the Bill. Now, he could never understand the attitude of the Irish priesthood on the subject. If the publicans were such bad people as they sometimes heard painted in sermons, surely they were as bad on a week-day as on a Sunday; and then the Irish priests, to be logical and consistent, should call upon the Government to close

public-houses not only on Sundays, but also on holidays. These days were quite as holy as Sundays, and there was certainly more temptation on those days than on Sundays, because the people were all idle and crowded into the towns. In fact, holidays were of all days those in which he would have thought restrictions on drink might be required. He thought he was justified, also, in saying that if the priests were opposed to Sunday drinking in public-houses, it was open to them to come forward and set up in every village a good national club; and he hoped the Bishops and priests would set to work to found in every village a good national club and library, where they could meet, so as to give the people some means of intellectual enjoyment. In that way they might, perhaps, learn something of the sort of Government under which they lived. Another matter that he did not understand was the action of Tipperary and Wexford in this matter, and why they should be so anxious for the Bill. These two gallant counties for many years passed a voluntary law closing the public-houses on Sunday within their limits, and the Tipperary and Wexford people obeyed that law, as to which he made no complaint, because they made it themselves. However, they did not seem to be satisfied with their own laws, and so they came over there to have them ratified by an alien Parliament; and not only that, but these two counties, having passed this law for themselves, were not content until, contrary to all their principles of Home Rule, they forced it on other places like Waterford, that did not want it. He thought the Chief Secretary for Ireland had acted unfairly in bringing forward such a measure as this without due notice to Irish Members. He knew that to hon. Members in Dublin 24 hours' notice was not sufficient; and those who were not opposed to it in principle were opposed to the manner in which it had been brought forward. The right hon. Gentleman said they must take this measure before they would go on with any other Irish Business, and he charged them with keeping back the Purchase of Land Bill by opposing the present measure. He (Mr. Leamy) told him that, when resolved to oppose a Bill, he would oppose it without any regard to what Bill might come after.

Mr. Leamy

The Government had tried the experiment of such a Bill as the present in England, and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had inquired if such a Bill would be likely to lead to disturbance in the large towns in Ireland. He found that they were a law-abiding people, and not likely to create a disturbance, but it was an extraordinary announcement that one of the reasons put forward in favour of the Bill by the Chief Secretary for Ireland was, that the Lord Lieutenant was satisfied that there would be no disturbance in Dublin if it were passed. Did the right hon. Gentleman know what he was saying? Was it to be laid down as a principle that a good law could not be passed for Ireland without a fierce agitation, and a bad law could not be averted without riot and disturbance? It was quite ludicrous that Lord Spencer should feel such concern for the souls of the people of Dublin. They were making an experiment on the people of Dublin, and he did not believe it would be possible to enforce the measure without great discontent. There had already been great reason to complain in Ireland of the way in which the present Act was administered as a kind of political engine, and so they would be sorry to see it extended. Public dinners to Members of Parliament were entered by the police, and people taking part in them were prosecuted. Only the other day that took place at New Ross, though he could hardly say that he was sorry for New Ross, as on Friday they had its Representative (Mr. J. Redmond), who was insulted, calling for the extension of Sunday closing to the rest of Ireland. It was true that the Chief Secretary for Ireland stated that he had given instructions that it should be discontinued, but so long as it could be used as a political engine he did not think Irish Members would help the Government in passing it. A great deal had been said of the popularity of Sunday closing in Scotland; but Irishmen were not like Scotchmen, although he believed the Scotch people came originally from Ireland, although they had not the humours of the Irish about them. They were strict Sabbatarians, and therefore Sunday closing was, to a great extent, germane to their disposition. The Irish, on the other hand, went in for amusement upon Sunday, and marched about

to the music of the fife and drum. They went in, too, for a great deal of excursion, and therefore it was not fair to them to offer them a Scotch Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had been asked to put into the Bill a clause to prevent the Bill being applied as it had been to prevent gentlemen of the same politics dining together at an hotel, and also to give the magistrates no discretion in granting exceptional licences on the occasion of such gatherings; but he would make no concession whatever to the wishes of the Irish Members. As he had said, they were told practically that until the Bill was passed, no other Irish legislation would be taken up. "Beggars cannot be choosers." That was the spirit in which they were to be treated. Well, whatever the Government threatened, he would oppose this Bill; and he thought his Colleagues, although some of them were in favour of the principle of the Bill, would oppose it also, because of the unfair manner in which its opponents were treated. He could not understand why Government should be so anxious to have the Bill passed now, especially as they could obtain, for another year at least, all they wished for by the passing of the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. The country, too, would have full opportunity of understanding the measure before irretrievably committing themselves to it, for everyone knew how extremely hard it would be to get it repealed if it once passed into law. He hoped the Bill would not pass this Session, and he was perfectly convinced that it would not.

DR. LYONS said, he wished to offer a few observations upon the Bill, as he had given close attention to the subject of it for a large number of years, and had likewise done all he could to ascertain the feeling of his constituents, the people of Dublin, in respect to it. Here he wished to say he considered the Irish Members had a good right to find fault with Her Majesty's Government. Some weeks ago, Tuesday and Friday nights were given to the Government, in trust, for the special purpose of enabling them to pass one or two great measures; and it was now particularly inconvenient to find them departing from that honourable engagement, by forcing this Bill upon the time of the House, while measures far more urgently called for were set aside. The Irish Members wanted

to see the question of Poor Law Administration and the Law of Settlement disposed of. These matters had been pressed upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but all that could be got from him was the promise that Bills dealing with them would be brought in without delay. He certainly would have great cause to complain if the promised measure was made to give way to this one, on which there was such a wide difference of opinion in Ireland. Both he and his hon. Colleague had warned the right hon. Gentleman against bringing forward such a measure as this; but he regretted to say that the Members for the City of Dublin were on that occasion treated with scant courtesy both by the right hon. Gentleman and the Lord Lieutenant; and here they had a Bill brought in in direct opposition to their wishes, and in the very teeth of the advice they had given the right hon. Gentleman. His experience told him that there was a strong feeling in Dublin against closing the public-houses in the City of Dublin; and although the right hon. Gentleman might succeed in inducing the House to pass this Bill, he would fail to carry with him that general consensus of opinion on which the success of a measure like that entirely depended, and the Government would go on manufacturing artificial crime without in any way forwarding the cause of temperance. This, too, was the opinion of a most illustrious individual, the wisest Prelate in Ireland, than whom no one ever upheld the character of his high office in the Church with greater dignity. He alluded to his Eminence Cardinal M'Cabe, whom he had consulted on this question of Sunday closing, and from whom he had received the following letter:—

4, Rutland Square, Dublin, Feb. 18, 1884.

"My dear Dr. Lyons,—On the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. I communicated with the parish priests of the city with the view of obtaining their opinions on the Sunday closing question. I need not tell you that these clergymen have had their attention frequently called to the subject, and that their intimate relations with their parishioners give them abundant opportunities of studying the question in its relations to the advancement of temperance. Were it clearly proved that the closing of public-houses in Dublin on Sunday would have the effect of guarding our people from the dangers of intemperance there would not be the slightest difference of opinion amongst the clergy. But as there are very strong arguments for and

against the measure, the parish priests are divided on the subject. On one point they are unanimous, that the hours during which public-houses are now open might be profitably restricted. On the question of earlier closing on the evening of Saturday there is perfect unanimity also, as all are convinced that excessive drinking on Saturday night is most provocative of drunkenness on Sunday. My own private opinion on Sunday closing has never undergone any change. On one occasion, a few years ago, I was waited on by a small deputation of gentlemen, for whose experience and judgment I entertained the highest respect. They pressed me very strongly to sign a declaration in favour of Sunday closing in Dublin. As the question resolved itself into a matter of mere opinion, which involved no principle, and as the deputation stated that they spoke with the authority of very large experience, I complied with their request. I did not care to insist upon my own opinion, which possibly might be erroneous now, as it was founded on the experience of other times when, happily for myself, my duties brought me into constant communications with the classes for whom the contemplated legislation is intended. I feel now that I should not have been persuaded to sign the document in question. Reviewing the whole subject, and keeping in view the danger to which in the present state of our people the closing of public-houses all day on Sunday is likely to lead, I would be sorry to see it enforced by a stringent law. From what I have heard within the last few days I am inclined to believe that a compromise between the contending parties might be effected. I think if these houses were allowed to be open between the hours of 2 and 6 o'clock p.m. on Sunday their owners should agree to close at 10 p.m. on Saturday night. This latter arrangement would, in my opinion, do the greatest good.—Believe me, yours sincerely,

“E. CARD. MACCABE.”

He had forwarded that letter to the right hon. Gentleman, and had commended it to the attention of the Government, as it would be practically impossible to enforce such legislation as was now proposed. He had been connected for the last 25 years with one of the largest hospital establishments in Dublin, and he was sorry to say that amongst the most painful cases treated there were those of intemperance, and many of those cases were admitted during the time when public-houses were closed, and when the presumption of the law was that there was no possibility of getting drink—namely, on Sunday mornings. There were several cases he could bring forward in support of his statement, and he would refer to one in particular, in which a child, only six years of age, was brought into the hospital insensible from the effects of porter. He had taken great pains to inquire

Dr. Lyons

into the matter; and there could not be the smallest doubt that a vast quantity of drink was consumed within the hours when the public-houses were closed on Sundays; and they had this result—that the wives and children of early age were made to participate in the drinking, and the children had become drunkards at an early age. The clergymen who had had practical experience had assured him that the foundation of drinking habits was most conspicuous in those places where private Sunday drinking was common in consequence of the regulations in force against Sunday trading. The class of clergymen of whom he was speaking were constantly in the habit of visiting houses where it was suspected secret drinking was going on, and they told him that in numerous houses which they visited they found quantities of drink stored. In one house, in particular, was a small room in which several dozens of porter were consumed on a Sunday morning before 10 o'clock. He was speaking to one of the unfortunate people who happened to be a victim of drink, and he asked him—“Where on earth he got the drink on the Sunday?” He replied—“I have not the slightest trouble in getting drunk six times over on the Sunday before 10 o'clock in the morning.” He then asked him—“How about the police?” and he explained that it was impossible for the police to check this evil of secret drinking, for those who were in the habit of drinking did not frequent the same place, but went from one house to another on different days. Similar testimony had been given him by the police themselves. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland chose to glean a little practical experience on the subject, and of the working of the Act in Dublin, and to act the part of Haroun-al-Raschid, he (Dr. Lyons) would undertake to be his guide, and he could not imagine any more useful function that he could perform than this. He (Dr. Lyons) would guarantee the right hon. Gentleman's safety among the working classes of Dublin, who he confidently asserted had no sympathy with lawless violence. He was quite sure of this—that he would be convinced that any attempt to deal with this question by prohibitory legislation, or by multiplying regulations, would be perfectly useless. Reform

must come in a totally different way from that of legislative action. They could not legislate so as to coerce men into sobriety; for nothing they could do, nor would any amount of ingenuity, keep men from drinking if they wished to do so. He had had pointed out to him in Dublin no less than 70 private places in which drink was to be had; and it was perfectly impossible to deal with this evil by any direct system of legislation. The hon. Member was then proceeding to refer to the case of Scotland; when—

MR. CAINE rose to Order. He wished to ask whether the hon. Gentleman was not transgressing Rule 13 of the Standing Orders, which dealt with repetition and irrelevance?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has certainly spoken at great length on this subject, and the House has shown symptoms of impatience. I cannot, however, say that so far he has transgressed against the Rule in question; but, possibly, the hon. Member may see his way to curtailing his remarks.

DR. LYONS, resuming, said, he was speaking on behalf of the citizens of Dublin and as their Representative; and he respectfully submitted that, on a question of that kind, he was fairly entitled to make any comparisons that were fair and pertinent to the case. He was not ready to admit that he had repeated anything he had said; and if he had given instances which he thought necessary for the enforcement of his views, after the recent experience they had had of Cabinet Ministers talking for four hours on particular subjects, he did not think the House would consider that he had been speaking too long on this matter.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Mr. Speaker, I rise to Order. I wish to know whether the hon. Gentleman is in Order, in discussing the question before the House, in referring to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not transgressing any Rule of Order.

DR. LYONS, again resuming, said, the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) had evidently come there not to hear argument, but with a settled determination to vote in a particular direction, and all argument, therefore, was

wasted upon him. He had confidence in the good sense and fairness of the House, and should address his observations to the numerous other hon. Members whom he saw around him. He should be sorry indeed to see the City he represented submitted to the stringent system of legislation that existed in Scotland, and which was productive of a vast amount of demoralization. He deplored most deeply the demoralization which followed the indulgence of illicit drinking. He claimed to be as strong an advocate of temperance as anyone; and he would venture to say that by inculcating temperance principles, whenever he had had the opportunity, he had succeeded in making many converts to temperance—he would not say teetotalism—in a way that many hon. Gentlemen might not imagine. He always believed that the better mode to keep people from excessive drinking would be to teach them to use those drinks for the purpose of enjoyment and refreshment which they could with safety employ. For instance, he would refer to a case in which he had succeeded in inducing a number of workmen to substitute tea for porter and whisky during their work by persuasion. ["Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I am bound to say with regard to the remarks which the hon. Member is now making that they do not appear to me to bear upon the subject before the House.

DR. LYONS said, he was coming to the point. He was merely pointing out how it was perfectly easy, in a case like that to which he was referring, to insure the conversion of people to temperance, and he was going to say that these men became substantial temperance men. They did not drink again after having had this experience of the value of tea.

MR. CAINE: I rise to Order, Sir. I wish to ask if the hon. Member is in Order in going on deliberately with exactly the same sentence he was using when you called him to Order?

MR. SPEAKER: I was waiting to see whether the hon. Gentleman was speaking to the point. I confess that the remarks of the hon. Gentleman do not seem to apply to the subject before the House, which is that of drinking on Sundays.

DR. LYONS again resumed, and proceeded to observe that he believed if more facilities were given to the labour-

ing classes on Sundays for using non-intoxicating drinks there would not be so much drunkenness. That was a point in the urging of which he did not yield to his hon. Friend the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine).

MR. CAINE: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether, in a debate on the Sunday closing of public-houses in Ireland, the hon. Gentleman is in Order in discussing my opinions and conduct?

MR. HEALY: I rise to Order; and I appeal to you, Sir, whether the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons) is not entitled to your protection from the hon. Member for Scarborough?

Mr. SPEAKER not replying,

DR. LYONS proceeded. He thanked the hon. Member for Scarborough for his interruption. If the hon. Member was enthusiastic on this subject in his way, he (Dr. Lyons) was also enthusiastic in his way; and he hoped the hon. Member would give him credit for speaking his real sentiments on the subject. He was going to refer to the results, which he was fairly entitled to do, of Sunday closing in Wales. A very remarkable meeting took place in Wales not long since, at which two Roman Catholic clergymen spoke, and their testimony was that the result of Sunday closing had been most disastrous to the cause of temperance. They had themselves visited localities where drink was illicitly sold, and they gave a horrifying picture of the scene. Men and women and numerous children were congregated together in close rooms, with large quantities of porter before them; and large supplies were in the houses; and these clergymen expressed the greatest possible regret that they had been advocates of the measure, not knowing the demoralizing effects to which it unquestionably led. With this evidence before them, he must say to ask the House to vote in favour of Sunday closing was to ask them to do something which was extremely wrong. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to prove that Sunday closing was capable of reforming the evil. He had to apologize to the House for speaking so long; but the question was one which so vitally concerned his constituents that he had felt bound to do so. His experience was that the large majority of the people of

Dublin were opposed to the measure. The right hon. Gentleman had favoured them with a number of figures bearing on this subject. He (Dr. Lyons) regretted that there was not sufficient time to discuss them at length. He ventured to think his right hon. Friend would not question the independence, judgment, and great ability which distinguished the Irish Bench. Now, a very considerable number of the members of that Bench had particularly remarked upon the great increase in the number of arrests for drunkenness in the districts in which the Sunday Closing Act was in force. He (Dr. Lyons) had carefully avoided questions which had previously been discussed in this debate; but, if the House wished it, he was perfectly ready to go into the figures at length, and he had a large supply of figures with him which he might quote to them. He could only promise them that if the Bill stood over to another day, he would then venture to lay those figures before the House; and he believed he should be able to show that the figures so triumphantly given by the Chief Secretary for Ireland were based on pure fallacy.

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood further adjourned till this day.

The House suspended its Sitting at five minutes to Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

CROFTERS AND COTTARS (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND) — REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

RESOLUTION.

MR. MACFARLANE, in rising to call attention to the Report of the Royal Commission on the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and to move—

Dr. Lyons

"That the Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners upon the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland demands the immediate attention of the Government, with the view to giving legislative and administrative effect to its recommendations,"

said, he was extremely sorry that the Motion was not still in the name of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), as he (Mr. Macfarlane) would rather have taken part in, than introduced, the subject to the notice of the House. He would remind hon. Members of a discussion which took place in the House on the 4th of August, 1882, in regard to this subject, and the Resolution which he moved on that occasion for the appointment of a Royal Commission. The statements which he made on that occasion, and in which he referred to the depopulation of the Highlands, had been contradicted, and he had been told by the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs (Mr. J. Ramsay) that it was a pity this subject should be dealt with by men so ignorant of the subject. The hon. Member, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate of that time, declared that the population of the Highlands had not decreased; but, as a matter of fact, according to Census Returns, his statement was quite correct. In Argyll, alone, for example, during the last 50 years they had lost 24,505 persons out of a population of 100,573; and taking the general increase of population throughout Scotland, which amounted to 78 per cent during that period, Argyll had now only 76,000 persons, instead of 150,000, giving a population of 24 to the square mile. The Lord Advocate said if they took Scotland county by county, the Highlands were more thickly populated now than at any period of which they had an authentic record. The figures he (Mr. Macfarlane) had quoted, however, he thought, showed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in making that assertion, was entirely in the wrong; and he (Mr. Macfarlane) now gave them in order to prove the allegation he had then made, and which had been contradicted. With reference to the Royal Commission, which had, after all, been appointed, and its Report, he might say that he objected at the time of the appointment of the Commission to its constitution. He thought it was not sufficiently repre-

sentative of the class into whose grievances it was to inquire. He would say, however, as to the noble Lord the Chairman of that Commission (Lord Napier and Ettrick), that it would be a long time before the people of Scotland would forget the kindly and sympathetic manner in which he had fulfilled his functions as Chairman, and the desire he showed to protect the people from the wrong which had been inflicted upon them. It was impossible to read the Report of the Commission without seeing that the noble Lord was in keen sympathy with the people. He would not refer to the other Members of the Commission, beyond saying that his hon. Friend the Member for Inverness (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) was a friend of the people. As to the Report, he asked the Government to carry out the recommendations of the Commission. The Government would probably plead that they had not the time to introduce a Bill so as to deal with the question; but he would suggest that they might withdraw the London Government Bill, which the citizens of London did not want, and then they would have abundant time. As a citizen of London, he confessed that he could still live without much suffering if that Bill were not proceeded with; but the people to whom he referred were not in a position to wait. This Commission was either to be a substantial protection to the people, or it was not; and if it was not, instead of proving a blessing, it would prove a curse to them. Even now, the people said they were being evicted, because of the evidence which they had given before the Commission. Although this statement was denied by the Duke of Argyll, he (Mr. Macfarlane) believed it nevertheless to be strictly accurate. It was, of course, very difficult to prove that that was the case, because it was hard to see into the motive of the landlord, when he gave notice to the people to quit; but a deep conviction undoubtedly existed in the minds of the people, and he believed it to be a well-founded conviction, that they were being evicted because of the part they had taken in this agitation, and in consequence of the evidence they had given. He had seen a letter which had been addressed to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, on behalf of some of the crofters, written by a lady, showing that it was not the

fact, as alleged, that the persons evicted had been evicted for non-payment of rent, and that, in many instances, there had been no arrears of rent due. It was firmly believed that they had been evicted from a feeling of vindictiveness. As a Scotchman, he maintained his right to interfere in this question; and as he had some experience of a similar class in Ireland, he submitted that what was done for them might well be claimed for their fellow-subjects in Scotland. But there were opposite cases; and the lengths to which some landlords were prepared to go was shown by the statement of General Burroughs, who refused to give indemnity to those of his tenants who gave evidence before the Commission. He said the property was his, and if those people were not content and happy, they could go away. That was a glaring example of the extent to which the rights of property could go. People who had been born and bred on the property for generations before the General was heard of, and whose forefathers had lived on it for hundreds of years, were told they could go away. He hoped the Government would act on the recommendations of the Royal Commission and remove the grievances of these poor people. If there was any trouble in store in the Land Question of Scotland—and he thought there would be trouble unless the Government took immediate steps to remedy the grievances—it was due to the abuses of the rights of property. The screw had been turned once or twice too often, and the people were now resisting. He had always urged that the principal cause of distress among the crofters was the curtailment of their holdings; and he would call the attention of hon. Members to the passages in the Report, in which the Commission distinctly affirmed that proposition, and he could not use stronger words than were used in the Report. The question of the increase of rent, which was another great grievance, was also dealt with by the Commission. In the first place, there was the difficulty of area; and, in the second place, there was the question of the increase of rent, both of which were substantial grievances. The next point to which the Commissioners referred was the waste land appropriated for purposes of sport; and several of the witnesses denounced deer forests as a most

demoralizing institution. In following passages they described how, through these causes, the crofters and cottars were driven down to the seashore to practise fishing without any practical knowledge of that occupation, and without either boats or harbours; so that they were not able to make a living. The agitation, in the opinion of the Commissioners, had no chance of subsiding until the fair demands of the crofters had been met. They had been accused of being very unreasonable. Everybody who objected to abuses was accused of being very unreasonable. He was sure that he himself, at least, was a moderate and reasonable person. He was not going to propound any remedies whatever for the state of things depicted in the Highlands by the Royal Commission. Her Majesty's Government had referred this question of the crofters and cottars to the arbitration of a Royal Commission. They named their own arbitrators; and all that he asked the Government to do was to carry out the award that had been given. He did not use stronger language than the Commissioners had done. They had shown that there were intolerable grievances affecting, perhaps, 40,000 families and 200,000 persons. Must the crofters agitate in a violent manner before they obtained anything? Let them not, for Heaven's sake, have a premium put upon violent agitation. That was the inevitable consequence of refusing the demands which were made in a peaceable manner. It was impossible that the intelligent crofter should not contrast his condition with that of the Irish tenant, and ask to what the difference was due—whether it was due to violent agitation in the one case, and to peaceful, quiet, law-abiding habits in the other? The crofter had a right, was absolutely entitled, to claim that, under the same Government and under the same Crown, he should be put in as good a position as his brother tenant in Ireland. But they did not ask even that. They did not ask for an Act like the Irish Act; but they simply asked the Government to fulfil the award of their own arbitrator. If that were refused, they would ask violently, and more violently, until they were put upon the same footing as their Irish brethren. He could not conceive that it could be any objection to the demand that it was made by a Scotch

Member for an Irish constituency. The Home Secretary, he believed, was full of compassion for the Highlanders, among whom he had passed a great deal of time. Let him show his sympathy by carrying out the award of the Commission he had himself appointed, and which had been chosen by himself. He would now move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

DR. CAMERON, in seconding the Motion, said, the thanks of the nation were due to all the Commissioners, and especially to Lord Napier and Ettrick, its Chairman. Their Report had been adversely criticized from the landowners' point of view as regarded their interests; and, solely because it had been so criticized, he would say it was equally capable of being criticized from the crofters' point of view. If anyone regarded the Report of the Commission from the crofters' point of view, they would find ample evidence of the landlord element in the constitution of the Commission, and it bore evidence of its having been drawn up by men of the landlord class. Indeed, four of its Members held between them 1-63d part of the land of Scotland and 1-20th of the land devoted to deer forests. When the Commissioners said the evidence was influenced by prepossessions, it might be retorted that the Report was similarly influenced, for, to his (Dr. Cameron's) mind, it most unmistakably evinced the fact that the four Members he had referred to had not overcome their inborn prejudices, their innate sense of justice not being sufficient to enable them to do so. The Commissioners refused to stereotype evils by granting fixity of tenure, but they recognized the evils resulting from so large a proportion of land being devoted to deer forests; they recommended certain restrictions, but they would apply them only to future and not to existing cases. They referred to the delegates evicted after having given evidence before the Commission, expressing their regret if anyone had suffered in consequence. No one could read the Report without being convinced, that had there been an infusion on that Commission of those in the crofter interest, the subject would have been dealt with in very different language. They would, in that case, probably have referred to the evidence of evictions for the posses-

sion of a gun or a dog, or for marrying against the wish of the landlord. It was evident to anyone who read the Report of the Commission, that the Commissioners sought to avoid all irritating matters; and the effect of that avoidance had been that the Report was quoted to show that there was no grievance in the Highlands. If anyone, however, wanted to understand the significance of the Report of the Commissioners they must read between the lines. The Commissioners, for example, recommended that official residences should be provided for Sheriffs in the Highlands to render them more independent of landlord influence. What did that mean? He had in his hand the account of an eviction which took place, the subject being a medical man who was medical officer of health for the district, and also medical officer of the prison. He wrote a report to the Board of Supervision on overcrowding in his district, and also with reference to the amount of hospital accommodation; and thereupon he was evicted. He had a practice in the town, but no one was permitted to let him a house. He had to remove his family to a distance, his practice failed, and the man shortly afterwards committed suicide. That was one of the things he read between the lines of the Report. The Commissioners, with respect to the payment of rent, recommended that no tenant should be allowed to take over arrears of rent. In some cases tenants paying £4 a year were compelled to take over arrears of £12 or £16, and the reason was this — if at any time it became desirable to evict them, they could be evicted, for they were always three or four years in arrears. Another great complaint made was of the damage done by the deer coming down from the forests; and this Commission, largely composed of owners of deer forests, proposed that there should be an inalienable right in every tenant to shoot deer trespassing on their arable lands. The appropriation also by landlords of commons was a fertile source of quarrels; it was at the root of almost every agrarian dispute. Well, in Shetland and Orkney the Commissioners declared that wherever a division of common lands took place, the rights of the people and of the occupiers ought to be respected. Having described the scope of the Commissioners'

recommendations, the hon. Member went on to say that perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department would tell them that he had not time to consider the proposals made on behalf of the crofters with a view to legislation. Well, he (Dr. Cameron) would ask—How many years did he want to consider the subject? Why, the vast majority of the proposals had been before the country again and again for years past. What had been done in the way of giving the Scotch crofters a better security of tenure? A recommendation to that effect was contained in a Report before the House in 1851; or of giving them the advantage of a better technical education, as had been proposed by Sir John M'Neil. They had all heard of Mr. Walker's Report to the Royal Commission on Land of 1880. Well, Mr. Walker recommended that townships should be laid down in eligible sites with long leases? In 1871 there was a Truck Commission, which reported emphatically against truck. The Crofters' Commission recommended that truck labour and truck sale of fish should be put an end to. Was that a novelty, and would the right hon. Gentleman deal with that recommendation? And one of the Sub-Commissioners of that Truck Commission not only reported strongly against truck, but, in collecting evidence for that purpose, he was so strongly impressed with the importance of the Land Question, that he said the present insecurity of tenure was inconsistent with a stable relationship of landlord and tenant. He said it might be maintained that, in the present state of agriculture, no tenure so short as one year ought to be permitted. Well, that Report had been before the country for 12 years, and what had been done in respect to it? Another recommendation was that no Procurator Fiscal should be allowed to engage in private practice. So obvious was the advisability of this from a legal and administrative point of view, that the present Home Secretary and Attorney General—when in Opposition—voted in its favour, and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Treasury gave it his support; but when he (Dr. Cameron) brought up the matter the other day, and while the Report was in the hands of the Lord Advocate, the Government turned their backs on the

proposal and voted against it. Some of the most important recommendations of the Commission might be carried into effect by a stroke of the pen; they had been repeatedly before the House, and the Government, if the Blue Books regarding Scotch affairs were not treated as so much lumber. Then, as regarded increased grants for Education, the Vice President of the Council and the Chancellor of the Exchequer might settle the matter between them in a very short time. One of the most important recommendations of the Report related to the giving these people instruction through the medium of teaching the Gaelic language. But that was a recommendation suggested by Sir Joseph Kay-Shuttleworth in 1874, and by the Scotch Education Commission in 1875. Why was it not attended to? There was likewise postal and telegraphic communication to be accelerated. The Commissioners had told them that there was a great fishing industry at Barra; but the fact that it took six days for a letter, and three for a telegram, to reach that point from the mainland was a disgrace to any civilized country. Could not the Postmaster General do something to improve such a state of things? The Commissioners also recommended that training ships should be sent round among the Western Islands, in order to afford the lads there an outlet for serving their country. Would his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty order a training ship to go to these Islands, instead of trying to pick up boys among the slums of cities? The chief objections to the Report had been taken by the Commissioners who dissented, and others, to that portion of it which related to the creation of townships. It was said that that was a retrograde step, and would have the effect of perpetuating poverty in the Islands. That was not his opinion, nor was it the opinion of Lord Napier and Ettrick, who wanted to bring benefits within the reach of all through the commune. In the words of M. Laveleye, the township or commune was "the organic cell of the social body;" for nothing could replace that powerful bond which attached the individual to his native village and the cultivator to the soil. He would beg Her Majesty's Government to do something to show that they did not mean to shelve the Report of this Commission. If they allowed it

to drop, there would result from the appointment of the Commission a great deal more harm than good, because suspicions would be aroused which could not but work immense mischief. Many proprietors had already been stimulated to take steps to decrease the number of their tenants. He was, however, happy to say that a number had acted differently—such, for instance, as the hon. Member for Caithness (Sir John Sinclair, and the Duke of Sutherland, who had made liberal proposals with that view. They had said—“This Report shows a bad state of things, and we will have it remedied.” But that was not the case with others who had taken action in the Courts. If the Government could not introduce legislative measures that year, let them do something in the way of the administrative reforms which he had shown could be effected by a stroke of the pen. The present state of opinion in Scotland was favourable to action. The people of Scotland were long-suffering; but they were pertinacious, and they were thoroughly aroused on this subject. The Government might dislike this question. He quite understood that it might give rise to Party difficulties; but it appeared to him that a good deal too much was sacrificed to Party interests in that House. The matter was not one that could be allowed to sleep. At present, he believed, the people of Scotland were prepared to accept this Report; but, if they were denied this Report, they would fall back upon the evidence, and their demands would probably be much more radical. At the present moment, as compared to what it would be in the future, the question was—

“As a little fire quickly trodden out,
Which, being suffered, rivers will not
quench.”

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word “That” to the end of the Question, in order to add the words “the Report of Her Majesty’s Commissioners upon the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland demands the immediate attention of the Government, with the view to giving legislative and administrative effect to its recommendations,”

—*Mr. Macfarlane*,
—instead thereof.

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

Mr. D. CAMERON said, he should not think it right to vote against the Resolution of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Mr. Macfarlane). But whether he should support the hon. Member or not would depend upon whether he thought it worth while to alter the terms of his Resolution in order to secure that support, seeing that he recommended legislation in a direction contrary to what he (Mr. D. Cameron), for his part, thought desirable. Before he could vote for the Resolution it would be necessary to add words to show that it would apply only to that portion of the Report which had been unanimously signed. He (Mr. D. Cameron) doubted whether the time for raising the question was either opportune or wise. Last year the question was forced on the attention of Parliament; for there were, unhappily, many manifestations of irritation and of lawlessness, which formed the subject of general comment. But, besides, there was an unusually bad harvest, which produced discontent. The result was that the subject was brought before Parliament, and he believed it to be the duty of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the causes which produced this state of things. That Commission was appointed, held a number of meetings, and, after unusually protracted sittings, they at last issued a Report, which was now the subject of discussion. He supposed it would be considered unlikely, if not impossible, for any Government, in so short a period as had elapsed since the presentation of the Report, to be prepared with any legislative proposals on the subject. He therefore thought that this debate partook more of the nature of an academic discussion than of a practical legislative character. He had still greater doubts as to the wisdom of the course now pursued. Once a debate was started in that House, it was not always easy to foresee the result; and he could easily understand that there were others who might wish to take part in this debate—Representatives of large burghs, and who might fully sympathize with the crofters, but who yet felt that they had amongst their constituents persons equally steeped in poverty; and if these great advantages were to be bestowed upon the crofters, their constituents might ask a share. Therefore, if the object of the hon. Members supporting the Resolu-

tion was to propose legislation in favour of the crofters, they might well consider whether they did good by discussing the question at the present moment. If the Government had been left alone, it would have been almost impossible, having themselves recommended the appointment of a Commission, to allow the question to be shelved. He conceived it would be their duty, and he believed it would be their duty, now or early next Session, to undertake some legislation. Referring to the speeches which had just been made, he felt no reason to blame their tone. He considered, on the whole, that they were moderate, and they contained nothing which he could object to; but he was bound to say that the hon. Member for Carlow, in his quotations, hardly did justice to the Report, as representing the views of the Commissioners in regard to deer forests. If he had continued the quotation, the House would see that the Report declared "that not only landowners but the whole community benefited by the system." The hon. Gentleman also talked as if the present race of landlords were the oppressors of the people; but he (Mr. D. Cameron) defied anyone to find a single word in the Report which justified that assertion. It was notorious that the complaint of the crofters were not made against the present landlords, but landlords of 60, 70, or 80 years ago, who dispossessed them of the lands which they thought they ought now to be allowed to re-occupy. Another point which he thought had not been established, although frequently asserted, was, that those who had given evidence before the Commission, had been, in many cases, evicted in consequence. That statement had been denied; but the truth of the matter might easily be ascertained by inquiring whether the names of the evicted crofters corresponded with the names of any of the witnesses. He should like to say a word to those who objected to the Report on different grounds, and, among others, that it was very little less than a thinly-veiled Communism. Those objections were directed against three portions of the Report of the Commission — 1, the constitution of the townships; 2, the compulsory 30 years' leases; and, 3, the large demands proposed to be made on the Public Exchequer. With regard to the first of those points, he held himself entirely free from

all responsibility. Hon. Members would see that he protested in a Memorandum, which had been added to the Report, against this recommendation of the Commissioners as to townships, on the ground of injustice, and as by no means advantageous to the crofters. From that Memorandum he had nothing whatever to retract. If there was one thing more than another which the crofters demanded, it was more land; and it was clear they could not profitably occupy more land unless they had the means to stock it. That was the key to the whole position, and the recommendations of the Commission on that point he looked upon as by far the most important portion in the Report. How did the Commissioners propose to deal with the matter? In their Report they stated that they were not without hope that occupiers of townships, partly from their own resources, and partly with the assistance of their friends, would be able to stock the land. But he must say that if they had resources, this question would never have arisen. Another recommendation was aid from friends. Well, he knew that during the last 30 years, many of the inhabitants of his own district had emigrated to New Zealand and Australia, and they were in the habit of sending money home as a gift, not as a loan, to their friends. It could not be supposed, however, that those friends, who had gone abroad, and had their own way to make, would send, say, £100, home on loan, without any security, to a corporate body called a township. Another mode the Commissioners referred to, for stocking those townships, was the multiplication of stock by the process of natural increase; but he was afraid, in the West Highlands, nature was not so kind as farther South, and that the noble Lord the Chairman of the Commission (Lord Napier and Ettrick) must have taken his idea as to the prolific character of the stock in the Highlands from the prolific nature of the people. In many parts of the West Highlands cows did not calve more than once in two years; and they considered that if every 20 ewes had 12 or 14 lambs, and they only lost 20 or 25 per cent in the first winter they were tolerably well off. There was not much room, therefore, for multiplication of stock. He believed that if the recommendation of the Report as to town-

ships were made law to-morrow not a single new township would be created in the Islands—from the Butt of Lewis to Barra Head. With regard to the compulsory 30 years' lease, he ventured to say that was a practical proposal, and for that reason he was a warm supporter of it. He did not say that there were not portions of land favourably situated that might not be profitably occupied by the crofters; but what the Commission recommended was, that the high land and the low land should be taken together, and that the "tit bits" should not only be taken, while the unprofitable land was left. Speaking as a landlord, he did not see how, under proper restriction, there could be any objection to granting a lease to an industrious tenant; or, even infixing the rent, if it were fixed according to the custom of the district. He held, on the contrary, that it would form an element of strength to the land; and he believed, also, it would add to the value of the estate. With regard to the third part, which recommended the expenditure of a large sum of public money, he, as a Member of the Commission, had signed that part of the Report with considerable hesitation; but he thought they made the best recommendation they could. He hardly saw how they could avoid something of the kind. They were instructed to report on the condition of the crofters, and they found that condition in most places exceedingly bad, and the cause was undoubtedly poverty; therefore, they had to try and find a remedy for that poverty. Of course, if they were to be helped out of that poverty, it was necessary that they should recommend assistance which should be of a comprehensive character. The Commission had not the power to make these grants. It was the Government and Parliament which made these large grants; and it would be for Parliament to decide the order in which these matters should be dealt with. He was glad that the Resolution which had been submitted affirmed the principle that no Land Bill would be satisfactory to the crofters in the Highlands which was not accompanied by some administrative remedies. He would like to indicate his own idea of what would constitute a fair solution of the difficulty, and what they had a right to expect from the House of Commons. He admitted that,

when he began his labours, he thought the difficulties were so stupendous that he and his Colleagues would be unable to find any remedy. But, at the same time, he felt they had to do their best to find some solution, and they would have been unworthy of the confidence of Her Majesty if they had not brought forward some proposal. The first and most important point to be dealt with was the erection of harbours and piers for fishermen; and he saw no reason why the Government should not appoint some Scientific Commission to report on the harbours and piers which might be constructed for the benefit of fishermen. It would not be necessary that the money should be found all at once; but he thought Parliament was bound to set aside a certain sum of money every year—not, perhaps, a large sum—in order to assist the fishermen, and to instil in them some confidence that their case had not altogether been neglected. He also thought some means should be devised to remedy the grievance connected with the heavy education rate, which pressed very hardly on the people of the Highlands. Then he thought provision should be made—and this would not be costly—to promote voluntary emigration, so as to relieve the congestion of the population in certain parts where it had been ascertained that, if the whole land were divided amongst the people, there would not be enough to support them. He also thought that assistance might be given by loans, taking the security of the landlord, to enable the crofter to settle on and stock the land now occupied as sheep farms or deer forests. And, lastly, there was the proposal, to which he had already alluded, to make it compulsory on the landlord to give 30 years' leases, with full compensation at the end for improvements. If approved by the Government and sanctioned by Parliament, these proposals would he believed be accepted gratefully by the crofters and their well-wishers. If they asked more they would likely run the risk of losing all. If the House of Commons should see fit to give effect to some such proposals, a spirit of contentment would be aroused the importance of which could scarcely be over-estimated, and the present irritation and despondency would give way to a feeling likely to produce among the crofters oblivion of the past and hopefulness for the future.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH said, he thought the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane) had rendered good service to the House in bringing the subject before it. He (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) would press the Government to indicate what they intended to do with regard to the recommendations of the Commission, as it was absolutely necessary that the Government should make a declaration that they would do something. He had no hesitation in saying, from his own personal knowledge of the Highlands, and from what he saw in the course of the investigations of the Commission, that the country would not be satisfied unless the Government took very decided action in the matter. With regard to the question of townships, two other Commissioners and himself were very clear upon the point; and the Chairman (Lord Napier and Ettrick), who had not hitherto been familiar with the subject, had come to the distinct conclusion that the recognition, expansion, and adoption of the township in the Highlands was the only way in which they could immediately benefit the people of the Highlands and the Islands; and in that view he entirely concurred. With the extended franchise which was to be conferred upon them, he had no doubt that the townships of the crofters would form most valuable centres of political intelligence. He should, therefore, be very sorry to see the townships suppressed. Another point to which he wished to refer was the deer forests. He had very unwillingly, and with great hesitation, signed the Report upon that subject in deference to the opinions of his Colleagues, and only in order to have a unanimous Report. What was the state of the Highlands with regard to deer forests? He believed that the acreage of Scotland altogether was some 18,000,000 or 19,000,000, and it had been stated that about 2,000,000 of those 18,000,000 were at present under deer forests, which had been created within the last 50 years. Now, that was bad enough; but it was not the whole truth, because those 2,000,000 of acres were almost entirely in the Northern half of the country beyond the Grampians; so that, in reality, they must take those 2,000,000 of acres out of, not 18,000,000, but about 10,000,000 of acres. Thus, in reality, so far as the Highlands were concerned, the deer forests extended to

about one-fifth of the country. In consequence of the demand for sport, these forests were now so closely shut up, that they were of no use whatever for any purpose but sport. It could not, however, be supposed that they could allow the system to go on; and that was a subject that the Government must take up immediately. It was with the very greatest hesitation, as he had said, that he put his name to a Report which did not interfere to some extent with the existing forests; but, in regard to future forests, it was high time that Government interfered. He had lately seen an advertisement announcing that a farm of 20,000 acres was to be sold on the West Coast of Scotland; and, as an inducement to purchasers, it was stated that there were no tenants or crofters on the land. That he called a shameful advertisement. The first wish of a purchaser of a large tract of land ought to be that it was inhabited by contented and prosperous people. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department knew that the people of the Highlands were a quiet and peaceful people; but it was very often found that people of those characteristics were, when roused, very difficult to deal with. Their grievances were entirely social, differing from the case of Ireland, where separatist views were largely held; while the Highlanders, on the other hand, were among the most loyal people in Her Majesty's Dominions. He did not ask the Government to state what they were going to do, but that they would say that they would do something; and he trusted that they would, without delay, take some action in accordance with the recommendations in the Commissioners' Report.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the last speaker (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) appeared to wish that the House should form the opinion that the landlords in the North of Scotland had sacrificed the interests of the population for the mere luxurious possession of a sporting ground. He could not agree with the hon. Member in that opinion. To his mind, the land was devoted to that purpose for which it was best fitted; and, when natural products were devoted to the purposes to which they were best suited, the interests of those who were concerned in working those products were best served. Hon. Members talked as

if those who possessed deer forests used the land for a purely selfish purpose. But the land was used for the manufacture of sport, which was a better business, if he might so express himself, for the population concerned in it, than any other trade now carried on in the Highlands. He asserted, from his own experience, that the classes who were concerned in the manufacture of sport, arising out of the deer forests, got better wages, were better housed, and were better off in every respect, than the classes who were concerned in sheep farming and other agricultural pursuits in other districts of the Highlands. Great prosperity was found in the neighbourhood of deer forests. It might be said that these forests were capital things for the population who remained upon them, but bad things for the people who were cleared from the land. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; but it was not to make deer forests, but to make sheep farms, that the great clearances in the Highlands had been made. What was the real evil from which the crofters in parts of the Highlands were suffering? It was poverty; and the crofters were poor because the country was treated in a very niggardly manner by nature, and because parts of it were exceptionally and unduly crowded. He thought the Commissioners had not carried on their investigations in accordance with the dictates of common sense. What the Commissioners, in his opinion, ought to have done, was to have gone and compared those parts of the Highlands where the crofters and peasantry were prosperous, with those parts where the population was far from prosperous; and, if they had done so, they might have arrived at some conclusions as to the conditions which went to produce prosperity. There was a district of the Highlands, with which he was acquainted, that could compare favourably with any other part of the United Kingdom; and the reason was not far to seek, for the population was about half what it was 60 or 70 years ago. Before that reduction in the population, this district was in a state of poverty. Now, there was no part of the United Kingdom where the peasants were more independent, or more prosperous. [An hon. MEMBER: Where is it?] A part of Ross-shire. He would give any hon. Member the details. That being so, in regard to one

part of the Highlands, was it not natural to suppose that over-population was the cause of the misery and poverty of other parts? If that were so, how was this extraordinary proposal for establishing communal property likely to diminish it? The hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had quoted an article in which he said M. de Laveleye had recommended the establishment of village communities in England. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not recollect that article; but he was very confident that so good an economist would not commit himself to any such proposal.

DR. CAMERON: He deals with what is referred to by the Commissioners.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; but the question was whether he had really grasped the question. No writer who was a competent authority, and who was acquainted with Indian, Russian, and other communes, would recommend that anything like the old system of common property should be restored.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: No, no; communal government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the recommendations of the Commission went beyond that, and meant the restoration of the system of common property. To adopt any such scheme would be a retrograde, and not a progressive, measure. What, in his opinion, they ought to do, was to aim at diminishing the population, and bringing about some balance between the soil and the population the soil had to support. When they had done that, he, for his part, should gladly accept such subsidiary recommendations as had been made by his hon. Friend (Mr. D. Cameron); but until they had done that, until they had discovered the effects of the Highland climate and the Highland soil, and until they had diminished the population in the manner which had been suggested, he believed by adopting recommendations such as those of the Commissioners' Report, they might perpetuate and render permanent the evils which they all deplored, but they would never do anything materially to diminish them.

LORD COLIN CAMPBELL said, that no one who retained a recollection of certain platform orations could fail to be struck by the sober and earnest tone of some of the speeches delivered in the course of the debate, or venture, without some fear and trembling, to con-

tinue the discussion lest, in view of the solemn warnings of hon. Members, he should have to invoke police protection on leaving that House. There were few spectacles more sublime than that of an hon. Member, who was notoriously wooing a Scotch constituency, enveloping himself in the folds of philanthropy, and posing as the champion of a down-trodden people. He could assure the hon. Member that he did not intend to yield one jot to him in the matter of regard he had so suddenly developed for the crofters, not only in the county he (Lord Colin Campbell) represented, but in the Highlands of the North and West of Scotland; but he did wish to express the hope that the House would not be led by the Report of the Royal Commission to sanction what he was sure would result in hasty and ill-considered legislation upon this subject. That Report was a very bulky document, and it was founded upon some 3,900 pages of evidence, and it was perfectly monstrous and absurd to ask Parliament, within three months of the issue of the Report of the Commission, to sanction every single recommendation contained in it. The hon. Member for Carlow was, no doubt, quite within his right in raising a discussion on this subject; but he (Lord Colin Campbell) objected to the terms of the Motion, which asked them to give immediate effect to the recommendations of the Commissioners. He did not for a moment question that the hon. Member for Carlow had mastered all the contents of that volume, for nothing was too large or too small for his brain. But he should have considerably borne in mind that there were some brains less capacious, some appetites less insatiable, some digestions that were unequal to work of this kind. The hon. Member ought to rest satisfied with having been the first to bring the question before the House — an honour for which, within the last few years, there had been a pleasant rivalry between him and the hon. Members for Inverness (Mr. Fraser-Macintosh) and Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). The hon. Member had complained of the composition of the Commission. But if the name of the hon. Member for Carlow had been substituted for that of the hon. Member for Inverness, he had a strong suspicion that the hon. Member for Car-

low would not have brought this matter forward, and they would have heard no complaint as to the constitution of the Commission. He had been among the first to urge on the Government the desirability of appointing a Royal Commission; and he must say he did so mainly because he thought it most impolitic to allow the people of Scotland, or any part of them who believed they were labouring under grievances, to drift into Hibernian methods of agitation. ["Oh, oh!"] He had never had much hope that anything could result from it, because he could not see that, with the exception of the introduction of the Irish Land Act, there were any conditions essentially different from those which obtained when Sir John McNeill made his Report to the Board of Supervision in 1852. Now, what had been the result of this Royal Commission? Whatever might be said as to its recommendations, it had undoubtedly astonished and puzzled the country. It was a Report which was full of inconsistencies and anomalies requiring much attention and sifting. So grave, indeed, were these inconsistencies and anomalies, as well as some of the recommendations, that there were some grounds for the suspicion that the Report was never intended to be taken seriously by Parliament. He believed the truth to be that the six Gentlemen who composed the Commission were not able to agree upon the main recommendations which were urged upon them by the noble Chairman, and that the Report was really a compromise between their varying and discordant views. A very able pamphlet had been circulated, written, he believed, by the Professor of Political Economy at Edinburgh, in which some of these inconsistencies and anomalies were exposed. He did not wish to go at length into the question; but he wished to enter his protest against the extraordinary doctrine of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), who spoke of the recommendations of a Royal Commission as if they were the "award" of an arbitrator, and called upon Parliament immediately to give them effect. That was a doctrine which would place Royal Commissioners above Parliament. The hon. Member for Carlow had not given the House any proof that persons had been evicted for giving evidence.

With regard to that portion of his speech which dealt with the subject of depopulation, the fact was, that the hon. Member omitted to notice that the decrease in the population of rural Scotland to which he had referred was not confined to the Highlands, but was general all over the country; and the Royal Commissioners themselves repudiated the idea that it was due to evictions. The hon. Member had not brought before the House a single atom of proof; but had merely told them what was his belief, and had asked the Government to take action in consequence of that. The Commissioners, however, had themselves said that many of the allegations of oppression and suffering with which the pages of that Report were loaded would not bear searching analysis. The most important recommendation of the Commission was that relating to the township system, and yet it was supported only by four out of the six Members. He believed the introduction of the township system would be a retrograde movement, and would end in the very system which was in vogue at the time when Sir John McNeill conducted his inquiry in the Highlands, and which was contemporaneous with that great famine in the Highlands that called for the utmost exertions of public and private charity. One of the recommendations of the Commission was that Parliament should provide funds for making fishermen's harbours. He must say he hoped the Government would see their way to take steps in that direction; but he could not forget that, while Parliament was advised to take this step, a Committee, presided over by the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), was still sitting on that question, and it was extremely doubtful whether its recommendations would tally with those of the Royal Commission. That, he thought, was in itself one reason why the Government was justified in waiting. He agreed with the hon. Member for Glasgow that there were recommendations which deserved the attention of the Government; but most of them referred to questions which came under the cognizance of Departments, and might be left to the Heads of those Departments. He found it impossible to vote for the Motion, because he wished to leave the

entire question to the mature consideration of the Government.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have listened with great interest and attention to this debate, and I think that no one can fail to have been struck with the extremely earnest tone that has been adopted by most of the hon. Members who have spoken, whatever may be their differences of opinion upon the subject. I cannot help referring to the speech of my hon. Friend opposite the Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. D. Cameron). There was one part of that speech which I am sure we all heard with regret, and that was the announcement that he will shortly cease to be a Member of the House. A more wise or more temperate speech, or one which could do more credit to the sympathies of the hon. Gentleman's heart, it would be impossible to conceive. Well, Sir, I also listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane) who introduced this Motion, and to the speeches of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) and others who have spoken to-night. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane) deplored the fact that I am not a Scotchman, and he expressed a great deal of sympathy with me on that account. But I have endeavoured to repair the defect of nature in that respect as much as possible, and I venture to say that there are a great many Scotchmen who have not seen or known as much of the populations of the West Islands as I have. My hon. Friend the Member for the borough of Inverness (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) has been good enough to allude to some remarks I made on the subject when I had the honour of receiving the freedom of the great City of Glasgow. At all events, there is no one in this House, or out of it, who has a more entire appreciation of the qualities of these populations or a greater desire to remove the grievances and the sufferings which they at present endure than I have. My hon. Friend (Mr. Macfarlane) who introduced this subject began with some reference to the test of population. Now, I have long and carefully examined that question, and I am quite sure that you cannot safely rely upon the increase or decrease of population as a test or guide in this matter. You will find some places which have decreased in

population, but whose prosperity is unquestionable; and you will find other places which have increased in population, but which are in a very miserable condition. Let us take the county of Argyll, which has been referred to by previous speakers. If we take up the statistics in reference to the population of Scotland, we are at once struck by the decrease which has taken place during the last 40 years in the population of Argyllshire. It would be an entire mistake to say that a part of that decrease has not been due to eviction. No doubt, a small part of the decrease is due to eviction; but what has been the great cause of the diminution? Why the enormous increase in the neighbouring City of Glasgow. The prospect of higher wages has induced large numbers to leave the counties of Scotland for the large towns. Everybody who knows anything of the rural history of England knows that the great distresses which existed in counties like Dorset, Somerset, and Wilts, were due to the fact that the manufacturing industries which formerly existed there had emigrated to the North. Scotland has suffered from misfortunes of the same character. One industry in Scotland has now disappeared, and in many places great misery has been left behind. The manufacture of kelp in the Western Hebrides supported and encouraged a large population which, when the manufacture disappeared, had no other means of subsistence. Unless, therefore, we bear all these facts in mind we shall be misled by mere statistics of population. Generally speaking, it is said that the increase of population is a proof of the prosperity of the place in which it takes place. That is not always the case. In the Island of Skye there has been a certain decrease of population; but in the neighbouring Island of Lewis there has been an immense increase of population. Is it true that the increase of population in Lewis has been contemporaneous with, or caused by, the prosperity of the Island? One of the few counties in Scotland in which the population has diminished is the county of Kinross, which is represented by my right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate. No one will say that because Kinross has diminished in population it is less prosperous. I find there is an increase of population in the Orkneys; but I am

certainly not of opinion, though I do not know the Orkneys very well, that that is due to an increase of prosperity. Neither will I say that I believe the decrease of population in Perthshire is a test of decreasing prosperity in that county. I only refer to these matters in order to show how careful we must be in applying the test of population.

MR. MACFARLANE: I only referred to the decrease of population in some counties with the view of substantiating the statement I made two years ago, and which has been denied, and not for the purpose of proving prosperity or otherwise.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not desire to misrepresent the hon. Member; but I know that in discussions on this subject population is very often taken as a capital test, whereas, in reality, it is no test at all. Now, Sir, I beg the hon. Member to believe, and I ask the House to believe, that the Government are not insensible of the great and pressing importance of this question. The very appointment of this Commission is proof of that. That the Government do consider the Report of the Commission a very important circumstance in the case I beg to assure hon. Gentlemen; but I observe that it is from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Inverness (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. D. Cameron) that the most moderate and prudent counsels as to the manner of dealing with the Report have been heard. Now, Sir, with reference to this Report. Everybody is aware of the difficulties surrounding the large questions with which the Report of the Commission deals. The subject-matter of the Report is divided into three classes. First of all, there is the question of the tenure of land, and everybody knows that that in itself is a most difficult question; secondly, there are certain financial proposals—proposals which involve the expenditure of large sums of money, and which, therefore, require to be looked at from many points of view; and, thirdly, there are certain administrative proposals upon which I shall have something to say, I hope not unsatisfactory, in answer to the appeal of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), and in regard to which the task of the Government is not so difficult, as the matter of administration

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comes more within the scope of the action of the Government than any of the other matters. Now, first of all, let me speak upon the question of the tenure of the land. I cannot admit the doctrine laid down by the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane) and the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), that the Report of the Royal Commission is like the finding of an arbitrator—a thing which the Government had nothing to do but to execute. That, certainly, is not in accordance with the Order of Reference. The Reference given to the Commission was that—

“Whereas we have deemed it expedient that a Commission should forthwith issue to inquire into the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and all matters affecting the same, or relating thereto.”

That is a view of a Royal Commission which has never yet been taken; indeed, if such a view did prevail, the Government would do extremely wrong in ever appointing a Royal Commission at all, because by so doing they would altogether destroy the responsibility of the Executive, and shift it to the shoulders of other people. Now, as regards the question of the tenure of land, I am not at this moment going to express any opinion. In my judgment, it would be extremely wrong for the Government to express loose opinions either for or against upon a question of such immense importance, unless they were able to legislate at once—unless they were prepared at once, on their responsibility, to introduce a measure upon the subject. Individual Members might do so; but it would be inconsistent with the duty of the Government to make loose statements upon a question of so important a character. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane) has suggested that we should sacrifice the London Government Bill, and thus afford an opportunity of dealing with this vexed question. Even if we were to abandon that Bill, I am by no means sure that we should be able to settle this great Scotch Land Question in what now remains of the present Session. Now, with reference to the immediate urgency of this matter. I do not deny there is a part of the matter concerning a portion of the population which is extremely urgent; but I see with satisfaction that the Commissioners say—

“On the whole, we cannot entertain a doubt that the small occupiers of the Highlands and Islands have participated in no small degree in the benefits which modern legislation and commerce, and the prevalence of philanthropic principles in government and individual action, have conferred on other classes of their countrymen. We remain under the impression that while in the whole community there was a larger proportionate number of persons living in rude comfort in former times, there was also a larger number in a condition of precarious indigence. The average amount of moral and material welfare is as great now as at any previous period, and the poorest class were never so well protected against the extremities of human suffering.”

That is the finding of the Commissioners upon the general condition of the small occupiers in the Highlands. And then, Sir, when I come to the recommendations of the Commissioners in respect to the alteration of the Land Law, I am struck very much by the fact that it is admitted by the Commissioners themselves that the recommendation with reference to the communal holdings, which is deserving of examination, does not touch or deal with the condition of the poorest class who most largely demand our sympathy. The Commissioners say—

“It may be objected to the scheme which has been proposed, that the protection and encouragement afforded to the higher class of crofters above the level of the £6 line are withheld from those of an inferior condition, forming, in most localities, we regret to say, the vast majority, and who may need such safeguards equally or more. This must be admitted. The poorest sort are here endowed with no formal security against eviction or excessive rents. The inequality of treatment is manifest, and may appear unjust. If we allow it, we do so not from a want of sympathy for the class excluded—we accept an evil to avoid a greater evil still.”

Now, what is the greater evil to which the Commissioners refer? Why—

“To invest the most humble and helpless class of agricultural tenants with immunities and rights which ought to go hand in hand with the expansive improvement of the dwelling and the soil, would tend to fix them in a condition from which they ought to be resolutely, though gently, withdrawn. These people ought either to pass as crofters to new holdings of a higher value, or take their position among the cottars as labourers, mechanics, or fishermen, with a cottage and an allotment, or migrate to other seats of labour here, or emigrate to other countries.”

It is quite plain, therefore, that in this respect there is a great grievance, and we have to consider how far we can deal with one class of people upon the prin-

ciple of fixing them on the soil, and deal with another class who most require consideration on the principle which would resolutely, though gently, withdraw them from the soil. Now, we have had, as we always do have, a very able speech from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour); but I am bound to say I entirely dissent from his views on the subject of deer forests. That deer forests have been carried a good deal too far, is an opinion I have held for a long time; and I cannot agree with the view the hon. Gentleman has expressed on that subject. It is quite true that diminution in the population of Scotland was originally due to the formation of large sheep farms. I never walk in a Highland strath without seeing the ruin which has been caused by sheep farming during the last half-century. I am very sorry that the black cattle, which in the old days were found perfectly consistent with the exercise of moderate sport, have disappeared. In the old forests—not the creations of modern times—the deer were fewer, but they were bigger. Better sport was not to be had than was to be found in the ancient deer forests; indeed, people were satisfied to walk a whole day to get a shot at a big buck. It is not inconsistent with sport that the black cattle should be on the hills; but if people are determined to have deer forests very much under circumstances which would exist if there were preserves of pheasants in the suburbs of London, the conditions are totally changed, and the population must necessarily be removed. I believe that one of the causes which have led to the distress which we all desire to allay—one of the causes which have led to the discontent we all desire to relieve—has been the undue extension of deer forests in Scotland. There are other recommendations which are very important, no doubt—namely, the financial proposals of which my hon. Friend the Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. D. Cameron) spoke. The hon. Gentleman said—“We went to the West Highlands, and we found that one of the great causes of the misery of the population was poverty.” That is a great cause of misery everywhere; but when you have proposals to relieve misery and poverty out of the public purse, you have to look into the matter very carefully. Such

relief cannot be confined to one part of the country, or to one class of the population. When, in order to relieve misery and poverty, you propose to take money out of the pockets of people who are just as poor as those to whom it is to be given, the House will at once see the difficulties which beset the use of money in this way. After all, public charity is like private charity; and, unless it is administered with discretion, it will tend far more to pauperize than enrich. Therefore, when you come to Parliament with a large proposal for a financial grant, which is to be levied on all parts of the country—England, Scotland, and Ireland—for particular purposes, that, I say, is a matter which must be extremely carefully considered before a responsible Government could assent to such a demand. I understood my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) to say that, in his opinion, relief ought to be given in respect of the education rate. The hon. Gentleman said—“You compel these people to receive education, and at the same time call upon them to pay an education rate.” But that is an argument which cannot be confined to the Islands of Scotland. [Dr. CAMERON: Excessive rate.] Well, but there is a large number of people in England who complain of the excessive education rate. [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: It is 5s. or 6s. in the pound.] I am not going into details. All I want the House to do is to look at the nature and magnitude of the financial proposals, because then they will see how carefully the proposals ought to be considered before a final conclusion regarding them is arrived at. My hon. Friend also referred to harbours. Again, I think that is a matter deserving of most careful consideration; indeed, it is now being considered. I think the East Coast of Scotland has as much claim as the West Coast, because, although the West Coast has claims, it is better furnished with natural harbours than any part of the world I know. One of the great attractions in yachting on that coast is, at least to me, that you cannot go five miles without finding a capital harbour somewhere, which nature has given to the coast. You may knock about the English Channel all night and not be able to get into harbour; but on the West Coast of Scotland you may drop your anchor

almost anywhere and feel as safe as if you were in dock. All these claims upon the Public Exchequer have to be looked into and well considered before the Government can take action in regard to them. My hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) referred to another matter—namely, postal and telegraphic communication. I may say that long before I joined the Government I was constantly persecuting the Postal and Treasury authorities with demands as to the improvement of postal and telegraphic communication in the Highlands of Scotland; and I am not sure I should not receive some censure from the First Lord of the Treasury if he only knew the number of telegraphic stations which I have been more or less instrumental in procuring in the Highlands. I am informed that the Department has taken administrative action with the view of meeting the complaints which had been made on this head. Well, then as regards the sending of a ship of war to these coasts. [Dr. CAMERON: Training ship.] Of course, I cannot answer for the Admiralty; but it seems to me that what the hon. Member (Dr. Cameron) suggests is not at all unreasonable. I think that a great Naval Power like England should avail itself of every opportunity of making its forces available for civil purposes in times of peace. Then the hon. Member says he wants a light ship at Stone Ferry. So do I. When I was with my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chamberlain) the other day on the Trinity Lighthouse ship, I said to him—"It is quite patent there is a want of beacons in the entrance to Stone Ferry." I do not understand why more has not been done in that direction. These are all the chief points to which the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) referred, and I am not at issue with him on any one of them. The Government do not approach this subject in any other than the most sympathetic and friendly spirit; but I hope I have shown that it would be quite impossible for them to embrace in its entirety the Motion of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane). Because, what does he do? He endeavours to pledge the House of Commons, many of whom cannot have carefully studied the Report, by an absolute Motion to the adoption of the recommendations of the Committee. That the Government should

give immediate attention to the Report I entirely agree, and they have given immediate attention to it. I have studied this Report as carefully as it is possible to do, and I am satisfied that the Government cannot assent in terms so absolute to give legislative and administrative effect to all the recommendations it contains. If, however, the hon. Member (Mr. Macfarlane) means that the Government are only to do so much as they reasonably can I entirely agree with him. The Government are perfectly alive to the urgent importance of the question; we are attending to it and are anxious to give effect, at the earliest possible moment, to such recommendations of the Committee as we think will be found to be practical, useful, and advantageous.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY said, he thought the House generally was inclined to accept the statement of the right hon. Gentleman; and he trusted that the Government would next Session bring in a Bill, giving effect to the views of the Members of the Government responsible for these administrative reforms. There was one point that the Government should have regard to—namely, the excessive amount levied in school rates in some parishes of the Highlands. He had hoped that the Home Secretary would have given some attention to this point. Then there was an administrative reform of some importance to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not alluded, and that was with regard to the administration of justice. On that point the Commissioners reported very strongly indeed; in fact, their recommendations went much further than anything he desired to urge on the House. They recommended that the Sheriffs should be placed in a position of complete independence. The recommendation to which he invited special attention was that Procurators Fiscal, who were so closely identified with the administration of the law, should be prevented from carrying on any private work or business from which they derived profit other than their official legal business. In a Question he had put to the Lord Advocate he had called attention to the fact that the Procurator Fiscal in the Island of Lewis, which belonged solely to one proprietor, was also the law agent of that proprietor. This was against the principle which was laid down a good

many years ago by the then Sheriff of the county, who declared the functions of factor, or land agent, to the proprietor and Procurator Fiscal to be altogether incompatible, and not such as should be performed by one person at the same time. It was very discouraging to the Scotch Members and the people of the Western Islands to hear the Lord Advocate defend the existing system; for the right hon. and learned Gentleman had declared, in answer to his (Mr. Barclay's) Question, that he did not see any impropriety in the law agent of the proprietor of the Island of Lewis acting also as Procurator Fiscal for the Crown. There were grave allegations against the administration of justice by the Procurator Fiscal. The Lord Advocate had been induced to make inquiries; but, presumably, he had made them of the Procurator Fiscal himself. The accounts he (Mr. Barclay) had received from independent sources were very different from the statement of the Lord Advocate; and he would urge on the Home Secretary—for he presumed he, in theory, was still the Minister for Scotland—the necessity of his interposing in this matter, and of exercising the authority of Secretary of State in such a manner as would assure the people of the Western Islands that they should have someone amongst them representing the Crown who would deal with them impartially and see that justice was impartially administered. At the present time it was not easy for these simple people to know whether the law agent was acting on behalf of the Crown or of the proprietor; and it was very easy to see, under such circumstances, that the people of the Islands had great reason to be dissatisfied with the administration of the law. They were at a loss to know whether it was the proprietor or the Crown who was acting oppressively against them. There was great reason now to apprehend very serious difficulties in the Islands. The people had been waiting a long time, and had become somewhat impatient, to see what was going to come out of the Report of the Royal Commissioners, on which they built very great hopes—far greater hopes, he was afraid, than were likely to be justified. When they saw the result of this debate, and understood that very little could be done by the Go-

vernment—he was not blaming the Government; but, in the nature of things, that would be the case—they would be very disappointed. The Government, he held, were responsible for seeing that the representatives of the Crown were placed in a position to deal fairly between the landlords on the one hand, and the crofters on the other—to deal with them in such an impartial manner as could not be expected from a person holding, at the same time, the positions of prosecutor for the Crown and law agent for the proprietor. That was the point he wished to urge on Her Majesty's Government. There could be no doubt that great dissatisfaction existed in the Western Islands as to the administration of justice there. Somewhere about 10 years ago, it was alleged that disaffection existed owing to the action of the factor of the proprietor, who held also the post of Procurator Fiscal. The Sheriff of that time satisfied himself, by inquiry, that the action of the gentleman in question showed that the post of Procurator Fiscal and the duty of factor to the proprietor were inconsistent, and he caused him to hand in his resignation. The course taken by the Sheriff fully justified the Commissioners in their Report, and fully justified him (Mr. Barclay) in urging on the Government the necessity of doing something to render satisfactory the administration of justice in the Western Islands, and to satisfy the people that they had in the service of the Crown one who would act towards them fairly and justly in the administration of the law.

MR. BRYCE said, he would not trouble the House with the remarks he had intended to make on the subject, although it was a subject of great importance, because he believed that at so late an hour the discussion ought to cease. He would only make one observation as to going to a Division. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman the Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane) proposed to take a Division. He (Mr. Bryce) confessed that, looking at the whole position of the debate, and at what had been said by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with such fulness and precision, with regard to the different recommendations contained in the Report of the Commission, he doubted whether much would be

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gained by going to a Division. He would suggest to the hon. Member that it would be as well to rest content for the moment with the assurances of the Home Secretary. He trusted they might depend on what had been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman as to the Government taking action as soon as possible on the points he referred to, and also on the matters raised by the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken, the importance of which was very great. Everyone who read the Report must feel that there was considerable danger of oppression, and that it was actually practised, particularly in remote parts of the Islands. There were difficult financial and legal questions with regard to the constitution of the township communities, the establishment of which the Commissioners had suggested, questions which required to be well weighed before legislation could be undertaken. It might be taken, however, that the Government were so far awake to the importance of the matter that they would probably announce and bring in next Session a measure dealing with it. Meanwhile, he hoped that no further time would be lost in effecting those administrative reforms to which the Report pointed. If his hon. Friend (Mr. Macfarlane) shared the favourable impression which had been made in most quarters by the right hon. and learned Gentleman's observations, it would not be necessary to divide.

MR. MARJORIBANKS said, he did not agree with a great deal which had fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department. He did not think that to hold up deer forests to such an amount of abuse and opprobrium was at all warranted by the facts. What was the recommendation of the Commissioners as to the deer forests? Why, that provision should be made for protecting the crofters against any diminution of the arable or pasture area now in their possession. He believed those words would be endorsed by nearly every Member of the House. What was the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman? He gave them a terrible account of the depopulation of the Highland glens—of the many houses which were to be seen in ruins and without inhabitants. But the history of

these ruined places was not such as the right hon. and learned Gentleman supposed; and the cases referred to, he (Mr. Marjoribanks) was prepared to argue, were special ones. The Report of the Commissioners did not support the gloomy view of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; and he thought it would be far better for the House to abide by the Report of the Commission as to the question of deer forests, rather than enter into sentimental denunciations. As to the question of harbours, he would express the hope that the Government would be cautious before they entered on any very great system of giving grants for the construction of harbours or piers on the Western Coast of Scotland. He was inclined to think that grants of public money were only justified in cases where some distinct life-saving purpose was to be effected. It was very doubtful whether, for the purpose of developing any trade or fishery, the Government should make free grants. There might be cases when it was very proper to grant loans at low rates of interest; but he doubted whether they were cases where free grants should be made.

MR. MACFARLANE said, that after the statement of the Secretary of State for the Home Department he did not wish to put the House to the trouble of a Division. He would ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had not derived as much satisfaction from the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary as some hon. Members seemed to have done. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had replied with great sympathy, but had not told them that he hoped to do anything, nor could he say that other Departments of the State would do anything. It might not yet be possible to settle an exact plan; but the Government should have informed the House that they intended to take action whether they agreed with the Report of the Commissioners or not. The Report of the Commissioners showed a state of things which imperatively demanded that action should be taken by the Government. Every page of the Report teemed with evidence to the effect that there had been extreme depopulation in many parts of the Highlands, and overcrowding in others.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter after
Twelve o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 30th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Earl of Doncaster (Duke of Buccleuch), after the death of his father.

Took the Oath for the First Time—The Marquess of Normanby.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Indian Marine * (170).

Second Reading—Committee negatived—Customs and Inland Revenue * (147).

Committee—Newcastle Chapter * (130).

Committee—*Report*—Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) * (141); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) * (142); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) * (143); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) * (136); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders * (137); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) * (139); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) * (140).

Report—Secretary for Scotland (157); Benefices (Tiverton Portions) Consolidation Amendment * (154).

Third Reading—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4) * (127); National Debt (Conversion of Stock) * (145), and passed.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPEALS—
CASE OF R. JOHNSTON v. MARY
McATASNEY AND PATRICK MOAN.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

Moved, That there be laid before the House—

"1. Copy of the shorthand writers' report of the evidence taken before the Irish Land Commission in the cases which came before the court upon the landlord's application for a rehearing in which R. Johnston was landlord and Mary McAtasney and Patrick Moan were tenants, together with the shorthand writers' report of the judgment delivered by Mr. Justice O'Hagan, and a copy of the order of the court on the said application:

"2. Copy of the reports of the official valuers appointed by the Land Commission in the same cases:

"3. Copy of the questions which the landlord applied to the Irish Land Commission to have stated in the same cases for the opinion

and decision of Her Majesty's Court of Appeal in Ireland, together with the order of the court refusing the said application:

"4. Copy of affidavit of H. A. Johnston, dated 28th June 1883, on which an application was made to the court of the Irish Land Commission to have the said cases reconsidered, in pursuance of section 48, subsection 5, Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881:

"5. Copy, letter of H. A. Johnston to Secretary of the Irish Land Commission, dated 8th September 1883, and the reply thereto, dated 13th September 1883."—(*The Lord Castle-town.*)

Motion agreed to.

Ordered to be laid before the House.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 157.) REPORT.

Order of the Day for Report of Amendments to be received, read.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, he wished to say a few words in reference to the Bill. He did not know whether that was the proper time to give Notice of an Amendment he intended to move on the third reading of the Bill. He had also to apologize to the House for not being present on the day when the Bill was considered in Committee. The fact was, he had been in Scotland on business; and having mistaken the day on which the Bill was to be taken, he had not got back in time. He had only one word to say in regard to the decisions their Lordships had come to; and that was, that he thought it was a very great mistake to place the appointment of the Supreme Judges, the Judges of the Court of Session, in the hands of the new Secretary. Considering that the Judges in England were appointed by the highest functionaries of State, he thought it would do serious injury to the status of the Scotch Judicial Body, if its Members were named by an official of inferior rank. That being his feeling on the matter, he begged to give Notice that, on the third reading, he would move that the clause which had been amended at the instance of, and on the Motion of, his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery), and which vested all legal patronage in the new Secretary, should be amended by the introduction of the words "with the exception of Judges of the Court of Session."

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he also wished to give Notice that, on the third

reading of the Bill, he would move that the Bill be read that day three months. He would do that mainly as a matter of form, in order to bring on a general discussion in reference to the objections against the provisions of the Bill.

Amendments reported accordingly.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN, in moving an Amendment, to omit from the Schedule of the Bill the words which transfer the management of endowed school education in Scotland from the Committee of Council to the new Secretary, said, he was going to ask their Lordships to omit these words, because he thought he should be able to show their Lordships, in the first place, that the present arrangement had been adopted as the result of experience; and, in the second place, that there was no other system whereby he, at all events, could suggest that Scottish opinion could be better arrived at. For that purpose, he would remind their Lordships of the recent history of endowed education in Scotland. Under the Act of 1878, endowed education was placed virtually in the hands of the Secretary of State for the Home Department; but, in practice, when the schemes came to be dealt with, it was found that the most convenient mode of dealing with them was to refer them to the Education Department; and, therefore, although by law the administration and supervision of these schemes vested in the Secretary of State, in reality they were referred to the Education Department for advice; and the advice of the Department was in almost every case adopted. It was quite clear that that arrangement was made because it was found convenient in practice. In 1882, when a new Bill was brought in to deal with the whole subject, the entire matter was handed over from the Secretary of State to the Privy Council; and under the provisions of that Act the Commission was appointed which had worked up to the present time under the Chairmanship of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour). This system was working, he believed, perfectly well and with general satisfaction, and appeared to him to call to its assistance a body composed of the most eminent Scotsmen that were to be found. The complaint made was, that they did not arrive, by the present system, at what Scottish opinion really was; but the Commis-

sioners included, in addition to the noble Lord opposite, a noble Baron who was not now present, Lord Elgin, Lord Shand, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, he thought, also, the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and there were one or two other Commissioners. The schemes were prepared by them, and were all forwarded to the Privy Council, and, in the ordinary course of business, they passed through the Education Department. The present permanent head of the Department was a very eminent Scottish official—Mr. Cumin—and there were also under him other able Scottish officials in the Department. From them the schemes passed on to the Scottish Committee of the Privy Council. He was not quite well aware who were the Members of that Committee; but, among others, his noble Friend (the Duke of Argyll) was one, and the noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery) was another; Mr. Baxter was also a Member, and the Lord Advocate was a Member *ex officio*. He believed there were other Members, and did not know whether the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Richmond) was one of them; but he had said enough to show their Lordships that those names were a sufficient guarantee that eminent Scotsmen, holding very different opinions, had the opportunity of seeing all these schemes, if the present system of administration was properly worked. Therefore, always provided that the Committee was duly called together, and that the schemes were submitted to the Committee as they ought to be, he did not know, and could not suggest, any system whereby one could be more likely to arrive at what Scottish opinion on any subject connected with educational endowments was. Then, what was the system proposed to be substituted? It was proposed to put in the place of the Scottish Committee the new Secretary for Scotland. But that Secretary would almost be necessarily a Member of the Scottish Committee. Therefore, the proposal came to this—to substitute for the Committee which he had named one Member of the Committee, and to place the control of endowed education entirely in his hands. He was sure that the most excellent choice would be made for this Secretaryship; but, at the same time, he could not perceive how it could be more conducive to the elucidation of what was

really Scottish opinion to place one man in control of endowed education, rather than to leave it as at present. There would be practical inconvenience in the working of the system now proposed. He had said the other day, when they were talking with respect to the transfer of Scottish education altogether to the new Secretary, that, from the best interpretation he could put on the Bill, that Secretary would require to have an educational establishment down in Edinburgh. He was told, however, that that would not be the case. If so, it seemed to him that one or two things must happen—either that the Secretary must have some small educational establishment of his own in London, or should have under his control, for the purposes of endowed education, some of the officials of the present Education Department. He could not help thinking there would be considerable practical inconvenience in the working of a system of that sort. He did not wish to put the matter on too high grounds; but it certainly seemed to him that the present arrangement was in every way better than that which it was proposed to substitute for it. It had been remarked the other evening by the noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery) that neither he (the Earl of Camperdown) nor the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour) represented Scotch opinion upon this point. Well, he did not in the least profess to represent Scottish opinion. He could not speak as to what Scottish opinion might be; he could only say what he himself thought; but he very much doubted whether the details of the scheme had really been put before the people of Scotland, and he thought it was very desirable that all the Bodies—the Commissioners of Burghs and others—who had passed resolutions with reference to this subject, should really have these details before them, and should really understand what the change was. Their Lordships, moreover, should remember that, if they retained these words in the Schedule of the Bill, they would, after all, be placing only half, and a very small half, of the education of Scotland in the hands of the Secretary. The other night it had been argued, and, he thought, very fairly indeed, by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour), that he was quite content to accept this issue—that either all

Scottish education should be put in the hands of the Scottish Secretary, or none of it; and, for himself, he could not understand how it would be more conducive to the elucidation of Scotch opinion to have one Scotchman in charge of the endowed schools, instead of five or six. Their Lordships had decided, the other night, that elementary education should not be placed in the new Secretary's hands; and, that being so, it appeared to him that it would be very much better to retain also the endowed education in the hands of those who were at present conducting it—namely, the Privy Council. He would now move an Amendment to that effect.

Schedule, Part II., page 4, moved to leave out (“Educational Endowments, 45 and 46 Vict. c. 59, except Section 32.”)—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, that his own feeling had always been that, if a Scotch Department of Administration was to be created at all in England, having its headquarters in London, and superseding, or at least over-riding and over-ruling, all the various Bodies in Scotland—supposing, he said, that it was the wish of the Scotch people that such a Department should be created, he had always felt that education, above all other subjects, was one of the things that ought to be entrusted to that Department. The Scottish system of education was much older than the English; and it was regulated on different principles; and, for his part, he rather regretted that the principles of the English administration of education should have been introduced in Scotland; but that had gone to a very considerable extent, and he was afraid it could not now be undone. If a satisfactory Department was really to be created in London for Scottish affairs, his voice would certainly be in favour of giving it to the administration of primary and secondary education as a whole. But, then, their Lordships, he understood, had decided by a considerable majority that, for the present, primary education ought not to be entrusted to that Body; at all events, until they saw how the new Department worked. He could, therefore, quite understand the objection of those who said that as primary education was not to be transferred, secondary education

ought not to be transferred either. He believed that the present administration of the Department in London, as regarded endowed schools, was very well conducted; and they had had the advantage, as his noble Friend (the Earl of Camperdown) had said, of very able officials. They lately had the advantage of the services of Sir Francis Sandford, and they now had the advantage, not less valuable, of Mr. Cumin, to whom they were much indebted; and if education was removed to the new Department, those permanent officials should be connected with it. His noble Friend had alluded to one matter on which he did not think the noble Earl himself knew the working of the present administration—namely, the Scottish Committee on Education. It was perfectly true that he (the Duke of Argyll) and some other Members of the Scottish Peerage and some Members of the House of Commons were Members of that Committee; but those who were acquainted with the working of that Body knew that they were very seldom called together—they very seldom met. He did not think he had attended it for a very long time, and practically the administration fell into the hands of the ordinary Committee of the Privy Council and the permanent officials. He had nothing, however, to complain of in that matter. He did not know any evil that arose from the present administration; and, if any important question should arise, he had no doubt the Committee would actually assemble, and give their opinion; but as regards the practical and daily administration of the Education Department, the Scottish Committee was a non-existent Body. Personally, he should be disposed to say that the two branches of education should go together; and, as the House had already decided that elementary education was not to be committed to the new Secretary, he would agree that the words which the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown) proposed to omit should be struck out of the Bill.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, it appeared to him that the Amendment was supported by the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll), because he would be glad if both classes of education were transferred to the new Secretary; whereas the noble Lord opposite (Lord

Balfour), who had raised the question the other night, in the debate in Committee, advocated the striking out of secondary education, on the ground that he was anxious neither should be transferred. Their Lordships ought to remember, however, that this was a tentative measure; and if the question of transferring the whole education was, as it seemed likely, to come before their Lordships again, surely it was better that some step of a tentative character should be embodied in the Bill. He had explained in Committee the considerations which influenced the Government to place the educational endowments in the Schedule of the Bill. The desirability, he thought, of making some experiment in order to see how the new Department would be able to work educational matters was a clear justification of the course adopted by the Government in placing the educational endowments in the hands of the new Secretary.

LORD BALFOUR said, he hoped their Lordships would not consent to passing a Bill which had in it, as the Schedule now stood, the transfer of the working of the Educational Endowments Act to the new Secretary, and leaving out of it the working of elementary education. He had said on different occasions, and would say again, that, however opinions might be divided on the general question, he did not believe that there were a dozen persons who were in favour of having the administration of general elementary education and the administration of the educational endowments separated the one from the other; and further than that, he had heard no reason given in that House by the Government, or anybody else within or out of the House, for making the separation. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie) thought it would be desirable that an experiment should be made, to see how the new Secretary would deal with education. All he (Lord Balfour) had to say in reply to that was, that he rather objected to the Commission being made the *corpus vile* on which the experiments were to be tried. He thought he would have the sympathy of their Lordships when he said that, as the Commission of which he happened to be Chairman had been at work for about 18 or 20 months, they were at that stage when the first of their work was just coming before the Education Department, and would

shortly be before Parliament. It would obviously be very inconvenient, if it had now to be submitted to the new Department; in fact, it was the most inconvenient time at which such a transfer could be made. They had established a *modus vivendi* of a most satisfactory kind with the Scottish Education Department; and he should be extremely sorry if they had all that work to go through again with the new Secretary, when he, perhaps, would take a different view of certain matters from that which the Department had taken, and the whole matter would have to be re-discussed. Upon that ground, he should deprecate the proposed transference at this time, especially as it was in the nature of an experiment, for which he could see no reason whatever. He did not wish it to be thought that the Commission had any dread or dislike of being under the new Secretary *per se*. The point on which he wished to found his plea was, that the separation of the two branches of education was in itself so inconvenient a thing, that it could not possibly be satisfactory, and would not, he believed, be approved of in Scotland. It would introduce a dual control of a most unfortunate kind. The real reason why some noble Lords wished this line retained in the Schedule was, that it might be a lever for hereafter getting the whole of education transferred to the new Office. He wished that matter to stand or fall entirely on its own merits. If elementary education had been transferred he would not have said another word in the matter, neither should he have dreamt of putting down an Amendment on the Paper; for he should have regarded the one decision as ruling the other. The noble Lords opposite had, in Committee, used as their most powerful argument in favour of transferring elementary education the fact that educational endowments were in the Schedule; but the decision of the Committee having gone against them, he really hoped that those who had supported it would not abandon the position that it was necessary for the two things to be transferred or not together. If it should really be the case, as the noble Earl who represented the Government seemed to imply, that they should hear of this matter again, he hoped they should hear of it as a whole. If the Amendment were pressed to a Division, he should support it.

Lord Balfour

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON said, he entirely agreed with everything that had just fallen from his noble Friend behind him (Lord Balfour). He was very much astonished to hear the noble Earl in charge of the Bill (the Earl of Dalhousie) say that it was a tentative measure. What did the Government mean by a tentative measure? It would be satisfactory to their Lordships to know how long they were to be occupied in experiments; how long they were to be kept in suspense, before they knew whether a Secretary for Scotland was to be one of the institutions of the country. The noble Earl might have told them whether the Bill was to last three, five, or seven years; and whether, at the end of that time, the Act would come before the House; and whether, if the Secretary for Scotland had not acted in a manner that was very satisfactory, his Office would then be abolished. To transfer the management of endowed schools to the Secretary for Scotland would be exactly undoing what Her Majesty's present Government set up in 1882, when the Commission of which his noble Friend was Chairman was appointed. In that year, the endowed schools were placed in the hands of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and were afterwards handed back to the Privy Council, because it was found the Home Department could not deal with them. The Education Department at present dealt with all the endowed schools of £50 and under, and the endowed schools of that class were very intimately connected with primary education in Scotland. Therefore, the Education Department, who were charged with carrying out the primary education in Scotland, were the very body best able to deal with such endowed schools. If the Scottish Education Committee in London did not meet too frequently, that was the fault of the Lord President of the Council, and not of the Scottish Education Department. He would not say that it did not meet as often as it should. The mere ordinary details which went through the routine of the Office did not require any very great consideration, and did not require the meeting of any Committee. The proposal of this tentative Bill was to take all these matters out of the hands of the Privy Council, and out of the hands of the Scottish Education Department, and place it in

the hands of one man, who might or might not know anything about the subject. In the interests of education in Scotland he protested against such a proposal; and therefore he should, with the greatest pleasure, support his noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Camperdown) in keeping the endowed school system under the present Education Committee and the Privy Council Office.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, that the course of the debate had led to some remarks being made which he thought it was due to his side of the House that they should take notice of. In the first place, he wished to state that, inadequate as their arguments on that side of the House might have been, they preferred them as stated by themselves, rather than as represented by his noble Friend who spoke last but one (Lord Balfour). He did not recollect that anyone—or, at most, there was only one—on that side of the House, who used the argument that the Scottish endowments and the system of Scottish primary education were absolutely inseparable. If there was any exception to that statement, there was not more than one. But passing from that, because the question of who used the argument was a very small one, he would wish to allude to another remark that fell from his noble Friend, which was, that they ought not to make this transference, because the noble Lord was Chairman of the Commission on Endowed Schools, that it had been sitting for 20 months, and that it was at the most interesting period of gestation, and that, under these circumstances, it would be a great misfortune to Scottish education generally, if the relations, so advantageous and cordial on both sides, between the Commission and the Education Department were separated. He attributed the less weight to that argument, because he recollected the circumstances which led to the appointment of that Commission, and he thought the appointment was about coëval with the separation of endowments from the Home Department. What had then taken place showed very conclusively that the difficulty of separating primary education and endowments was not so very great as it was now represented to be; because, if they were separated departmentally up to two years ago without any very serious consequences, he did not see

that the interregnum of two years made an absolute and impassable gulf between the present and the past. The noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) had said the endowed schools were taken out of the hands of the Home Department, because the latter was incapable of dealing with them. His (the Earl of Rosebery's) recollection of the transaction, however, was that these endowments were separated from the Home Office, not because the Secretary of State found himself unable to deal with them, but because the Home Office had lately been overcrowded with work. If up to two years ago these endowments were in the hands of the Home Department with excellent effects on both sides, there did not seem to be much reason, when they were forming a sort of new Home Department for Scotland, why they should not transfer the endowments in Scotland to its charge. The noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) said that he would be inclined to support the Amendment, because he did not very well see how primary and secondary education could be separated in Scotland; and he added that, as the question of primary education had been settled by a very large majority, he, for one, did not feel inclined to support the clause as it stood. It was, no doubt, a large relative majority; but the numbers who took part in it were not such as to settle absolutely a large national question. The figures, he thought, were 37 to 18. He could not believe that Scotland or "the other place" would accept that decision as one either representing the opinion of their Lordships, or the feeling of the country at large. He inclined to think that if the battalions who were usually ranged behind the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) had been present when he gave his vote in reference to the question of elementary education, the decision would have been much more conclusive the other way. The noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) had argued that the Bill ought not to be described as a tentative Bill, and that was the only remark he (the Earl of Rosebery) wished to take notice of in concluding, because his noble Friend (the Earl of Dalhousie) had not the right of reply. He (the Earl of Rosebery) took it for granted that the Bill was tentative, in-

asmuch as it was an experiment in the formation of a Department; and the Government wished to confine the experiment in this matter of education, because they wished to see how that matter would work. That was the ordinary meaning of the word tentative, and he did not see what objection could be taken to it. He hoped that the Government, though they did not seem to have much promise of success in the Division after what had fallen from both sides of the House, would adhere to the proposal in the Bill, because he knew that the whole question of education would be raised "elsewhere," and it would strengthen the hands of those who wished to enlarge the basis of this Office.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he entirely agreed with the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dalhousie) in wishing to enlarge the basis of the new Office, because its success would much depend on that object being carried out; but when they came to details, he did not think that educational endowments and elementary education could be separated from each other. If the House chose to reverse the decision come to the other night, he should be perfectly willing to join the two subjects; but, it being the decision of the House that the management of elementary education was to remain where it was now, he thought educational endowments ought to be in the same position, and that the two ought not to be separated.

LORD NORTON, in supporting the Amendment, said, it had been stated that the Government wished to try how far a transference of Scotch Business to the new Office would work, and they had selected education for the purpose of that trial. He should have thought any other subject would have been better than education for experiment. In the recent Report of the Commission on Industrial Schools the disadvantage of separating some schools to a non-educational Department was noted. Education was the most special of all subjects, and one with which it was least in the public interest to make experiments in a variety of Departments. It was desirable to make endowed schools for the middle classes separate from elementary schools; but there was no more reason to put any of the schools in Scotland under the Home Department than

under the Foreign or any other Department. Under the plan provided by the Bill, moreover, two sets of Inspectors would be required, and a different standard of education introduced.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he entirely agreed with the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) that this appeared to be essentially a subject on which the wishes of all Scotland ought to be considered. Although it did appear, from the conversation which had taken place, that there was some difference of Scottish opinion, yet he knew that his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in framing the Bill, took immense pains to ascertain, not only the opinion of the Scottish Peers, but also the opinions of the Scottish Members on this subject, and the great majority were decidedly in favour of the Schedule as it stood.

THE EARL OF MINTO said, he thought there was ample evidence that the public of Scotland were in favour of the separation of education from English control; and he did not believe that public opinion would approve of the management of educational endowments and of primary education being separated. He should vote for the maintenance of educational endowments as contained in the Schedule of the Bill.

On Question? Their Lordships divided:—Contents 55; Not-Contents 38: Majority 17.

CONTENTS.

Rutland, D.	Hardinge, V.
Salisbury, M.	Hawarden, V.
Abingdon, E.	Hutchinson, V. (E. Donoughmore.)
Ashburnham, E.	Sidmouth, V.
Bradford, E.	Strathallan, V.
Cadogan, E.	Templetown, V.
Camperdown, E.	Bagot, L.
[Teller.]	Balfour of Burley, L.
Carnarvon, E.	[Teller.]
Doncaster, E. (D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.)	Borthwick, L.
Hardwicke, E.	Boston, L.
Latham, E.	Clanwilliam, L. (E. Clanwilliam.)
Leven and Melville, E.	Colchester, L.
Lovelace, E.	Cottesloe, L.
Lucan, E.	Digby, L.
Mar and Kellie, E.	Donington, L.
Milltown, E.	Douglas, L. (E. Home.)
Morton, E.	Ellenborough, L.
Powis, E.	Forbes, L.
Ravensworth, E.	Gerard, L.
Redesdale, E.	Harlech, L.
Selkirk, E.	Inchiquin, L.

Kintore, L. (<i>E. Kintore</i> .)	Stewart of Garlies, L.
Norton, L.	(<i>E. Galloway</i> .)
Penrhyn, L.	Sundridge, L. (<i>D. Argyll</i> .)
Saltersford, L. (<i>E. Courtown</i> .)	Tyrone, L. (<i>M. Waterford</i> .)
Saltoun, L.	Ventry, L.
Shute, L. (<i>V. Barrington</i> .)	Wemyss, L. (<i>E. Wemyss</i> .)
Silchester, L. (<i>E. Longford</i> .)	Winmarleigh, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

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	FitzGerald, L.
Grafton, D.	Foxford, L. (<i>E. Linrick</i> .)
Marlborough, D.	Greville, L.
Somerset, D.	Kenmare, L. (<i>E. Kenmare</i> .)
Normanby, M.	Monson, L. [<i>Teller</i> .]
	Oxenford, L. (<i>E. Stair</i> .)
Derby, E.	Ramsay, L. (<i>E. Dalhousie</i> .)
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Sherbrooke, V.	Stratheden and Campbell, L.
Abinger, L.	Tweedmouth, L.
Blachford, L.	Waveney, L.
Boyle, L. (<i>E. Cork and Orrery</i> .) [<i>Teller</i> .]	Wrottesley, L.
Braye, L.	
Carrington, L.	

Amendment agreed to.

Schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Bill to be read 3^a on Tuesday the 8th of July next.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA.

QUESTIONS. MOTION FOR PAPERS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising—(1)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true, as stated in the public prints, that a telegraphic despatch of his with reference to Angra Pequena has been communicated to the German Parliament by Prince Bismarck, and, if such should be the case, whether he will lay that despatch and others that have been made public on the Table of this House; (2) to move for a despatch or report addressed by the commanding officer of H.M.S. *Valorous*, a few years ago, to the Admiralty on the same subject; and, (3) to move for a letter addressed by a mercantile house in the Cape Colony to the Colonial Office in

July 1883, on the same subject; with the Secretary of State's answer to that document, said, that, years ago, the English flag had been hoisted on the islands close to Angra Pequena, and those islands had been granted to a firm of British merchants by the Crown. The territory on the mainland was purchased by the same firm from a duly-accredited Chief, who acted not for himself alone, but for others also. The head of the house, as he was informed, had sunk £30,000 in making improvements and putting up buildings. The firm had resigned property in Table Bay to the Cape Government entirely on the ground that they were to be allowed undisputed right to those islands. The islands were not really outside the harbour. There were one or two of them so near the mainland that at low water you could actually walk across. He was informed that H.M.S. *Valorous* visited the place some time ago, that formal possession was taken of the harbour, and that a Board which was set up claiming the territory was still there. About 15 months ago German settlers arrived in considerable numbers; they built a kind of fort, on which they placed cannon; and, finding that the British Government took no notice, they applied to Prince Bismarck, who they could not but admit had acted in a way in which many of them would wish our own Government should act. Immediately Germany discovered this country had no jurisdiction, the protection of that country was extended to the Colony. He was sorry that the protection of the Home Government had not been afforded to British subjects there in the manner which they had a right to expect.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of a letter addressed by a mercantile house in the Cape Colony to the Colonial Office in July 1883, with reference to Angra Pequena, with the Secretary of State's answer to that document." — (*The Viscount Sidmouth*.)

EARL GRANVILLE said, he believed the noble Viscount had put a Question on this subject to his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook), who had replied to that part of the Question relating to the visit of a British ship to the Colony; and, if he remembered rightly, he put the same Question to himself a few days ago. He then gave reasons why he

could not accede to the noble Viscount's Motion.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, that the answer given by the First Lord of the Admiralty had reference to the visit of H.M.S. *Boadicea* in the autumn of last year. His present Question referred to the *Valorous*, which was there some years ago, and to the Report of the commanding officer of that vessel.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that he must ask the noble Viscount to postpone that part of the Question. In answer to the first part, he might say that he had sent no telegraphic despatch such as the noble Viscount had described; but there was little doubt that the German Embassy did send a despatch, recording the result of the communications which had taken place between Her Majesty's Government and the German Embassy. The result of those communications gave every reason to hope that the question was likely to be settled, which, at one time, seemed calculated to lead to considerable friction. Her Majesty's Government, after considering the whole circumstances of the case, and after considering the statements of the German Government, and more especially with regard to the declarations made some years ago by the Government as to the limits of the Cape Colony, came to the conclusion that it was not possible nor desirable for them to oppose the protection of the German Empire being extended to German subjects having establishments in Angra Pequena. Her Majesty's Government would be ready to give a formal recognition to that protection after an agreement was come to which, he had no doubt, would secure all acquired rights, would prevent any chance of a convict establishment being founded there, and would secure the interests of British subjects, whether they had had concessions from the Native Chiefs, or whether they were Englishmen trading in those parts. As to the confines of the Colony, there was no doubt that, with regard to Wallfisch Bay, which was at some distance from Angra Pequena, and also with regard to the adjacent islands, they were British.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, he hoped the Government understood the importance of the subject. He would point out that these islands were practically part of the mainland, being attached to

it at low water. There was a very valuable property involved in the possession of the islands, for they were covered with guano; and if the Germans got possession of them, they might exclude us.

THE EARL OF DERBY, in answer to the third part of the Question of the noble Viscount, said he had no objection to lay on the Table the letter referred to. He presumed that the noble Viscount wished it to be produced with the rest of the Correspondence relating to the same subject when it was complete.

Motion (by leave of the House), *withdrawn*.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—

P. P. No. 22 (1884).

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY, in rising to call attention to Parliamentary Paper, "Egypt, No. 22, 1884;" and to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs especially as to the meaning of the first two lines of his Despatch (which comprises the whole of that Parliamentary Paper), viz., the words—

"As the original plan for the evacuation of the Soudan has been dropped, and as aggressive operations cannot be undertaken with the countenance of Her Majesty's Government," &c.;

also whether any explanation can be given why this Parliamentary Paper, which appeared in the newspapers on the 12th instant, was not delivered to Members of this House until the 17th instant? said, he would recall to the minds of their Lordships the massacres of Sinkat and Tokar, and would point out that it was after those two events that aggressive operations were undertaken at the bidding of the Government. In January, when they had no policy of their own, the Government invited General Gordon to come and advise with them as to what their policy should be. The policy advocated by General Gordon was that he should be sent out to the Soudan in order to determine what should be done. The Government accordingly sent General Gordon out to the Soudan in order to create a policy for them. Turning to the Memorandum written by General Gordon, while on his way to Egypt, a document which he thought had not been sufficiently considered by either House of Parliament, he pointed out what it was that General Gordon

undertook, how he was aware of the difficulties which faced him, and how he proposed to encounter them. He would call their Lordships' attention to various passages in that Memorandum, and would particularly emphasize as being worthy of notice the passage in that document referring to the arrangement for the evacuation of the Soudan, the measures to be taken for the safe removal of the Egyptian *employés* and troops, and to General Gordon's opinion that it would be advisable to postpone any decision in the matter until such time as the inhabitants made known their own opinion in respect to the towns of Kassala, Khartoum, and Dongola. The Government, he thought, practically admitted that they had no policy of their own in Egypt until they sent out General Gordon, who was appointed Governor General of the Soudan by the Khedive under their special approbation. The question then came to be, What was he to do—what was the plan for the evacuation of the Soudan which had received the approbation of the Government, and which he was trying to carry out? After the massacres of Sinkat and Tokar, the Government thought it necessary to take active operations by sending a joint military and naval force to the Red Sea littoral. When General Gordon was asked for an opinion on the subject of attacking the forces of Osman Digna, there was only one answer which could be expected from a man like him. He had undertaken a mission single-handed, and when he had left the country he wrote and warned the Government, three times, that he did not expect to be able to execute his pacific mission to evacuate the garrisons of the Soudan without fighting. Then he received, either at Abu Hamad or Berber, a telegram from the Government asking whether he would approve their pursuing offensive operations on the Red Sea littoral. When asked whether he approved of these operations, General Gordon said "Yes" at once; and his natural idea, no doubt, was that the Government were prepared to send an organized force from Suakin to Berber. It would have been a wise step to have sent a Cavalry force from Suakin to Berber after the Battle of Tamanieb. That alone would, in General Gordon's own words, have "smashed the Mahdi." The Government, however, were not

ready to follow up the advantage they had gained by a desert march of Cavalry, and thus insure the release of the garrisons, which, in the words of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was the grand object of Gordon's pacific mission. They were now told that the original plan of the evacuation of the Soudan had been dropped. What was the meaning of that? Did it mean that the Government were now going to leave the garrisons entirely to themselves, and were even going to drop General Gordon? The fact was, throughout all these operations in the Soudan, the Government had had no policy at all. At the beginning of the Session he (the Earl of Gallo-way) had heard Sir Wilfrid Lawson describe the policy of the Government as one to be summed up in the words "rescue and retire"—a definition which the Prime Minister accepted. The rescue had not yet taken place. Was it the meaning of this despatch that the Government intended to retire without rescuing? The House had a right to demand an explanation. The noble Earl concluded by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH said, he should confine to a small compass the few remarks that he desired to make; first of all, because it would be difficult to go at any length into the different points on which he should like to obtain information, without trenching to a considerable extent on the important debate which would to-morrow take place in their Lordships' House; and, secondly, because, although he expected an amiable and kind reply from the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville), he scarcely hoped for much definite information. The object of the Question which he had placed on the Paper was more particularly to point out a very important portion of the subject-matter of the coming debate, around which there was much doubt. He desired to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether it would be possible, without prejudice to the deliberations of the Conference, for Her Majesty's Government to give any indication of the provisions they are prepared to recommend during the proposed three years' military occupation of Egypt for meeting the additional expense which may be incurred in the event of military

operations being undertaken to protect Upper Egypt from the advance of a hostile force under the Mahdi or any of his adherents? In the Correspondence which was lately laid before Parliament there were statements which, judging by the interpretation put upon them in the House of Commons and in the French Chamber, were by no means clear. There appeared to be two interpretations given by the two different Ministries. Nothing, for instance, showed this more clearly than those statements respecting the military occupation, which, as he had said, would form a very important portion of the subject-matter of the debate to-morrow. As regarded it, the Prime Minister's interpretation was in the form of a negative, while that of M. Ferry was in the form of an affirmative. M. Ferry said there was a positive engagement to retire at a certain date. Mr. Gladstone said there was an engagement to retire only if called upon to do so by the Powers. There appeared to be a great difference between these statements; and this showed that there was much doubt as to the meaning of certain passages which occurred in these Papers, and which should be made clear before the debate took place. They were, after all, only dry bones without flesh upon them—the *résumé*, in diplomatic language, of conversations that occurred between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and M. Waddington. To his mind it was an extremely regrettable fact that Her Majesty's Government had not taken Parliament and the country into their confidence, because it was perfectly impossible to judge of the proceedings of the Conference until they were in possession of this information. No subject in all these despatches was, it appeared to him, of so much importance as the financial question. In a letter, written by the noble Earl, to M. Waddington, on the 16th of June, it was stated that the Commissioners of the Dette Publique would be empowered to veto any proposed expenditure which would cause an excess on the Budget, except in certain circumstances of emergency involving "peril to peace and order." Supposing that during the next three years, while British troops still occupied the country, Egypt was invaded by the Mahdi or any of his followers, and the Government were forced to send an expedition to Egypt of

10,000 men, and to carry on a war at a great distance and at enormous expense, either the English or the Egyptian Exchequer would probably have to meet an expenditure of £1,000,000 or £2,000,000, what provision did the proposals of the Government make for such a contingency? The arrangements with regard to France and with regard to the occupation were all practically minor points; but what they all turned upon was the financial question; and it was extremely important, not only in the interests of the country, but also in the interests of the Government, to put the House in a position of knowing something of the plans likely to be adopted. It was something like a public scandal that a formal statement of the arrangements between the Governments of this country and France had appeared in the daily Press; and he challenged the noble Earl to deny that it represented textually that arrangement. As an independent Member of their Lordships' House, he approached the subject with an open mind. He was himself perfectly prepared to be converted to anything, either by the late, or by the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; but his present wish was rather to be convinced by the noble Earl; but he must have something upon which he could form a judgment, as he could not go blindly into the Lobby and vote in favour of the Government. He should not say anything as to the merits of the financial proposal to be made; but the point he wished to arrive at was whether it had been arranged that there should be a stable and secure arrangement which should not be altered, and he thought it extremely unfortunate, in that view, that the debate should take place to-morrow without full information being in possession of the House. At the present time, the Government were not only making themselves responsible for the good government of Egypt, but also for the credit of Egypt. If not, they were doing infinite harm to that country. All he wished to ask the noble Earl was, whether, in the attempts which he had, no doubt successfully, made to arrive at an understanding with the Powers, he had considered the important matter of the exterior troubles to which he was exposed? As the Government were prepared to occupy Egypt for three years, during those three years they might be

responsible for £2,000,000; and he therefore wished to ask the noble Earl, what financial arrangements he intended to make to meet such a contingency; or whether the burden would fall upon the taxpayers of this country?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, with regard to the Question of the noble Duke (the Duke of Marlborough), I really do not think I have any reason to complain of anything he said in the short preface he made. He gave Notice of asking a Question on a very important matter—a matter which, I am glad to say, has been considered by the Government; for it would have been wrong if they had not done so; but at the same time, both from the words of his Notice and still more from what he has let fall in his speech, he does not expect it is likely I can give premature and somewhat piecemeal information with regard to the financial question which will be discussed by the Conference. There is one other point upon which I agree very much with the noble Duke, and which is, that it is not a very desirable thing for the public service that this House, or any other House, should discuss matters without a complete knowledge of the whole of the subject. But then there are two ways of dealing with that—either that the Government should be bound, contrary to all diplomatic usage, at the outset of a Conference announced to all the world, to show their cards on the matters to be discussed in that Conference; or whether the House should have a little patience and wait until they can properly—as it has been pledged that they shall—discuss the whole subject. I do not think, even upon that point, there is much disagreement between the noble Duke and myself. With regard to the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Galloway), I listened with both my rather indifferent ears as much as I could, but, unfortunately, without much success, because there was such a buzz of conversation during the whole time—apparently from some information that had reached your Lordships—that I had great difficulty in following him generally so as to understand what he said. I shall therefore confine myself to answering the two Questions he has put to me. One is as to the original plan for the evacuation of the Soudan being dropped. Now, if the noble Earl will merely refer back to the instructions

which were given, he will see that General Gordon was sent out merely on a mission to report from Suakin as to the best mode of evacuation.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY: From Suakin?

EARL GRANVILLE: Yes; but on arriving in Egypt he was requested to go to Cairo, where, after conference with Sir Evelyn Baring and the Egyptian Government, his final instructions were given by Sir Evelyn Baring, which subsequently received the sanction of Her Majesty's Government and in which General Gordon entirely agreed. So far those were operations in the Soudan with which Her Majesty's Government entirely agreed; but when it became a question of making Zebehr Ruler of the Soudan, and of sending an expedition to crush the Mahdi, it was quite clear the first plan must be abandoned. General Gordon was the means of enabling some 2,000 people to come from Khartoum and arrive safely in Egypt; and I have no doubt that the effect of his name and reputation produced at Khartoum a very considerable check to the advance of the Mahdi. As regards the complaint respecting the delivery of Parliamentary Papers, I am always most anxious that they should be presented as soon as possible; but in the case referred to by the noble Duke, it appears that your Lordships' House having risen for four days, the messengers did not distribute them in the interval. I think the dates will show that they were sent round on Monday, the 16th of May; and that, if Peers were not in London to receive them, they were sent by post on the evening of the 17th. I hope the answers which I have given will be satisfactory.

INDIAN MARINE BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to provide for the regulation of Her Majesty's Indian Marine Service—Was presented by The Earl of KIMBERLEY; read 1^a. (No. 170.)

House adjourned at Seven o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 30th June, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*
—Police [56]; Intestates Estates [168];
Dean Forest and Hundred of Saint Briavels
[184], *postponed*.

Referred to Select Committee—Middlesex Registry
of Deeds [169].

Committee—Medical Act Amendment [207]—
R.P.

Committee—Report—Tramways and Public Com-
panies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment*
[231].

Considered as amended—Municipal Elections
(Corrupt and Illegal Practices) [252]; Revi-
sion of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin
County) [124].

QUESTIONS.

—o—

PARLIAMENT — PALACE OF WEST-
MINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL
(WEST FRONT).

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked
the First Commissioner of Works, Whe-
ther he can now state to the House how
it is proposed to treat the west front of
Westminster Hall?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: No, Sir;
I cannot do so now, but I hope to be
able to do so in a few days.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—VISIT
OF THE LORD LIEUTENANT TO
BELFAST.

SIR THOMAS BATESON asked the
Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant
of Ireland, If he would state the num-
ber of extra Police drafted into Belfast
for the recent visit of his Excellency to
that town; whether their services were
required beyond their mere routine
duties; whether the conduct of the
people on that occasion was unexception-
able; what has been the total extra cost
incurred in connection with the move-
ment of such force; and, further, to
inquire from what source such extra
expenditure is to be defrayed?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Before the
right hon. Gentleman answers the Ques-
tion of the hon. Baronet, I would like
to ask him whether the demonstrations
were not, to a great extent, demonstra-
tions of armed men, such as at the meet-
ing at Dromore, where sackfuls of re-

volvers were left behind; whether at
the Orange meetings there were not
bodies of armed men, some of whom
were prepared to make murderous at-
tacks upon the Nationalists? I would
also like to ask the right hon. Gentle-
man whether the gentlemen who were
received recently as a deputation on the
occasion of His Excellency's visit to
Belfast were members of the organiza-
tion which prepared for these counter-
demonstrations; and whether His Ex-
cellency has ever, on any occasion, re-
ceived a body who represented armed
demonstrations, calculated to lead to a
breach of the peace?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, there were
bodies of armed men at the Dromore,
and other meetings; as regards the rest
of the Question, I am not prepared to
answer. In answer to the hon. Baronet,
I may say that the number of extra
police drafted into Belfast on the occa-
sion in question was 10 officers and 400
men. Their services were required, as
the ordinary routine duties had to be
performed by the town force as usual,
and the extra men were employed to
assist them, and to keep order at places
visited by their Excellencies, and along
the routes taken by them. The conduct
of the people was unexceptionable. The
total cost incurred in connection with
the movement of such force was about
£500, which will be defrayed from the
Constabulary Vote.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I asked
the right hon. Gentleman whether His
Excellency received a deputation, and
whether the members of it did not be-
long to the same Orange Society which
was declared by himself to be the
organization which prepared these
counter-demonstrations?

MR. TREVELYAN: The hon. Gen-
tleman asks me several Questions on
this subject. There undoubtedly have
been Orangemen who prepared these
counter-demonstrations; but it does not
follow that all men followed the example
of those of the rank and file who came
armed.

MR. HEALY: I would like to ask
the right hon. Gentleman were there
any extra police drafted into Belfast on
the occasion of the visit of the right
hon. Member for North Devon (Sir
Stafford Northcote)?

[No reply.]

INDIA (MADRAS)—VIJIARAGHAVA CHARIAR.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is a fact that one Vijiaraaghava Chariar, finding his petitions for redress unattended to by the Government of Madras, has sued the Secretary of State for injuries caused him by that Government in wrongfully and illegally removing him in 1882, on the Report of Dr. Macleane, Magistrate of Salem, from the post of Municipal Commissioner; whether the High Court has found the Secretary of State liable for the conduct of the Governor of Madras, liable for damages, liable for the costs of complainant, and liable for interest on both these amounts until paid in full; and, whether the Governor of Madras, or the State, is to pay the amount of the decree?

MR. J. K. CROSS: It appears from the newspapers, but is not otherwise known to the India Office, that the individual named recently brought an action against the Government to recover damages for his having been removed by the Government of Madras from his office as one of the Municipal Commissioners of the town of Salem; and that the High Court of Madras decided that the removal was illegal, and gave the plaintiff a decree in the usual form for 100 rupees damages with costs. The amount decreed will doubtless be paid by Government in the ordinary manner.

THE CIVIL LIST—REVENUES OF THE EPISCOPAL SEES OF SCOTLAND.

MR. WEBSTER asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will state by whom and under what authority the funds of the Episcopal Sees in Scotland which fell to the Crown at the Revolution are collected and disbursed, and if the accounts are regularly audited, and by whom; whether he will state the present position and amount of these funds and their revenue; if they are public property belonging to the Nation; or treated as being the private property of the Sovereign; and, if any account or statement of these funds, and the revenues from them, is to be found in any Blue Book or other Papers accessible to Parliament?

MR. COURTNEY: These ecclesiastical funds form part of the hereditary re-

venues of the Crown, the income of which is enjoyed by the public during the lifetime of the present Sovereign; they are managed by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and accounted for and audited in the same way as other property in their charge; they cannot be accurately distinguished from other Crown property in Scotland, but they probably amount in gross to about £10,000 a-year.

SCOTLAND—THE CHAPEL ROYAL— WARRANT OF 9TH FEBRUARY, 1873.

MR. WEBSTER asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he can state by whom, and under what authority, the funds of the Deanery of the Chapel Royal in Scotland are collected and disbursed; if the accounts are regularly audited, and by whom; to whom do these funds belong; are they National funds or the private property of the Crown; and, on the latter supposition, in what character, and by what title; and, is the Sovereign for the time entitled to dispose of them, or of the revenues from them, at pleasure and without Ministerial responsibility?

MR. COURTNEY: So far as I can ascertain, the facts are as follows:—The funds of the Deanery of the Chapel Royal in Scotland are collected and disbursed by the agents of the Deans and under their authority; the agents render accounts to the Deans, who presumably audit and examine them for themselves. The funds in question originally formed the endowment of the Chapel Royal, which was a Collegiate establishment consisting of a Dean and Prebendaries; in 1688, when Episcopacy was abolished in Scotland, they reverted to the Crown, and from that date until 1858 they were bestowed by the Crown upon three Crown Chaplains, who were called Deans of the Chapel Royal. By Royal Warrant under the Privy Seal, and by Ordinances of the Commissioners under the Scottish Universities Act of 1858, which have the force of law, they have been apportioned between certain University Professors and their successors in office, as Deans of the Chapel Royal; particulars will be found in House of Commons Paper No. 167 of last Session. It appears, therefore, that they have now become permanent endowments for the Professorships.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE: What is the annual amount of the funds of the Deanery?

MR. COURTNEY: I think it is about £2,300 a-year.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—
MR. MURRAY KER, J.P.—CASE OF —
MULLIN.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the case that in consequence of some party disturbance in the village of Drum, county Monaghan, a Catholic named Mullin was committed to Dundalk Gaol without bail, by Mr. Murray Ker, J.P., although bail to any amount was forthcoming, is Mr. Ker the magistrate who advised the Monaghan Orangemen, on the occasion of Lord Rossmore's reception, "never to fire their revolvers unless they were aiming at somebody," is it the fact that in the case of the Newry Orangemen charged with the much more serious offence of shooting with intent to kill, bail has been accepted, will the Government take care, in the absence of Catholic justices in Ulster, that party cases shall only be adjudicated upon by resident magistrates; and, can he state whether the prisoner in the present case must remain in custody till the trial takes place?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that this case was not a Party one, but an ordinary street disturbance, in the course of which Mullin struck a man named Dawson on the head and rendered him insensible. Moreover, Mr. Murray Ker did at first allow Mullin out on bail; but subsequently, upon its being ascertained that Dawson was confined to bed and in a critical state, the District Inspector directed that Mullin should be rearrested and objected to bail being taken. When the injured man got better, the prisoner's friends were so informed with the view of their renewing the application for bail if they saw fit; but they did not do so. The remand was for eight days only, and the accused will be brought again before the magistrates to-morrow. As to the alleged words used by Mr. Murray Ker, I believe that he was quite misrepresented in the papers at the time. In consequence of a Question which the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had upon the Paper, I looked

at these remarks, and received an explanation of them. I was informed that the object of these remarks was to dissuade these persons from bringing their revolvers to the meeting, and I quite believe that explanation.

MR. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman what were the exact words used if these were not the words?

MR. TREVELYAN: I think it is very likely that these were the words used, but the revolvers were not brought for the purpose of being put to any practical use. It is a very dangerous and irritating practice to bring them to public meetings.

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman would any Nationalist be permitted to use similar language?

MR. TREVELYAN: Undoubtedly, if his object were the same—namely, to dissuade persons from coming armed to public meetings.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman what other interpretation he could put upon the words addressed by Mr. Ker to murderous parties of men who were watched by armed Constabulary and excited to the extremest by the violent language of their leaders, who advised them "to keep a firm grip of their sticks and not to fire their pistols unless they were certain to shoot somebody," except as murderous incitement to a breach of the peace by one whose duty it was to preserve order?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that these and many other specimens of violent language had been quoted before, but upon inquiry he found that the words bore a different interpretation to what had been put upon them.

MR. HEALY wished to ask whether in the case of the Newry Orangemen, in which the evidence was much more serious—that of intent to kill—bail had been accepted, and also in the case of the Tyrone Orangemen, and that the magistrate did not consider that the application in the case of Mullin should be accepted?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that bail was accepted in the case of Mullin, and was only refused on account of the dangerous state of the injured man. The same course would have been adopted in the other cases had there been danger.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—WICKLOW CO.—MR. WINGFIELD.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Wingfield, who was compelled to resign his position in the Castle in consequence of a recent crim. con. action, is still a member of the Wicklow magistracy, and does the Lord Chancellor intend to continue Mr. Wingfield in his functions as justice?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Wingfield's name is still in the Commission of the Peace for the county of Wicklow; but he has not sat as a magistrate there since early in April last year, and I understand that he resides permanently out of Ireland. The matters connected with the action referred to occurred several months before the present Lord Chancellor took Office, and have not been under his Lordship's consideration. The late Lord Chancellor had the matter brought under his notice to the same extent as the Government had—namely, by newspaper reports of the trial. He, however, took no action with regard to it, and I do not propose to refer it specially to his Successor.

MR. HEALY: May I ask if in the county of Wicklow a certain person named Charles Stewart Parnell was not removed from the Commission of the Peace?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that this was the action of the late Lord Chancellor, and the object of the late Lord Chancellor had not been considered. He did not think it proper to go into or take up cases before the term when the present Lord Chancellor came into Office. Had he been in Office at the time referred to by the hon. Member, possibly he would not have taken the same view.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MACROOM UNION.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in reference to the supplementary election for the Macloneigh Electoral Division of the Macroom Poor Law Union, the Local Government Board will direct that the election should be conducted by a new returning officer, in view of the charge that the returning officer at the late election was absent from his office during the days when the

voting papers were collected, an irregularity for which, under the twentieth paragraph of the Circular of the Poor Law Commissioners, dated 17th January 1854, he is liable to censure or dismissal, and in view of the further fact that the said returning officer is the nephew of one of the candidates?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board do not consider that there are grounds for superseding the Returning Officer of Macroom Union, and appointing another person to perform that duty; and the supplemental election is now proceeding. It is true that the Returning Officer absented himself from his office on two days during the last election; but the Board trust that this irregularity will not occur again. The Board are not aware whether the Returning Officer is related to one of the candidates; but, even if that should be the case, the circumstance would not afford any sufficient reason for removing him from his office.

NEW SOUTH WALES—THE "FOREIGN SENATE."

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the fact that Mr. Combes, one of the members of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, recently spoke of England as a "Foreign Country," and of the Imperial Parliament as a "Foreign Senate;" whether it is a fact that Mr. Combes is a justice of the peace for New South Wales and a "Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George;" whether the Government of New South Wales last year struck off the roll of magistrates, with the approval of the Imperial Government, three gentlemen, because they signed an address to Mr. J. S. Redmond, M.P., in which the words "Foreign Senate" were applied to the Imperial Parliament; and, whether the Colonial Office will now recommend a similar course being adopted in the case of Mr. Combes?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: We have no information of the matter to which the hon. Member refers beyond the fact that Mr. Combes fills the positions described. But as to the last part of the Question, I may say that, as shown in the Parliamentary Paper, the action of the New South Wales Government was

based not merely on the words indicated in the Question, but also on an expression of admiration of "resolute resistance to the oppressive proceedings of the Foreign Senate." The Colonial Government acted entirely on its own initiative, and the initiative in such matters rests solely with them.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said, he was sorry to trouble the hon. Gentleman; but he wished to inform him that it was in consequence of the expression he had mentioned that the action was taken. The words "Foreign Senate" were, he might say, the words relied upon in the case.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The action of the Government was taken after a consideration of all the facts and bearings of the case.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked whether the Colonial Office would inquire into all the facts of the case?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: As I have already said, the initiative in such cases rests entirely with the Colonial Government.

THE QUEENSLAND LABOUR TRADE.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, in reference to his recent statement that abuses in connection with the labour trade are "prevented in Queensland vessels by the presence of a Government agent," whether one of the persons recently tried in Brisbane in the *Alfred Vittery* murder case was the Government agent of the ship, one "Freeman;" whether the Colonial Office, after expressing the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that the acquittal in which the trial resulted was "a failure of justice," made any representations to the Government of Queensland as to the immediate dismissal of Mr. Freeman from the office of Government agent; and, whether he can state how these Government agents are appointed, what are the qualifications required, and what class of persons generally hold the position?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I did not state that all abuses in connection with the labour trade were prevented in Queensland vessels by the presence of a Government agent, but that such abuses as were described in the Question relating to the ship *Bileen*, to which I was at the moment referring, would be impossible

under the system of Government agency. As to the case of the *Alfred Vittery*, which represents quite a different class of cases, the Colonial Office wrote to the Governor of Queensland to the effect that the conduct of the Government agent on the occasion referred to appeared to indicate the necessity for the choice of superior men to fill situations of this nature, from which it is impossible to dissociate a large share of responsibility. These agents are appointed and removed at the discretion of the local Government; but naturally it is not a service for which it is very easy to find the men that it would be desirable to obtain. I do not doubt, however, that the Queensland Government will do their best to get good men.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—INQUIRY AT BALLYCASTLE UNION—MR. R. T. HAMILTON.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Did Mr. Richard Tipping Hamilton, Local Government Inspector hold a sworn inquiry in the union workhouse, Ballycastle, county Antrim, on Saturday the 21st instant, into a complaint made by the Protestant chaplain, regarding the religious registration of two inmates; did Mr. Hamilton, at the meeting of the Board of Guardians held the same day before the inquiry, read a letter he had received from Mrs. General Boyd, Ballycastle, in which Mrs. Boyd complained that she and her daughters were prevented from distributing religious tracts, &c. in the workhouse by the master; is it true that Mrs. Boyd's late husband bequeathed an annuity for the support of a professional scripture reader, and that that scripture reader visited the workhouse accompanied by Mrs. Boyd's daughters for the purpose of distributing religious tracts, and was prevented from doing so by the master; did Mr. Hamilton hold two other inquiries, one on the 28th of March 1866 and the other on the 30th of October 1867, in the same workhouse, into matters of dispute arising from the evangelical visits of other ladies, and was he (Mr. Hamilton) made thereby aware that such visitations had heretofore been a source of heart burning in the Ballycastle Workhouse; and did Mr. Hamilton, notwithstanding, write a resolution at the meeting of the Board of Guardians, on the 21st instant, and ask

Mr. Evelyn Ashley

the Board to pass it, to the effect that Mrs. Boyd, her daughters, and other ladies should be admitted into the workhouse for the purpose of distributing religious books, tracts, &c. among the inmates; and, did Mr. Hamilton thereby exceed his duty as Local Government Inspector; did he act contrary to the Poor Law Act (1 and 2 Vic. c. 56, s. 48 and 49), which, by enumerating only the official chaplains and other regular ministers of the persuasion of the inmates as authorised to visit workhouses to give religious assistance to the inmates, excludes all others, and contrary to the wishes of the Local Government Board; and, if so, what action does the Local Government Board intend to take in the case?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Hamilton held an inquiry as stated in the first paragraph of the Question. At the meeting of the Board of Guardians held on the same day, Mr. Hamilton read a letter which he had received from Mrs. Boyd complaining that the master of the workhouse had prevented her from giving books to Protestant inmates whom she visited. The master appears to have acted in accordance with a rule made by the Guardians some years ago. In the course of the conversation which ensued Mr. Hamilton mentioned the arrangements which exist in most other workhouses in his district, under which ladies are allowed to visit the sick of their own persuasion and give them books, provided that no sectarian or controversial work is given. It is not the case that Mr. Hamilton framed a resolution with the object of permitting ladies to distribute religious books at Ballycastle. On the contrary, though asked to do so, he declined, saying it was for the Guardians themselves to deal with the matter. A resolution was subsequently proposed but was not carried. Mr. Hamilton held the inquiries referred to in 1866 and 1867, and was aware of what occurred then. He did not act in the manner imputed to him in the Question, and the Local Government Board do not think that he exceeded his duty in bringing Mrs. Boyd's letter before the Guardians, or that the course suggested by his remarks would have been an infringement of the Poor Relief Acts. The Local Government Board know nothing of the alleged annuity referred to in the third part of the Question.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)— SMALL-POX.

DR. CAMERON asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will state the number of cases of small-pox that have been treated in the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board since the 1st of January 1884, and the number of deaths that have occurred among them; and, if he will state the total number of deaths from small-pox that have occurred in London, since the same date, outside those hospitals?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The number of small-pox patients who have been treated in the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board since the 1st of January, 1884, is 2,628. The number of deaths that have occurred among them is 282. The number of deaths from small-pox that have occurred in London since the same date outside those hospitals is 107.

BURIAL GROUNDS (IRELAND)—BALLY- HAUNIS, CO. MAYO.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the closing of portions of the Augustinian burial ground at Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, against further interments, and of the long delay that must take place before the Board of Guardians can obtain a new cemetery, What provision the Local Government Board propose to make for the burial of members of the families of persons owning grave plots in the ground now closed against interments?

MR. TREVELYAN: Only a very small portion of the burial ground was closed by the order of the Local Government Board, and the Board cannot, with due regard to the public health, open it again for interments. Persons who have had members of their families buried in the part of the graveyard which has been closed, can, in future, if they see fit, inter the remains of their relatives in the portion of it which still remains available for such purpose.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND— COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE.

MR. SMALL (for Mr. GRAY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieu-

tenant of Ireland, Whether, under the statutes of the Royal University of Ireland, which have been sanctioned by Her Majesty, all Senators are entitled to be present at meetings of all Committees of Senate; whether, on the 30th May, a member of the Senate requested to be informed of the date of the meeting of a Committee, so as to enable him to be present at such meeting; whether Mr. J. C. Morelith, one of the secretaries, refused to inform him of such date, alleging that the request for information would be brought before the Standing Committee, which will not meet until July next; whether, under the eleventh section of the Charter, the statutes of the University are binding on every member thereof; whether it is the case that the statute above referred to is evaded unless information as to meetings of Committees be given to every Senator who desires to receive such information; whether secretaries of the Royal University are merely appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, but are removable by the Lord Lieutenant alone, and not by the Senate; and, whether this fact fix on the Government the responsibility of taking cognisance of the acts of a secretary in an official capacity?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The statutes of the University contain a provision which gives to all Senators a right to be present at the meetings of any Committee. This right has, however, I understand, been very seldom exercised. The Senate recently appointed a Special Committee for a particular purpose. A member of the Senate who inquired the date of the meeting of this Committee was informed by the secretary that no date had as yet been fixed. The 11th section of the Charter contains a provision as stated. The question whether information as to the meeting of every Committee is to be given to every Senator is to be brought specially before the Senate at its approaching meeting on a notice given by the Senator already referred to. It may be inferred, therefore, that heretofore the secretaries have not been expected to give such general notice. The secretaries are removable by the Lord Lieutenant; and no doubt if any complaint of misconduct were made to his Excellency, it would be his duty to consider it. No such complaint has been made to his Excellency so far as I am aware.

Mr. Small

POST OFFICE—THE IRISH MAILS.

MR. GRAY asked the Postmaster General, Whether the accelerated mail service between London and Dublin will, as he recently anticipated, come into operation on the 1st of July; whether notice thereof has been given to the Irish Railway Companies; and, whether he will kindly state what progress has been made in the arrangements for the acceleration of the mails out from Dublin?

MR. PARNELL asked the Postmaster General, If he is now in a position to state whether the hoped for acceleration of the mail service between London and Cork can shortly take place?

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the Postmaster General, If he will arrange with the Great Northern Railway Company that when the mails arrive late in Dublin they shall at once be forwarded by special train to Belfast and North of Ireland?

MR. FAWCETT: As the Questions of the hon. Members for Cork, Carlow, and Tyrone refer to the same subject, I think it would be convenient if I answer the three Questions together. The accelerated service between London and Dublin will, as stated some time since, come into operation to-morrow. With regard to the general acceleration of the mails beyond Dublin, I am glad to be able to state that negotiations have proceeded so far that I think there is now no doubt that on an early day, probably by the 1st of October, the mail will leave Dublin for Cork at 8 in the morning instead of at 9, arriving in Cork at a quarter past 12, instead of, as it now does, at 2. The mail train will leave Cork at a quarter to 2, instead of leaving, as at present, at half-past 12. When the accelerated steam service comes into operation next year, the mails will arrive in Cork a quarter of an hour earlier than the time just mentioned, and leave a quarter of an hour later. The acceleration to Cork will, I hope, improve the service to Waterford and Limerick, and generally to the South of Ireland. With regard to the mails for Belfast and the North of Ireland, the Department is now carefully considering what will be the best plan of accelerating these mails; and as to providing for those cases in which the packet arrives late at Kingstown, the suggestion of my hon. Friend

the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) shall not be lost sight of. With regard to the acceleration of the mails to the West of Ireland, the question presents greater difficulties; but I am carefully considering whether anything can be done to improve the service to Galway, Sligo, and to the other towns served by the Midland Great Western Railway Company.

MR. LEWIS asked if the right hon. Gentleman would include in the acceleration to Belfast the North and North-West of Ireland generally?

MR. FAWCETT: I said Belfast and the North of Ireland generally.

MR. SMALL asked whether there would be an improvement along the Wexford line?

MR. FAWCETT: I hope so; I am looking over the whole service, and am considering Wexford. We are considering generally throughout Ireland, whether it would be possible to effect an acceleration.

MR. HEALY asked whether the proposed arrangements might not be placed in the Library of the House, so as to save Members the trouble of putting these Questions?

MR. FAWCETT said, when they came to a decision with regard to any particular acceleration, he would very gladly communicate it to the Members who were interested in it.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked if there was any intention to accelerate the service between Portadown and Londonderry as well as between Dublin and Belfast?

MR. FAWCETT: I should not like to give any promise; but that is one among many accelerations that are now being considered. It is a complicated question, but we will deal with it so far as we can.

DEAN FOREST AND HUNDRED OF ST. BRIAVELS BILL—RIGHTS OF THE FREE MINERS.

COLONEL KING SCOTE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, as much dissatisfaction is expressed by the free miners of the Forest of Dean with the interference with their rights and privileges contemplated in the Dean Forest and Hundred of St. Briavels Bill, Her Majesty's Government will appoint a Commission to carry out a local inquiry into the nature and value of those rights

before proceeding further with the said Bill?

MR. COURTNEY: My hon. and gallant Friend will remember that, in answer to a former Question put by him, I spoke of the Dean Forest Bill rather as a scheme embodying equitable principles of settlement than as one to be insisted upon in its details; and I may say that I have always thought that in the absence of agreement Parliament could scarcely be expected to fix the amount of compensation to be given to the free miners. It is now evident that an agreement cannot be easily established; and among the means of settlement of the question a Commission is perhaps the most promising. The Government will at once consider the expediency of appointing such a Commission.

POST OFFICE—THE TELEPHONE COMPANIES.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in deciding on any suggestions which, in accordance with his invitation, may be laid before him by Telephone Companies, he will take care to exact such conditions as may protect the public against the evil effect of private monopolies which might be created by the amalgamation of, or by arrangements between, the Companies?

MR. FAWCETT: I can assure my hon. Friend that the considerations to which he refers will be carefully taken into account in dealing with the question of telephonic communication.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, Whether there has recently been appointed to the position of Stationery Clerk in the office of the Surveyor of the Midland District of Scotland, a son of the Postmaster of Edinburgh; if so, whether this gentleman, till thus appointed, held any appointment in the Post Office; and, if not, whether there were no employés in the lower grades of the Department qualified for the post; whether a son of the Postmaster in Glasgow has recently been put on the staff of the Surveyor for the Northern District of Scotland, and whether he held any prior appointment in the Department; and, whether a gentleman in the Surveyor's Department in Scotland was formerly in an Irish Militia Regiment, and is now in a Surrey Regiment of Militia; and, whether he

draws salary both in his capacity of officer of Militia and Post Office employée?

MR. FAWCETT: The practice has long prevailed of allowing the Surveyor to select stationery clerks from the clerks in Provincial post-offices. I find that the son, not as stated in the hon. Member's Question, of the Postmaster of Edinburgh, but of an official in that Office, was appointed a stationery clerk almost immediately after he was appointed to a clerkship in a Provincial post-office. The son of the Postmaster of Glasgow is employed temporarily as a Surveyor's clerk; but he has no permanent appointment on the Surveyor's staff. I am considering whether it will not be desirable to introduce some change in the present mode of selecting not only stationery clerks, but also Surveyor's clerks, whether permanent or temporary. It is the case that a Surveyor's clerk in Scotland holds a commission in a Militia regiment. I certainly think such an arrangement would be undesirable if it in any way interfered with the due discharge of official duties; but I do not think this can be so in this case, as although he has held this commission for 18 years, on only one occasion has he been absent from his official duties for more than the ordinary period allowed for leave of absence. I presume that the officer in question draws the pay of a Militia officer while out with his regiment for training.

THE GENERAL REGISTER OF SASINES, EDINBURGH—THE ENGROSSING CLERKS.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether a Memorial has been received by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury from the engrossing clerks in the office of the General Register of Sasines, Register House, Edinburgh, date 12th May, 1884; and, if so, when an answer to it may be expected?

MR. COURTNEY: This Memorial was received on the 19th instant, and a letter dealing with it was sent on the 24th instant to the Keeper of the Sasines Register.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)— CO. ATHLONE—RELIGIOUS PERSUA- SION OF COUNTY OFFICIALS.

MR. J. H. MCARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant

of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that not a single one of the following offices in Athlone is held by a Catholic, namely, those of,—1. Divisional Magistrate for Western Division; 2. Assistant Divisional Magistrates (two); 3. Resident Magistrate; 4. Divisional Inspector of Police; 5. Head Constable Royal Irish Constabulary; 6. Master of Workhouse; 7. Clerk of Workhouse; 8. Civil Engineer under Board of Public Works; 9. Clerk of Petty Sessions; 10. Clerk of the Crown for the County of Roscommon; 11. Clerk of the Crown for the County of Westmeath; and, whether the Government will take care, in filling up future vacancies, that Catholics are not excluded from these offices?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have already more than once recently explained to the House that I could not make statements with regard to the religious distribution of the Constabulary Force. With regard to the other offices mentioned, there is no official record of the religious profession of their respective holders, and the Government must decline to make personal inquiries on the subject. Several of these offices are not in the gift of the Government at all. With regard to such of them as are, I can assure the hon. Member that, whatever may be the facts as to the present occupiers, there is certainly no intention on the part of the Government that in filling future vacancies religious profession should be any bar to the appointment of properly qualified candidates.

ARMY—THE SMALL ARMS FACTORY AT NORTH BOW.

MR. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering the advantages to the public service of having private establishments in existence which can be used for the manufacture of arms of precision for Military purposes, he can inform the House what course the War Office propose to adopt with regard to the Small Arms Factory at North Bow, which has hitherto received orders from the Government for such arms?

MR. RITCHIE asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether the War Department has reconsidered the decision arrived at not to further employ the Small Arms Factory at Old Ford for the manufacture of rifles?

MR. BRAND, in reply, said, that the Government had decided to continue the employment of the Small Arms Factory at North Bow.

MR. RITCHIE asked whether a promise of continuous employment would be given to the factory?

MR. BRAND said, that the terms of the proposed contract would be sent to the Directors at once.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN.

MR. J. STEWART asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will inform the House what steps are being taken to remove the difficulties which prevent the conclusion of a Commercial Treaty with Spain, and what prospect there is of a satisfactory arrangement being speedily arrived at?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In consequence of the dissolution of the Spanish Cortes last Spring the Protocol of the 1st of December, 1883, has not yet been discussed in the Spanish Legislature. Her Majesty's Representative at Madrid has urged the Spanish Government to seek without unnecessary delay to obtain the assent of the Cortes to the arrangement recorded in that Protocol, and will continue to press the adoption of this course.

JAMAICA—THE NEW CONSTITUTION—THE FRANCHISE.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether information has been received at the Colonial Office of a Return by the Collector General to the Governor of Jamaica, showing that, under the new franchise in that island, the number of voters will be only 9,400, with a probable reduction through the disqualification of many, instead of 15,000, as anticipated; and, whether he can explain the discrepancy, and which is the correct number?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes; we have just received from Jamaica a Return drawn up by the Collector General, at the request of the Governor, in which he reports 9,400 as his estimate of the number of the new voters. I cannot without further information explain the discrepancy between this and the estimate made by the Franchise Commission. I am afraid that the Collector

General is more likely to be correct than the Commission.

ARMY—COST OF THE GENERAL STAFF.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a statement showing, by years and in sufficient detail to be explanatory, the causes which have led to the expense of the General Staff of the Army being increased from £83,993, the amount voted in the Army Estimate for 1872-3, to £173,411, the amount voted in the Army Estimate for 1884-5?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: With the exception of about £25,000 for the Staff in Egypt, and an improvement in pay of military staff clerks, almost the entire increase is nominal only, and represents a transfer of charge from one head to another. Before 1881-2 the emoluments of a staff officer were provided from two sources. He had staff pay under the head of General Staff, and either regimental pay or half-pay. At present he draws but one consolidated pay under the head of General Staff. These two items account for about £75,000 out of the apparent increase of £90,000. The remaining £15,000 is attributable partly to the improved pay of staff clerks referred to above, and partly to the fact that officers commanding Artillery and Engineer districts now for the most part receive pay as colonels on the Staff, whereas they were formerly paid as regimental officers. To give the Return in detail by years asked for by the hon. and gallant Member would involve great labour, and I fail to see that it would answer any useful purpose.

ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS—CASE OF SERGEANT MAJOR WALSH.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Sergeant Major Patrick Walsh, 8th Battalion Rifle Brigade, was recommended for £20 a-year annuity, for highly-meritorious conduct and long service, by Lieutenant Colonel Gore, commanding 2nd Battalion 3rd Foot, 25th May, 1865, name noted in Military Secretary's Office 27th June 1865, and likewise strongly recommended for £20 a-year annuity by Colonel Pearson, 2nd Battalion "The Buffs," on 22nd December 1867; whether this Non-Commissioned

Officer was strongly recommended for the appointment of Quartermaster in the Militia in the year 1877, and noted for the appointment in the Adjutant General's Office, but was subsequently declared ineligible, in consequence of a recent Order of the War Office limiting those appointments to Non-Commissioned Officers serving in Regiments of the Line; and, if he can hold out any hope of a reconsideration of Sergeant Major Patrick Walsh's case, and this Non-Commissioned Officer obtaining the annuity of £20 a-year?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: My hon. and gallant Friend will, perhaps, allow me to answer his Question since, it relates to the annuity of a non-commissioned officer. The recommendations and notings on this non-commissioned officer's behalf were made as stated in the early part of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question. It is not now usual to award annuities of more than £15, and the amount allotted to men from each regiment is strictly limited. In 1881 Sergeant Major Patrick Walsh was granted an annuity of £10 a-year, and he is noted for an increase to £15 when a suitable opportunity occurs. As, however, he has no service in the field, one of the elements for consideration in awarding these pensions, there are many sergeants whose claims are stronger for the increased pension than his. In reply to the latter part of the Question, I have to say that Sergeant Major Walsh is not eligible for an appointment as Quartermaster, not being a non-commissioned officer serving on his Army engagement with the Militia.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—MR. EDWARD GREER, A SUB-COMMISSIONER.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Edward Greer, Sub-Commissioner under the Land Act, was transferred to the county Armagh at his own solicitation, so that he might be enabled to reside in his own dwelling-house at Moygannon; and, whether Mr. Greer receives the same allowances as other Commissioners who have to live away from home, or whether the change was made for economy?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Greer's present delegation is for the counties of Londonderry and Armagh. He was not deputed to act in that district at his

own request. His residence is in the county of Down. Neither he nor any other Sub-Commissioner receives an hotel allowance when residing at his own home. The question of economy did not arise. The Commissioners decline to make public the grounds of their action in the distribution of particular Sub-Commissions. To do so would be contrary to the principle upon which they have always acted, and would, in their opinion, be injurious to the Public Service.

MR. HEALY inquired whether this gentleman's district was really only five miles from his residence, and whether there was any other instance of the Land Commissioners appointing a Sub-Commissioner at so short a distance from his own house?

MR. TREVELYAN: That I do not know.

PUBLIC HEALTH—THE CHOLERA.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, What steps the Government are taking with a view to the possible approach of cholera to this Country; and, whether it is not in the power of the Local Government Board, under the special circumstances of the case, to impose some stringent rules upon the local authorities in London in regard to the efficient cleansing of the streets, particularly where wood pavements have been laid down? I wish to supplement my Question by asking whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman has been directed to the sanitary condition of the streets surrounding some of our markets, and especially of those surrounding Covent Garden Market?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Last year, owing to the outbreak of cholera in Egypt, much attention was given to the subject. Revised cholera regulations were issued, and the attention of the sanitary authorities was drawn to the precautions to be taken against cholera. Under the regulations which were issued, and are still in force, an officer of the Customs may detain a vessel on its arrival in England, if he suspects that it is infected with cholera. He is to give notice of the detention to the sanitary authority of the place where the vessel is detained, and they are thereupon to cause the ship to be visited and examined by their medical officer of health or

some other medical man. Moreover, without any action on the part of the Customs' officer, the medical officer of health may visit and examine any ship which he has reason to believe is infected with cholera, or has come from a place infected with cholera. If, after his examination, the medical officer of health certifies that the ship is infected, no one can leave it until he has been examined by the medical officer of health, and any person who is found to be suffering from cholera is to be sent to a hospital. Doubtful cases may be detained on board or at a hospital until it is ascertained whether the disease is cholera. Provision is also made in the regulations for the disinfection of the ship or articles which are infected. Port sanitary authorities have been established at the ports, and they have sanitary officers, whose duty it is to deal with ships bringing cases of infectious disease into the country. The Board are not empowered to impose rules upon the local authorities of London in regard to the cleansing of the streets; but the efficient cleansing of the streets, including those where wood pavements have been laid down, should be regarded by the authorities as an every day duty, and no way dependent on an apprehension of cholera. I can assure the noble Lord that the matter referred to in his supplementary Question will not escape the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked how long the regulations referred to in the hon. Gentleman's answer would remain in force?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Until they are repealed, I suppose.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE SALMON FISHERIES—EMPLOYMENT OF A GUNBOAT.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Would he have any objection to lay upon the Table Copies of Correspondence between his Department and the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries, or any other person, respecting the employment of gunboats or Government vessels for the protection of salmon fisheries in Ireland; and, have any such vessels been ever so employed in England or Scotland; and, if not, why have certain Irish salmon proprietors been specially favoured by the State in defending their alleged rights.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: It is the case that vessels of the Royal Navy have been employed in former years in protecting salmon fisheries both in Scotland and in Ireland. Recently, however, it has been the policy of the Board of Admiralty to confine the services of the Navy to the protection of sea fisheries, and to allow the duty of protecting fisheries in inland waters to be discharged by the Conservators of the respective fishery districts. At present no vessel of the Navy is employed on this service. I regret that as the Correspondence to which the hon. Member refers is confidential it cannot be produced.

MR. HEALY asked if the hon. Gentleman could give them his assurance that no gunboat, or any other Government boat, would be lent to private proprietors to protect salmon?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he thought he had given in his answer sufficient indication of the policy and desire of the Board of Admiralty.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—RUMOURED CAPTURE OF BERBER.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that an official report of the capture of Berber and massacre of the garrison has been received at Cairo, as stated in *The Daily News* of the 27th?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The statement in *The Daily News* refers probably to a telegram received by the Khedive from the Mudir of Dongola. He reported that a soldier who had arrived from Berber stated that on the 26th of May the rebel troops had attacked and taken that town. The intelligence, however, is contradicted by a telegram received yesterday from Consul Baker at Suakin, who states that he has received the following information from the Governor of Suakin:—

"Pilgrims who left Khartoum May 23 and Berber June 7 report all well Khartoum. Food plentiful. Garrison numerous. All right at Berber also. Government and soldiers there. Food cheap."

In the face of these contradictory statements, it is impossible to say that any report is "official."

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had given

the whole of Consul Baker's telegram, and if it were not the fact that the story of the pilgrims was disbelieved, and that orders had been given to detain and search them, as it was supposed that they had letters from the Mahdi in their possession?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That statement is not in the telegram.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—
POLICE SUPERANNUATION BILL.

MAJOR GENERAL ALEXANDER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as the Representation of the People Bill has been passed by the House of Commons, he will now undertake to give facilities for the discussion of the Police Superannuation Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Government desire to push on this Bill as rapidly as circumstances will allow. Its appearance on the Order Paper to-day may be taken as an indication of our wishes in the matter.

EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE.

MR. LEWIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, the pledge of the Government to submit the result of the Conference on Egyptian Finance, and the preliminary agreement with France, to the judgment of Parliament, when the labours of the Conference are ended, involves the submission of the whole matter to the judgment of the two Houses of Legislature in this Country; and, whether the Government will propose to take such judgment by a vote affirmatively approving such result and agreement, or how do they propose to obtain such judgment.

MR. GLADSTONE: Without reference to the particular words in the hon. Member's Question, the language which I used was intended to convey that the whole proceedings of the Government in relation to the preliminary agreement with France, and the transactions that might take place in the Conference—if they do take place—will become entirely subject to the judgment of Parliament. I answer, therefore, the second part of the Question by saying that we anticipate obtaining an affirmative vote in the House of Commons, which will have the effect either of sustaining or of overthrowing that arrangement.

MR. LEWIS: In the House of Commons only?

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no doubt that in "another place" there will be plenty of disposition to ascertain whether the proceedings will be dependent upon the judgment of both Houses.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any date had been fixed for the next meeting of the Conference, and, if so, what that date was?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): No date has been fixed.

EGYPT—THE NEUTRALIZATION OF
THE SUEZ CANAL.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the event of the proposed neutralisation of the Suez Canal being carried out, the war vessels of a Foreign State with whom this Country might be engaged in hostilities would have the same rights as English vessels of passing through the Canal, and that the British Government would neither be able to stop these hostile men of war nor to fortify the Canal against possible injury or destruction?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Perhaps the hon. Member will permit me to answer his Question. I may point out to the hon. Member that the word "neutralization" as applied to the Canal is misleading, the proposal being in the nature of an agreement to secure the free passage of all ships under all circumstances. The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. The British Government would not be able to stop hostile men-of-war in the Canal or its approaches. It is contemplated that provision would be made for the immediate repair of any damage to the Canal caused by a war-vessel at the cost of the Power to which she belonged; but the British Government do not claim the right to fortify the Canal.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH
OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE
"NISERO."

MR. STOREY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether news had been received of the death of some of the crew of the *Nisero*?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I regret to have to state that news has been received and forwarded by the Government of the Straits Settlements, under date the 27th of June, to the Fo-

reign Office, to the effect that letters, dated the 26th of May, had been received stating that three of the crew of the *Nisero* had died. It appears that an epidemic of a choleraic character has broken out among the crew. I need not say how deeply I regret to have to communicate this intelligence to the House, which will be so painful to the relatives and friends of the men; and I am sure that the House will understand how sensible the Foreign Office is of its being their duty to do all they can in the matter. The whole question is at this moment the subject of an interchange of views between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the Netherlands; but I cannot communicate the details of what is passing at the present moment.

MR. STOREY said, that a telegram which he had received stated that other members of the crew were sick; and he wished to know whether this was the case?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I meant to convey that impression when I said that an epidemic had broken out.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART— THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

In answer to Sir ROBERT PEEL,

MR. GLADSTONE: The Government have received a promise from the Royal Academy that they will spontaneously frame documents in the most convenient form and address them to the Government, who will then be able to lay them before the House, giving all the information on every head that has been given from year to year, whether in the form of a Parliamentary Return, or in the form given by a Royal Commission.

M O T I O N .

EGYPT (TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

MR. GLADSTONE: I beg to move that the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion with reference to Egypt has been disposed of.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion on Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France)."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I do not rise for the purpose of disputing the Motion of my right hon. Friend. At the same time, I wish to say that I myself and many hon. Members on this side of the House are of opinion that the discussion likely to arise from it is one which is inopportune and inconvenient. And we think so still more now that we have heard from the Prime Minister within the last few minutes that the Government intend to submit an affirmative Motion to the House approving of all that they have done, both as regards their Agreement with France and their proceedings at the Conference.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not mean necessarily a Motion setting forth everything we have done, but one that will make the whole matter contingent on the vote of the House.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: That statement does not alter my view of the matter, since it makes it certain that an opportunity will arise for the discussion of the question. But we have collected together for a great Party fight, and I suppose that anybody trying to prevent it from coming off will be in the position of a person trying to prevent a prize fight. I shall not trouble the House with any remarks, except to make an appeal to the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold). There are some of us who, perhaps, may not altogether hold the same views with regard to the Agreement, but who still are strongly of opinion that it is undesirable at this moment to give an opinion upon it, especially considering the course taken in France and all other contingencies. The way in which we can best show that opinion is by the usual Motion of the Previous Question. My hon. Friend the Member for Salford has put on the Paper a Motion which has precedence of, or would come before, that of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright), and which he considers the same as the Previous Question. It is not quite so; in fact, there is a considerable difference, the difference being—

"This House withholds its opinion upon the result of negotiations with France until it has been placed in possession of the proposals submitted to the Conference of the Powers of Europe."

Now, that is not the view of many of us who wish the Previous Question shall be submitted to the House. We

want not merely to know what are the proposals to the Conference, but also what is the final decision of the Conference on which it is understood the Agreement depends. Many Gentlemen who are in favour of the Previous Question would like to record their votes in favour of it before being compelled to vote either for or against the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth. I think there would be many advantages in our being able to do so. Upon these grounds, I venture to appeal to my hon. Friend—and I am speaking on behalf of many who agree with the proposal—that he will either himself consent to move the Previous Question, or withdraw his Amendment so as to allow some other Gentleman to move it.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I was not in the House when the Prime Minister made the statement as to the intentions of the Government with reference to some affirmative proposal; but, in reply to my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), I have only to say that, while acknowledging the similarity which exists between my Amendment and the Previous Question, I regard the Motion which I have put upon the Paper as being somewhat more intelligible, and as better expressing what I hope and believe will be the feeling of my right hon. Friend and those who act with him. With reference to the remark of my right hon. Friend as to the desire of himself and those who feel with him to know the result of what takes place in the Conference, I have no difficulty on that point, because I have absolute confidence in the pledge which the Prime Minister gave to us on the subject. On the present occasion, while I deeply regret to differ, even in the smallest point—and it is a small one—from my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, I am bound to say that I feel it my duty to persevere with the Amendment which stands in my name.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I should like to appeal to the Government somewhat in the same sense as my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford. I do not suppose that he and I agree very much on this particular question; but still I do think the Previous Question would be the course which, as far as I know, would secure almost the whole

support of hon. Members on this side of the House. I have no authority to speak for anyone; but I think it quite possible that some Members on this side would not wish to vote, under these circumstances, for a direct negative, or even for the Amendment of which Notice has been given. I beg to second the appeal of my right hon. Friend. I think he has proposed a more satisfactory mode of considering the circumstances in which we are placed. If the object is to have a good Party fight, we could not have a better one than on the Previous Question.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not quite gather what the Government are going to do upon this question. Do they meet the Motion with a direct negative, or do they intend to support the first Question put on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold)—“That all the words after the word ‘that’ be left out?” If so, we shall have the word “that” left alone.

MR. GLADSTONE: With respect to what has fallen from my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, I wish him to understand that I am a most reluctant party. I have to say, on the part of the Government, that, so far from coming down here in the glee with which we may very often contemplate Party conflicts when we feel that we are in the right, on this occasion I come down here with a very deep sense that I am, under the pressure of circumstances, and as the choice of evils, giving facilities for bringing forward a Motion which we feel to be most inopportune, and most injurious to the public interests. I, therefore, am under pressure; but, with regard to the Question which has been put by the two hon. Gentlemen following my right hon. Friend, what I have to say is this. It is absolutely impossible, as, I think, must be well known to the Mover of the Resolution, for us, in the position in which we stand, to enter at large upon an explanation or a defence of our policy in regard to the complicated Egyptian Question; and if I address the House after the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Bruce), the chief part of my duty really will be to endeavour to describe accurately the Parliamentary situation, and to explain and justify the course that we propose to take in view of that situation. I am afraid I should be clearly

deviating from the common order, at any rate, of the proceedings of this House, if I were to enter upon that subject on the preliminary Motion for postponing the Orders of the day.

MR. GOSCHEN: What has fallen from my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister confirms me in an opinion which I have held during the last two or three days, and to which I should have wished to have given more formal expression if it had been possible to have given Notice, and to take the opinions of others since Friday evening. My own opinion is that, after the speech of my right hon. Friend, and chiefly looking to the circumstances of the case, the House would best do its duty if it were to refuse to postpone the Orders of the Day, with the view of giving an opportunity of bringing on a Vote of Censure which is most inopportune. I freely admit that the Government were bound to give a day for discussion when they were challenged by the Opposition, and I also admit that the Leaders of the Opposition may have found themselves in this difficulty, that if they did not propose a Vote of Censure at this moment some uncontrollable Member opposite might have done so. But I claim this, that the House of Commons at large is entitled to disregard these considerations, and that we have simply to look at what is most for the interests of the country and that which will best preserve our liberty of action and our independence of judgment which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has distinctly promised us. For, whatever may be said, this debate if it proceeds, and the Division following it, will be looked upon by Europe and by the country as decisive of the questions which are at issue. It will be wrong; but we know perfectly well how difficult it is to make these distinctions, and it will be considered decisive. Meanwhile, what has been the attitude of the French Chambers? They have said that they refuse to discuss this question; and are we, the House of Commons, to bind ourselves in advance and to commit ourselves to principles of great political and international importance while the rest of Europe refuses to commit or to pledge itself? I say, therefore, the argument is overwhelming that this debate ought not to be allowed to proceed. I dissent entirely from the argument

which might be put forward by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, that if this debate and Division do not take place before the Conference then it will be impossible to upset the results of the Conference. I say that that is a position which is derogatory to this country. We are not going to be bound either as regards the neutralization of Egypt or its evacuation by a Conference assembled simply to deal with the financial question. We shall remain, and we ought to remain, entirely masters of our position and masters of our political action. For my part, I think that this House ought not to be driven into the Division Lobbies upon an incomplete case and at an inopportune time; and therefore for my part, if I have any support, I shall be perfectly ready to say "No" to the Motion.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: This preliminary debate is one of rather an unusual character; but it appears to me to be absolutely necessary that I should say a few words in reply to the observations which have been made, and especially to those of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). When it was announced by Her Majesty's Government, some time ago, that it was intended to hold a Conference of the Powers of Europe on the Egyptian Question, very careful and very jealous inquiries were made by Members on this side of the House, and I think by Members on the other side also, as to what were to be the limits and the functions of that Conference. We were assured, over and over again, that the object of the Conference was purely financial—for the purpose of settling the Law of Liquidation. If any intimation had been given to the House at that time that it was intended to hold a Conference for the purpose of considering the question of the limitation of our occupation of Egypt, or the question of the neutralization of Egypt, or any questions of a similar character, I think there can be no doubt that this House would have desired, at the earliest possible moment, to express its opinion on these questions, and would have insisted upon doing so. What has taken place? The Conference is called together, it is true, for the single purpose, as we are informed, and as we believe, of deciding and settling financial questions, and that they are very difficult and im-

portant questions we do not for a moment doubt; but we find that, as a preliminary measure, in order to enable the Conference to be brought forward, there has been a correspondence going on between this country and one of the Powers of Europe, and that an Agreement has been made between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France touching and laying down principles of the very greatest importance as to the time during which we are to occupy Egypt. What is the position of the House with regard to that? We do not take this haphazard or on hearsay. We have had Papers laid before us by Her Majesty's Government, and we have had ample time to consider them. The question is not as to what is proposed to be done, or even a part of what is proposed to be done; it is what has been done? It is a question whether that agreement ought to be accepted as a basis of any further proceedings. Serious principles are involved in that correspondence; and we have felt it our duty at the very earliest opportunity to call the attention of the House to them, and to challenge the opinion of the House as to the propriety of these principles. Of course, it is for the House to say whether they will accede to the proposal of the Prime Minister, that the Orders of the Day be postponed, for the purpose of going on with that discussion. It is a matter with which the majority must deal; but I say that our course is, in our own minds, perfectly clear. There is no question as to whether anyone would anticipate us. The question is whether, having this fact before us, we should approve it or not; and we cannot put ourselves off to consider this after the Conference has been held. Other questions may be raised then which the House and the country may have opinions upon one way or the other; but that is no reason why we should now allow this proposal to go forward without challenge.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has not been altogether accurate, for he has said, or implied, with respect to the work of the Conference, that there has been some change since the Government stated to Parliament that it would be summoned and why it would be summoned. Sir, there has

been no change whatever. What has happened is simply this. Her Majesty's Government have summoned a Conference for the precise purpose set out in the original Papers presented to Parliament. But before going into the Conference Her Majesty's Government have been in communication with the Government of France, and the result of those communications has been faithfully and frankly stated to Parliament. If after we go into Conference the result is an inability to bring about an agreement with the Powers, all that has been done in communication with France will come to an end. If, on the other hand, we agree in the Conference, then this House will have the fullest opportunity of discussing, not only the proceedings of the Conference, but the previous understanding with France; and, therefore, Sir, I claim that the Government have not departed one jot or one tittle from the promise they gave to Parliament; and I am bound to say that, although in accordance with the demand of the Leader of the Opposition, the Government agreed that a day should be set aside for the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Bruce)—a demand that the Government could refuse—yet they think that a debate on this occasion is certain to be most mischievous.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I think the House will be somewhat astonished at the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). It appears to me that there is somewhat of communication between those observations and the refusal of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) to give way to the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), and allow the Previous Question to be moved. The Previous Question is one of those vague things for which hon. Gentlemen can vote without affecting their political consciences. The announcement of the Prime Minister, that he intended to meet the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Mr. T. C. Bruce) with the direct negative, has evidently caused great perturbation and dismay in the minds of hon. Members both above and below the Gangway. If they had been able to afford an opportunity for the hon. Member to withdraw his Amendment, and to prevent the Prime Minister

from directly negating the Resolution of the hon. Member for Portsmouth; and if he had done that without absolutely endorsing the policy of the Government, of which only a portion had been presented to the House, we should have heard but little of the candid and impartial suggestion of the right hon. Members for Bradford and Ripon. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon suggests that this debate should not take place; but the Party representation of this House leads to a different conclusion. It will be in the recollection of the House that on the 27th of May the Prime Minister said—

“We can undertake and engage, in the event of any common understanding with France, of consultation with the Powers, and of any plan resulting from those communications, that those results and the whole conclusion which is arrived at shall be presented to Parliament before the Conference meets.”—(3 *Hansard*, [288] 1474.)

I should be glad that the Prime Minister's attention should be called to the words which he has uttered, and to the whole consequences of that which his own words represent. Now, for what purpose was the whole conclusion to be presented to Parliament previous to the meeting of the Conference? Surely, no mere matter of general information could be submitted as a matter of fact. But I venture to think that no general observation would produce any substantial effect amongst the Members of a Party of which I have the honour to be a Member.

MR. HENEAGE said, that, whilst he should be willing to vote either for the Previous Question or the direct negative should the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Bruce) move his Resolution, he considered the Motion inconvenient and mischievous; and he hoped his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) would take a Division against the Motion before the House, in order to protest against the most ill-timed and unpatriotic Motion he had ever seen proposed in his Parliamentary experience.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We on this side of the House, supported by the great majority out-of-doors, regard the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Bruce) as not only inopportune, but as most mischievous. The Government had no option save to answer the challenge of the Party opposite. But I hope that the entire Party on this side of the House will take the simple

and straightforward course of saying “No” to the proposal before the House, to enter into a discussion from which nothing but mischief can result.

MR. RAIKES: I put it to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) to reflect what will be the immediate effect if the course which he has recommended were adopted by the House. Will the public out-of-doors believe that the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon was not in any way prompted by the Government? Will it not be thought, and will it not be said, and not merely in this House and throughout this country, but throughout Europe generally, that the one point with regard to this question upon which the great Liberal Party was united was that they were afraid to face a discussion? I think the Parliamentary course of my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), if it needed vindication, has been most fully vindicated by the way in which events have shaped themselves, and has received ample justification this afternoon. When we hear hon. Gentlemen talk about a Motion being inopportune, we know very well that it is inopportune to Her Majesty's Government. I recommend the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon, whom we all so greatly respect, to consider whether, by the observations which he has just made, he has not given a blow to Her Majesty's Government from which it will be extremely difficult for them to recover.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will answer the question of the right hon. Gentleman, and I will answer it in this way. I say there is no man outside this House who will believe, and I believe there is no man inside this House who would have made that suggestion except the right hon. Gentleman, who would have made a suggestion which would have been equally dishonourable to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) and to Her Majesty's Government. I will leave to the right hon. Gentleman opposite the sole monopoly of his insinuations. That, Sir, is the only answer which I think the right hon. Gentleman's suggestions and insinuations require or deserve.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 148; Noes 190: Majority 42.

AYES

Alexander, Major-Gen.
 Asher, A.
 Ashley, hon. M.
 Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
 Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
 Balfour, A. J.
 Barttelot, Sir W. B.
 Bateson, Sir T.
 Beach, right hon. Sir
 M. E. Hicks-
 Biggar, J. G.
 Birkbeck, E.
 Blackburne, Col. J. I.
 Boord, T. W.
 Bourke, right hon. R.
 Brand, hon. H. R.
 Brodrick, hon. W. St.
 J. F.
 Bruce, Sir H. H.
 Bruce, hon. T.
 Burghley, Lord
 Cameron, D.
 Campbell, J. A.
 Campbell-Bannerman,
 H.
 Carden, Sir R. W.
 Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
 Childers, rt. hn. H. C. E.
 Christie, W. L.
 Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
 Collins, T.
 Coope, O. E.
 Cotes, C. C.
 Courtney, L. H.
 Crichton, Viscount
 Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
 Cubitt, right hon. G.
 Curzon, Major hon. M.
 Dalrymple, C.
 Dawnay, hon. G. C.
 De Worms, Baron H.
 Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
 Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
 Donaldson-Hudson, C.
 Douglas, A. Akers-
 Duff, R. W.
 Eckersley, N.
 Egerton, hon. A. F.
 Elliot, Sir G.
 Ellis, Sir J. W.
 Elton, C. I.
 Ewart, W.
 Ewing, A. O.
 Fawcett, rt. hon. H.
 Feilden, Lieut.-General
 Finch-Hatton, hon. M.
 E. G.
 Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Fowler, rt. hon. R. N.
 Fremantle, hon. T. F.
 Freshfield, C. K.
 Gardner, R. Richardson-
 Gathorne-Hardy, hon.
 J. S.
 Giles, A.
 Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
 Gorst, J. E.
 Greene, E.
 Greer, T.
 Halsey, T. F.

Hamilton, Lord C. J.
 Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W.
 G. V. V.
 Harrington, Marq. of
 Hay, rt. hon. Admiral
 Sir J. C. D.
 Hayter, Sir A. D.
 Hibbert, J. T.
 Hicks, E.
 Hildyard, T. B. T.
 Hill, Lord A. W.
 Holland, Sir H. T.
 Houldsworth, W. H.
 Hubbard, right hon. J.
 G.
 Jackson, W. L.
 Kennard, C. J.
 Kennaway, Sir J. H.
 Knight, F. W.
 Knightley, Sir R.
 Lawrence, Sir T.
 Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
 Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
 Legh, W. J.
 Leigh, R.
 Leighton, Sir B.
 Leighton, S.
 Lennox, right hn. Lord
 H. G. C. G.
 Lowther, hon. W.
 Lowther, J. W.
 Mackintosh, C. F.
 Makins, Colonel W. T.
 Manners, rt. hon. Lord
 J. J. R.
 Marriott, W. T.
 Master, T. W. C.
 Maxwell, Sir H. E.
 Mills, Sir C. H.
 Milner, Sir F.
 Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
 Newport, Viscount
 Nicholson, W. N.
 North, Colonel J. S.
 Northcote, rt. hon. Sir
 S. H.
 Northcote, H. S.
 Otway, Sir A. J.
 Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
 Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
 Percy, Lord A. M.
 Phipps, C. N. P.
 Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
 Power, J. O' C.
 Price, Captain G. E.
 Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
 Repton, G. W.
 Ridley, Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, C. T.
 Rolls, J. A.
 Ross, A. H.
 Russell, G. W. E.
 Salt, T.
 Selater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
 Scott, M. D.
 Selwin - Ibbetson, Sir
 H. J.
 Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
 Stanhope, hon. E.
 Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F.
 Stanley, E. J.

Storey, S.
 Summers, W.
 Sykes, C.
 Talbot, J. G.
 Thornhill, T.
 Tollemache, hn. W. F.
 Tottenham, A. L.
 Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
 Walker, S.
 Wallace, Sir R.
 Warburton, P. E.
 Warton, C. N.

Watney, J.
 Whitley, E.
 Wilyams, E. W. B.
 Winn, R.
 Wolff, Sir H. D.
 Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, right hon.
 Lord R.
 Kensington, rt. hn. Lord

NOES.

Agnew, W.
 Allman, R. L.
 Anderson, G.
 Armitage, B.
 Armitstead, G.
 Arnold, A.
 Balfour, Sir G.
 Barclay, J. W.
 Baring, Viscount
 Barran, J.
 Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
 Beaumont, W. B.
 Bolton, J. C.
 Borlase, W. C.
 Brassey, H. A.
 Brett, R. B.
 Briggs, W. E.
 Bright, right hon. J.
 Bright, J.
 Brinton, J.
 Broadhurst, H.
 Brogden, A.
 Brown, A. H.
 Bruce, hon. R. P.
 Bryce, J.
 Buchanan, T. R.
 Buszard, M. C.
 Caine, W. S.
 Cameron, C.
 Campbell, Lord C.
 Campbell, Sir G.
 Campbell, R. F. F.
 Cartwright, W. C.
 Causton, R. K.
 Clark, S.
 Clarke, J. C.
 Clifford, C. C.
 Cohen, A.
 Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
 Collings, J.
 Collins, E.
 Colman, J. J.
 Colthurst, Colonel
 Courtauld, G.
 Crum, A.
 Currie, Sir D.
 Davey, H.
 Davies, R.
 Davies, W.
 Dickson, T. A.
 Dillwyn, L. L.
 Dodds, J.
 Earp, T.
 Ebrington, Viscount
 Edwards, P.
 Egerton, Admiral hon.
 F.
 Elliot, hon. A. R. D.

Fairbairn, Sir A.
 Farquharson, Dr. R.
 Ferguson, R.
 Findlater, W.
 Flower, C.
 Foljambe, C. G. S.
 Forster, Sir C.
 Forster, rt. hn. W. E.
 Fowler, H. H.
 Fowler, W.
 Fry, L.
 Fry, T.
 Gladstone, W. H.
 Gordon, Sir A.
 Gourley, E. T.
 Gower, hon. E. F. L.
 Grafton, F. W.
 Grant, Sir G. M.
 Grant, A.
 Grey, A. H. G.
 Guest, M. J.
 Hamilton, J. G. C.
 Hardcastle, J. A.
 Healy, T. M.
 Heneage, E.
 Henry, M.
 Hill, T. R.
 Holden, I.
 Holland, S.
 Holland, J. R.
 Hopwood, C. H.
 Howard, G. J.
 Inderwick, F. A.
 James, C.
 Jenkins, Sir J. J.
 Jenkins, D. J.
 Jeringham, H. E. H.
 Kenny, M. J.
 Kingscote, Col. R. N.
 F.
 Kinnear, J.
 Labouchere, H.
 Lambton, hon. F. W.
 Lawrence, Sir J. C.
 Lawrence, W.
 Lawson, Sir W.
 Leatham, E. A.
 Leatham, W. H.
 Lee, H.
 Lloyd, M.
 Lusk, Sir A.
 Lymington, Viscount
 Lyons, R. D.
 Macfarlane, D. H.
 Mackie, R. B.
 MacIver, P. S.
 McArthur, Sir W.
 McCarthy, J.

McCarthy, J. H.
McClure, Sir T.
McIntyre, Aeneas J.
McKenna, Sir J. N.
McLagan, P.
McLaren, C. B. B.
Mappin, F. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N.
Story-
Mason, H.
Milbank, Sir F. A.
Molloy, B. C.
Moore, A.
Moreton, Lord
Morley, J.
Muntz, P. H.
Noel, E.
Norwood, C. M.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Shea, W. H.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, G.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A.
Pddie, J. D.
Pender, J.
Philips, R. N.
Pieton, J. A.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Pulley, J.
Ralli, P.
Ramsay, J.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.

Read, Sir E. J.
Richard, H.
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, Lord A.
Russell, C.
Ruston, J.
Rylands, P.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Samuelson, H.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Shaw, T.
Sheil, E.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Small, J. F.
Smith, E.
Smith, S.
Smyth, P. J.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stewart, J.
Stuart, H. V.
Sullivan, T. D.
Tennant, C.
Torrens, W. T. M.
Waddy, S. D.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
West, H. W.
Whitworth, B.
Williams, S. C. E.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wodehouse, E. R.

TELLERS.

Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Illingworth, A.

stood in the country, and making this protest.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I do not think that when the right hon. Gentleman asked for the indulgence of the House, the House was perfectly aware of the use he intended to make of it. ["Oh!"] I am so accustomed to this kind of interruption that I consider it is not to be taken notice of. But I mean to keep my remarks within the same, or even shorter, limits than those of the right hon. Gentleman, and I hope I may claim the same indulgence. When the right hon. Gentleman inquired of me on Thursday as to whether we would give a day, the question had been the subject of much consideration in my mind, and in the mind of my Colleagues; because, on the one hand, we felt that it was not the business of the Government to deprecate discussion, and that, on the other, it was our business, as long as we could, to adhere to the rule which has of late been made use of to such an extraordinary extent, of giving a day when a Vote of Censure is threatened. When I answered the right hon. Gentleman, I certainly felt that, having arrived at the conclusion that a day ought to be given, I ought to give it without grudging, or giving expression to any adverse opinion, or seeming in any way to deprecate debate. But when my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), in the exercise of his discretion, and hon. Gentlemen who followed him especially, in the exercise of their discretion, made a direct appeal to me on the subject, and I found myself saddled with the responsibility of bringing on this Motion, then it was absolutely necessary for me to give my opinion on its bearing on the public interests, with respect to which I have never entertained a doubt.

MR. SPEAKER: The Clerk will now proceed to read the Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES)

BILL.—[BILL 252.]

(Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr.

Solicitor General.)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, there is one observation which, with the indulgence of the House, I hope I may be allowed to make. It is an observation of great surprise that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on Thursday last, upon the challenge of my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Bruce), should have named this day for the discussion, without intimating, in the slightest degree, that he considered it would be injurious to the public interest, and that to-day he should come forward to announce for the first time that, in his opinion, it would have that injurious effect. [*Cries of "Question!" and "Order" from the Ministerial side, and "Move the Adjournment!" from the Opposition Benches.*] I am anxious not to move the adjournment, or in any way to interfere with the Business of the House. I think we occupy a more dignified position by merely calling attention to the fact, which I think one that will be under-

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now considered."

MR. WARTON criticized the action of the Attorney General in finally reverting in the Grand Committee to the principle of a maximum expenditure after having refused it before. He considered that there was one great error which pervaded this Bill—namely, that the penalties imposed by it were absurdly high. Punishments which were too great in proportion to the offences for which they were awarded had only the effect of shocking the moral sense of the country; and, in his opinion, the punishment of highly respectable solicitors under the Parliamentary Elections Bill had done a great deal to shake the faith of the public in it. Were members of Local Boards or Improvement Commissions, Guardians of the Poor in Ireland, or members of a School Board, to have their elections hedged in by the terrific penalties of this Bill? He maintained that it was their duty to oppose a Bill which they considered bad, without regard to the fact of its having passed a Grand Committee. This Bill was an attempt to carry on the experiment of last year, without giving them any time to see how the Bill of last year had worked. He objected to this legislation in the dark.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS called attention to the absence of the Attorney General from the Treasury Bench, and declared that it was impossible to proceed with a measure of this kind unless the hon. and learned Gentleman was present. When the Bill had been brought in by the Attorney General, he himself had maintained that it would be likely to promote bribery. In the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act there was a clause fixing a maximum expenditure; but in this Bill there was no such clause. Upon that point the Attorney General had laid great stress, on the ground that if such a clause were introduced, it would be impossible to put down bribery. What would have been the result of the difference in this respect between the two Bills? They knew that a great amount of bribery took place at municipal elections, with a view to influencing Parliamentary elections. He had himself endeavoured to have the clause inserted, but had been defeated. Now, the At-

torney General had inserted the clause after all in the Grand Committee. He thought that some explanation was due to the House as to how this great change had come about. With respect to the question of a maximum, it was agreed that such an amount of expenditure should be permitted as would enable a candidate to make known his views. This was a question of such importance that, in the absence of the Attorney General, he had no alternative but to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. HEALY, in seconding the Motion, expressed his surprise to find Ireland included in the Bill after the promise that had been made to exclude it.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross.*)

MR. HIBBERT said, that in the absence of the Attorney General he did not think the first Order was one with which the Government could ask the House to proceed.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, before the Motion was agreed to, thought the House should know what Business the Government intended to take. It was obvious that the House was placed at great disadvantage, as the hon. Members who were interested in the opposed Bills on the Paper could not have expected that they would be reached at all that night. He hoped the Government would not proceed with any opposed Bills that evening.

MR. GORST said, that before they agreed to the adjournment of the debate they ought to have some statement from a Minister of the Crown as to what Bill they would next take. There were several very important Bills on the Orders. For instance, No. 5 was the London Government Bill, and he asked the Government to say that they would not proceed to-night with that Bill. No. 9 was the Merchant Shipping Bill, and he should like a similar assurance from the Government with regard to that measure.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH wanted to know what was to be done with the Police Superannuation Bill, which had been before the House for some years?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, it was true that they had unexpectedly come to the Orders of the Day; but that was true of any other night. ["No,

no!""] He said "Yes." It was always possible that circumstances might occur to place the House in a similar position to that in which it was that night. Any Member who had been in the House for 10 years knew that such circumstances had happened a hundred times. The natural and proper thing was to go on with the next Order. The Government were now quite prepared to go on with the first Order, the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill. The Attorney General was in his place, and he hoped the Motion for the adjournment of the debate would be withdrawn.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, in the peculiar circumstances they were placed, it would be neither natural or proper to proceed with the Orders on the Paper in the absence of their supporters.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD appealed to the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) to withdraw his Motion. The right hon. Gentleman was one of the leading Members of the Grand Committee on the Bill, and he had a large influence in moulding the measure.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked whether it was the intention of the Government to carry out the promise made to the Irish Members to leave Ireland out of the Bill?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) denied that any such promise had been made. What had been said was that inquiry should be made among the Irish Members, and that the Government would be guided to some extent by their views on the subject.

MR. HEALY: We have never been consulted.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) apologized for not having been present when the Order was called. He had been engaged elsewhere on business connected with the House; but there was no reason why the debate should not proceed, as he believed there was no substantial objection to the Bill.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had omitted, in replying to a question put to him by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), to state that it was intended to proceed with the second reading of the London Government Bill on Thursday next.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT said, that he should object to the Bill being pro-

ceeded with at the present moment, after the pledge given by the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Hibbert), who represented the Government a few minutes ago before the return of the Attorney General. A pledge was given; because it was understood in the House that when a Member sitting upon the Treasury Benches said a thing he would keep to it, and that the hon. Members who sat behind him would support him. [*Dissent.*] He quite agreed that occasionally there were exceptions to that rule; and he believed that there had been instances when very high officials—aye, all the Cabinet—had been voted against by their obsequious supporters. ["Question!"] That was the Question. He begged to say—

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member must confine his remarks to the Question of Adjournment.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT said, his reason for speaking was that the answer given by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert), who had represented the Government a few minutes ago, was a pledge; and in consequence of that pledge several of his (Mr. Montagu Scott's) Friends left the House, because they considered that the Bill would not be proceeded with after the pledge of the Government. He called upon the Government to stand by their pledge. His Friends left the House, he repeated, in consequence of the pledge of the hon. Member for Oldham; and it was a gross breach of faith, after that pledge, that the Government should resist the Motion for Adjournment.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked leave to withdraw his Motion, which, he said, he made solely on the ground of the Attorney General's absence. He wished, however, to have an understanding from the Government that the opposed clauses should be dealt with on a future day.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR complained of the want of courtesy shown by the Attorney General to the Irish Members.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, before the Motion for Adjournment was withdrawn they were entitled to know what the Attorney General was going to do with reference to Ireland.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that nothing which might occur that evening should preju-

dice the pledge he had given, that there should be the same opportunity of obtaining the opinion of the Irish Members as if they were not proceeding that evening.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 35; Noes 139: Majority 104.—(Div. List, No. 140.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HEALY regretted to have to oppose the Motion for the consideration of the Bill. Irish Members had been treated very badly. It was absurd to apply the cumbrous provisions of a Bill like that to wards in Irish municipalities which contained only 15 or 20 voters. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that he had consulted Irish Members on the subject. Whom had he consulted? Certainly none of those who sat near him. Was the Chief Secretary in favour of those provisions? The Irish Members had relied on a half-promise of the hon. and learned Member which precluded the necessity of their moving Amendments, which they would now have to prepare. It was absurd for the hon. and learned Member, who knew nothing of Ireland, to frame a Bill of that character to be applied to Ireland. He should divide against the Motion that the Bill be considered.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT moved the adjournment of the House, alleging as a ground for his so doing that they were totally unprepared to enter upon a discussion of a series of Bills which they had, on coming to the House, understood there was no chance of being brought on. He thought that after the character of the defeat sustained by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, the dignity and character of the House would be best consulted by their not longer prolonging that day's proceedings.

MR. WARTON cordially seconded the Motion. The Government got a very unfair advantage by having a number of Orders down which no one expected to be reached.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir Eardley Wilmot*.)

The House *divided*:—Ayes 32; Noes 85: Majority 53.—(Div. List., No. 141.)

The Attorney General

Original Question again proposed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES) said, he wished to fulfil the pledge he gave on the second reading, which was that the Government would endeavour to obtain the opinions of Members for Ireland as to the application of the Bill to Ireland. He wished if he could to obtain such opinions; and if the House would consider the 1st clause, he would move the adjournment of the debate, and would not bring the Bill on again before Thursday, when he should probably be able to state whether or not it was proposed to proceed with the Bill in relation to Ireland.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he was gratified with the statement which had just been made by the Attorney General; and he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to announce on Thursday that the Bill would not apply to Ireland.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he hoped the Attorney General meant to consult all sections of the Irish Members.

MR. HICKS said, he thought it would be much more becoming of the Government if they would at once adjourn the House than attempt to go on with the Business. He, therefore, moved that the debate be adjourned.

Motion made, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Hicks*.)

Thereupon MR. SPEAKER, having stated his opinion that the Motion was an abuse of the Forms of the House, put the Question forthwith.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 22; Noes 83: Majority 61.—(Div. List., No. 142.)

Original Question again proposed.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: These proceedings are of a somewhat curious description. I should like it to be generally known that a course has been taken this afternoon which is worthy the attention of the House. The Leader of the Opposition stated, when the Motion on the question of Egypt was negatived, that he should not be a party to the moving of the adjournment of the House, or obstructing in any way the Business of the country. That was the statement of the Leader of the Opposition. But, Sir, proceedings have been taken since that statement was made, which I will not characterize on this occasion. But you, Sir, have just declared from the

Chair that such proceedings are an abuse of the Forms of the House; and, you having made that declaration, I wish the House to know that the hon. Members for North Lincolnshire (Mr. Rowland Winn), for West Suffolk (Mr. Thornhill), and East Kent (Mr. Akers-Douglas), who are officially connected with the Party opposite, voted with the minority for the adjournment of the debate. While some Members who sit upon the Front Opposition Bench voted in the majority, these three Gentlemen voted in the minority.

MR. MACARTNEY wished to know whether Members on his side of the House were more bound to vote with their Leader than Members opposite? He had not the good fortune to behold the wondrous scene; but he was informed that a Division took place in which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone), and those who sat upon the Government Bench, went one way and his followers went another. ["Question!"] He was speaking to the Question. He had as good a right to speak of that Division as the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had to speak of the other. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed astonishment that three Gentlemen officially connected with the Opposition should have voted in the minority. No doubt they did so because they were not satisfied—no one on either side of the House was satisfied—with what occurred. The House had got into a muddle. They were accustomed to muddles; but such things were not creditable. When a great many Members thought that no disputable Business would be brought on, it ought not to be persevered with.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that as one who voted with the Government in the late Division, being anxious that Business should proceed, he should like to protest in the strongest manner against the language of the right hon. Gentleman, who had no right to speak as he had done. Hon. Members, in the exercise of their duty, had a right to vote for the adjournment on the last occasion, and they had broken no pledge whatever given on this occasion. He was quite sure the only reason why his hon. Friends voted against the Government was, that the Government would not tell them what Business they were going to take. It was quite understood that the Bill now before the House

would be adjourned immediately—as soon as the House resolved that the Bill be considered; and it was because the House was left perfectly uncertain as to what was to be discussed for the rest of the evening that the late Divisions had been taken.

MR. GLADSTONE and MR. WARTON rose together—

MR. WARTON: I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker—["Order, order!"]—a point of Order, Sir. ["Order, order!"] I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker, and my point is that the observations of the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke)—

MR. GLADSTONE: I rise to Order, Sir. ["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER rising, the Prime Minister resumed his seat, leaving Mr. WARTON standing.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member should resume his seat when the Speaker is on his feet.

MR. WARTON (resuming his seat): Certainly, Sir; certainly.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman rose to a point of Order.

MR. WARTON: So did I. I was first.

MR. GLADSTONE: What I desire to know, Sir, is whether a Member can rise to Order on account of observations made by my right hon. Friend near me (Sir Charles W. Dilke), another hon. Member having since spoken?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton) has risen to a point of Order I should like to know what it is.

MR. WARTON said, that the Speaker had power, under one of the Rules of 1882, to refuse to let a Question be put if it was not regular. He submitted that as the Speaker had allowed the Division it was regular; and, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman opposite was not in Order in the remarks he had made.

MR. SPEAKER: No question of Order has arisen.

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. and learned Gentleman actually rose on my rising—[Mr. WARTON: Before.]—and said he wished to speak to Order; and yet he was going to call attention to a speech made by another person; since which a second speech in the regular order of debate had been made by my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Stanhope). A more dis-

orderly proceeding I never saw. My object in rising was not to mix in the controversy; but to inform the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney) that I have never seen a more egregious mistake in point of issue than that into which he fell. He appeared to think that my right hon. Friend near me (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had called the attention of the House to the fact that some hon. Gentlemen on that side had voted against their Leaders. That had nothing whatever to do with it. He says he was not in the House at the time of the former debate; but he might just as well not have been in the House now. It is a totally different matter, and I will not go back upon it. I rose to meet the wish of my hon. Friend opposite, who desires to know what Business the Government are going to proceed with. We propose to take No. 2 on the Paper, the Police Bill; No. 3, the Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill; No. 6, the Intestates Estates Bill; Nos. 11, 12, 13, and 14; No. 17, the Universities (Scotland) Bill; and No. 21, the Crown Lands Bill. I hope no one will complain that that is not an ample bill of fare.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, that there would be great opposition to No. 2 Bill—not so much that the money should be taken for the police as to how it would be applied for their superannuation.

MR. SPEAKER: The noble Viscount would be out of Order in referring to the provisions of the Bill.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, that if the right hon. Gentleman should go on with the Bill he would move the adjournment of the House.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he would make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman. When they came down to the House it was supposed that no other Business would be taken but the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Bruce), which would naturally have led to a debate. Many Gentlemen might be absent who took an interest in those particular Bills. The Government would do well and reasonably, therefore, if they would not take that night any of the Bills which were seriously opposed. It would be rather a strong measure if Bills to which there was serious opposition were taken under the peculiar circumstances.

Mr. Gladstone

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOTT said, he hoped the Government would not proceed with the Police Bill that evening, as there were many hon. Members absent who were interested in it.

MR. HIBBERT said, the Police Bill had been before the House for a very long time, and it was somewhat unreasonable for hon. Members to endeavour to prevent the Order being taken. 336 Members were in the House when the Motion to postpone the Orders of the Day was defeated, and therefore 336 Members had notice that other Business would be brought on.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE rose to Order. He wished to know whether hon. Members were in Order in discussing the Police Bill?

MR. SPEAKER said, the discussion was out of Order.

Original Question put, and agreed to.
Bill considered.

Further Proceeding on Consideration, as amended, *deferred till Thursday.*

POLICE BILL.—[BILL 56.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HIBBERT, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he had been waiting to bring it forward since 1882; and he thought it would be unreasonable if an attempt were made not to have the discussion on it now. The Bill was introduced in the interests of a very long-suffering class—the police-constables of this country—who had been waiting patiently for some years past for some way of improving their system of superannuation. It was now seven years ago since a Committee of the House of Commons sat to consider the question of police superannuation. The Chairman of that Committee was his hon. Friend opposite (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), who, he was sure, was prepared to give his support to the proposals contained in the Bill now before the House. He fully admitted that the Bill had met with considerable opposition; but he was in a position to say that much of that opposition had been withdrawn during the present year, owing to certain concessions that had been made

with regard to it. He had had two classes of persons to contend with in dealing with this subject. In the first place, there were those who were interested in the local taxation question, and who considered that, if anything was to be done to give the police increased superannuation, or a claim to it, such as was proposed in the Bill, the same grant should be given towards the superannuation sums, as was now given towards the maintenance of the police in the counties and boroughs of this country. He had never been able to meet the views of hon. Members who held that opinion. A considerable sum was now paid in aid of the police of this country (something like £1,250,000 to £1,300,000), and the Treasury were not very willing to increase the amount, as suggested by those who favoured the local taxation view. In the next place, he had had to meet the opposition of those who represented the municipalities of the country. He was happy to say that, with the exception of a very few, those opponents were now willing that the Bill should pass. One reason, however, why they had assented to the Bill was that he had agreed to considerable alterations being made in the conditions of the claim for superannuation. It was originally proposed that any constable who had served 25 years should be entitled to compulsory superannuation; but a condition was inserted in the Bill, which stated that, with respect to an inspector or person of higher rank, the limit of age should be fixed at 55, and that the common constable should have attained 50 years of age. The change which he had made in the Bill to meet the views of the municipal authorities was, that the condition of 55 years should apply to all classes of the constabulary. Under the circumstances, therefore, he did think that they ought now to be able to come to some agreement upon the subject. Under the present law, a constable above the age of 60 could be superannuated, even though he had not obtained his certificate of ill-health. The evidence was, that that principle did not meet the wants and difficulties of those who entered the Police Force. There were very few police constables who entered the Police Forces of the country, especially the borough forces, who were not, to a considerable extent, worn out

and unfit for active service after 25 years' service. That was the evidence of many of the counties and of most boroughs. Probably the wearing out was not so severe in the counties as in the boroughs, and it was not so severe in some counties as in others; but there was, no doubt, a strong feeling on the part of chief constables, and on the part of many of the local authorities, that it would be to the advantage of the Police Force of the country, if there was some such system as was proposed in the Bill—that a man should be enabled to retire at the end of a certain number of years' service. The House of Commons' Committee considered whether that number of years should be 25 or 30, and they came to the unanimous conclusion that it should be 25. He, therefore, thought that the Government had the Committee on their side in respect of this proposal. It had been stated that they might have men entering the Force at 21 years of age who would be enabled to withdraw on a pension at the age of 46. There was something to be said for that objection; but 25 years' arduous work in a Police Force unfitted a man for efficient service. That was found to be the case in the Metropolis and in all large towns. The proposals in the Bill affected not less than 23,000 men in England and Wales, and something like 3,600 in Scotland. With respect to Scotland, he found that, with the exception of Greenock, there was no superannuation system in the country, and the result was that most of the best men in the English Force were drawn from Scotland. He had received letter after letter, showing how great was the advantage derived by England from drawing good men from Scotland. He had experienced that in his own county, Lancashire; and he had been told by men from Scotland, whom he had questioned, that they came down to the English Force, because the pay was better, and there was also a pension fund. What was the cost of making a policeman? Sir Edward Henderson had informed him that he could not make an efficient constable for less than £200 or £300. The loss, therefore, to those places where superannuation did not exist, and from which men were drawn or transferred to forces in England, must be great. From statistics on the subject, it would be found that the amount of

men whose signed from the Force in boroughs was very much larger in comparison with either the County or the Metropolitan Force, being 56,000, as against 49,000 in the Metropolitan Force and 25,000 in the County Forces. That showed the advantage of having a good system of pensions in the Force. There were county and borough police forces with pension funds and no pensioners. There were 58 such borough forces and three such county forces. In some forces with pension funds they had but a single pensioner. Yet, in all these cases, a certain sum, usually $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, was taken from the pay of the men and added to funds from which the men got no benefit at all; and was it not likely that, under such circumstances, the men would feel that they had a grievance? Parliament must consent to do something in the matter; and, unless some more regular system of superannuation was carried into effect, he believed that the complaints of the police would be even stronger in the future than they had been in the past. He considered, in fact, that the police of the country deserved great credit for their forbearance under the existing circumstances. In Ireland, last year, the police had gained what they were trying for, after taking upon themselves, in many instances, to create grave difficulties. They did not want to see the police in this country acting similarly; they wanted to meet them generously and fairly; and they would find that the police would fully repay any such attention and measure of justice being carried out in their favour. The number of pensioners out of a force of 23,000 was only 4,887, which was by no means a very large number. They were told that if they made it a system absolutely to allow men to retire after 25 years' service, they would have a large additional sum to pay. No doubt they would have to pay a considerable sum; but he thought, at the same time, that it would be conceded that it was better that they should be able to keep their men, if they were good, than to have the constant chopping and changing about, which was the case at present, with the result that they were continually renewing their force. He would call attention to the question of how the Police Bill would affect counties. In Lancashire, out of 97 pensions granted in five years, it had been

calculated that 35 would have received an increase, and 62 would have been decreased. The increase was in the case of all who had served for over 25 years; and those were just the men to whom they wished to give pensions, who had devoted their lives to the service, and fairly earned a generous pension. He would not go into detail as to the recommendations of the Committee; but he would like to call the attention of the House to the evidence given by men of great experience in the Force, who were chief constables. They were, practically, unanimous in recommending a pension after a fixed period of years, and that period was generally fixed at 25 years. The general opinion appeared to be that, after a service for 25 years, a constable was not fit for much, no matter at what age he might have entered the Force; and one chief constable had recommended 22 years as the length of service after which a man should be entitled to a pension. These were the opinions of responsible men who had been at the head of their respective forces for a considerable period of time, and who had the best means of knowing the lasting point of a policeman. Government had, therefore, adopted 25 years as the period after which a man should be entitled to a pension; but they had added the condition that that person who claimed it should have reached the age of 55. That condition was, so far, against the men; but it had been accepted by them. The scheme brought forward in the present Bill conferred other advantages upon the men. At present, if a man died in active service, his widow received a gratuity; but his children were not entitled to a gratuity, or, indeed, to anything at all. They now proposed that the widow should be entitled to a pension, and also to a certain sum for each child, and, in the case where there were children but no widow, that each child should be allowed a certain gratuity. At present, again, if a man changed his force, he was only allowed to claim the advantage of a certain amount of the years he had served. It was now proposed to alter that, and to make it the rule that if a man had served three years in one force, and then changed into another, he should be entitled to count the number of years he had served. Another alteration which

they now proposed to make was in the matter of fees. In the Bill of last year they had touched this question; but they had been met by considerable objections on the part of counties which had strong pension funds, and also of the Scotch authorities. They had, therefore, made it permissive for those fees to be added to the pension fund. If the compensation fund of the country was in a weak condition, these fees would be added to it; but when the fund was strong, no doubt they would not be added. In respect to Scotland, the Scottish authorities would probably not add them at all; they preferred, if they were to pay those fees at all, not to take them out of the fines, but out of the rates. At the same time, the Scottish authorities approved of the reduction of pay for the men, and other small matters alluded to in the clauses of the Bill. He would appeal to the House to try to come to some understanding with the view of settling this question during the present Session. It was not a wise thing to delay the matter and make the men in the Police Force of England and Scotland think they were worse treated than their brethren in Ireland, or that the House was indifferent to the way in which their case was considered. Even in the case of hon. Members who opposed the Bill, their opposition was chiefly grounded on their dislike to throwing an additional burden upon the local rates, and their contention that additional pensions should be defrayed by the State. He believed the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Selater-Booth) was in favour of the Bill, except on that one point. With regard to the disabilities which men in the Police Force laboured under, it must be allowed that they had a good wage; but their disabilities were considerable. They were not allowed to enter into any trade or business; they were not allowed even to have a vote in municipal or Parliamentary elections. But perhaps the greatest disability of all was found when a man had to contribute to a fund in the force from which he saw no expectation of ever receiving anything back again. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

MR. SCLATER - BOOTH said, although he thought the introduction of the Bill, under present circumstances, highly objectionable, indeed so much so that he must protest against its being taken then, yet he did not grudge the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hibbert) the opportunity to discharge himself of a speech he must have had in his mind for three years, or take exception to anything he had said about the desire of the House to deal generously with the force. But when he invited the House to treat the force generously, at whose expense did he propose that it should be done? Not at the expense of the Treasury, or the Government; but at the expense of the local rates. The proposal of the Government was to take away from the county police authorities the discretion which, by law, was now vested in them. It seemed to him a most extraordinary thing that the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who was never weary of telling the House that he desired to decentralize and place more responsibility and more control in the hands of the local authority, should come down with this Procrustean rule to deprive them, without exception, of their discretion in awarding pensions to their police. To require a separate pension fund where the police superannuation fund was absolutely intact was a most unwarrantable intrusion upon the finance of counties. He was far from saying the police had not a grievance in the matter; but he did not approve of the way it was proposed to remedy it. If there were counties and boroughs in which there were stoppages of pensions, let them be looked to; but to apply one rule to all, entirely irrespective of their previous conduct, was very unfair. The Government proposal was no great boon after all. If they offered a pension to a man after 25 years' service, but provided that no superannuation should take place till the age of 55, what advantage was that to men who entered the service, as many of them did, at 20, or even earlier? It was, however, impossible for him to argue the question as he should desire; because the proposition to read the Bill a second time having come upon him by surprise, the materials he had been collecting for the last three years were not by him; but he must again protest against tarring all local authorities with the same brush. There were several

points in the Bill to which strong objections could be taken, therefore the Government could not avoid a second discussion of this question, when an opportunity would be given to go into detail. He had risen out of courtesy to the hon. Member; but considering the way the Bill had come on, and that many hon. Gentlemen interested in the question were not present, he trusted the hon. Gentleman would not refuse to adjourn the debate.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he did not understand the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Selater-Booth) to move the adjournment of the debate; but he (Viscount Folkestone) was prepared to do so, as it had not been already moved. It was a very significant fact that, while the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Hibbert) was prepared with his notes and speech on this occasion, the right hon. Gentleman had no expectation that the subject would come on, and was therefore unprepared. Many hon. Gentlemen who were opposed to the Bill were absent, and he thought it would be most unfair to proceed with such an important Bill in an empty House. The Bill was a most objectionable one; for, though he was quite willing that a man should be superannuated, the cost of it was to be thrown wholly on the unfortunate ratepayers. He would move the adjournment of the debate. He was not hostile to the Bill; but, if superannuation were granted, it ought to come out of the right and not out of the wrong pocket.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(Viscount Folkestone.)

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think the Police Force, who have with admirable patience waited for years for the measure of justice which is due to them, will read to-morrow, with some astonishment, the manner in which their claims are treated, and the Party from which that treatment comes. You have had from Gentlemen of great weight and influence, representing counties in England, a treatment of this measure which I think the police of England have not deserved.

MR. HICKS: I rise to Order, Sir. I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is

addressing himself to the Motion before the House?

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman has not said anything which is not in Order.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not think this in the least alters the statement, but rather confirms it. This is another form of Obstruction in addition to the Motion for Adjournment of the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Folkestone). The attempt to count out by the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Scott), and the interruption which now comes from the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks), show the obstinate determination there is to obstruct the Bill. The noble Viscount the Member for South Wiltshire has said that he does not object to the Bill generally; that he admits there ought to be a Bill, and to the general principles of the Bill he is not opposed. Then he ought to vote for the second reading, instead of moving the adjournment of the debate. I say this is not fair treatment to men who should have deserved fair treatment at the hands of this House and the country. I saw the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in the House until the count; but I did not see him in his place when the count took place. I say that is not a fair way of meeting a measure of this description, and it would not so be considered by the country or by the police force, in whose conduct and in whose stability I venture to say the county Members of England are as much interested as anybody. Let them not obstruct the Bill, but manfully come forward on the clause with reference to superannuation, and object, as they are perfectly entitled to do, to the provisions of the Bill. If they make out a good case, they will convince the House, and make the Bill what it ought to be in that respect.

MR. SPEAKER said, he must remind the right hon. Gentleman that he was now travelling beyond the Motion before the House.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I beg pardon for so doing. In speaking upon the Motion for Adjournment, I have deviated into the principles of the Bill. I was anxious to show the noble Viscount the real significance of the attitude he takes. I say again that the Motion for Adjournment ought not to

have been moved, but that, as the objections raised are upon matters of detail, they should be dealt with in Committee, not on the second reading; and, under those circumstances, I hope the Motion will not be pressed, and the general discussion on the measure itself proceeded with. }

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he did not think the Government, and primarily the right hon. Gentleman, were treating the House fairly in bringing in the Bill at a time when no one could expect it would come on, and in forcing on a debate. [“Oh, oh!”] No one could have expected that this Bill would be under discussion at that time, and therefore the Motion for Adjournment was perfectly proper. The right hon. Gentleman said his noble Friend (Viscount Folkestone) wished to obstruct the Bill; but the noble Viscount plainly said he was not opposed to the principle of giving pensions to the police. What was the main principle of the Bill? That the police should be pensioned out of the rates.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is not the main principle of the Bill.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, no Party was more anxious than those who sat on that (the Opposition) side of the House that the question of pensions to the police of England and Scotland should be settled; but they maintained that although this scheme of the Government might be fair to the police it was not fair to the ratepayers; therefore he, with his noble Friend, was opposed to it, and he would take the sense of the House upon the Motion for Adjournment made by his noble Friend. As to the remarks of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) did walk out of the House, because he did not think it was fair to discuss the Bill before so small an attendance. But when the right hon. Gentleman told them that they wished to obstruct, and that they wished to deprive the police of pensions, he begged to tell him there was no foundation for those statements.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that early in the evening, when 337 Members voted in the Division, it was known that this Bill was one of the Orders of the Day to be proceeded with that night. Those hon. Members had gone away of their own choice; and there

was, consequently, no foundation for the allegation that the House was unaware that the question was going to be discussed.

MR. INDERWICK said, he would point out that when a Question was asked with regard to the Police Superannuation Bill, the Prime Minister drew attention to the fact that it was amongst the Orders of the Day, and said that Her Majesty's Government were anxious to press it on.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he hoped the Motion would be withdrawn. He trusted, seeing that there still remained three hours during which the House could discuss the principles of the Bill, that at least one stage of it might be taken. He quite concurred with the Secretary of State for the Home Department that it would have a bad effect throughout the whole country if the Bill was not proceeded with. He spoke with some knowledge of the subject; because he was in constant communication with the police, especially with his own county, and he had presented numerous Petitions in favour of this Bill; and he, therefore, thought the Government were right in taking the first opportunity they had of passing a stage of the Bill. He could assure the House that the Police Force generally throughout the country would view with the greatest disgust the treatment they were now receiving. They all heard the other day—

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Gentleman is now travelling beyond the Question.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he would not refer to that matter; but he would again appeal to his noble Friend (Viscount Folkestone) to withdraw his Motion, so that they might proceed with the discussion of the Bill. Why he made that application was, because he was a Scotch Member, and he hoped he should not be out of Order in reminding the House of what an hon. Member had said. In Scotland they had 3,600 constables without any pension at all, and the Inspector General of Constabulary in Scotland reported that there were many constables in Glasgow who were completely worn out, and whom it would be a scandal and a disgrace to discharge without a pension.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, that, having served upon the

Police Committee, he also hoped that the Bill would be proceeded with, as it related to a subject which deserved immediate consideration. If the present stage of the measure were allowed to be taken, any objection to its details might be raised on its further stages. He would suggest that his noble Friend (Viscount Folkestone) should not press his Motion, but reserve discussion for a future stage of the Bill. He would remind the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that a general supposition had prevailed that the debate on the Vote of Censure was coming on, and, therefore, that the Bill would not be reached that evening.

MR. DODDS said, he would also appeal to the noble Viscount to allow the Bill to proceed, as it dealt with a question which had already been too long delayed.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he could not accede to the request that had been made to him to withdraw the Motion.

MR. HICKS said, that the Bill would affect the ratepayers, and that its principle must be discussed upon its second reading, and could not be properly dealt with in Committee.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 18; Noes 56: Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 143.)

Original Question again proposed.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he would venture to hope that those Members of the Government who were answerable for the Bill might soon return, for it was impossible to discuss the merits of the Bill without someone in authority being present to take notice of what was said. It was quite true the Bill had been before the House some considerable time, and he believed it was equally true that his hon. Friend (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) had considered the Bill, or rather a Bill of the same kind, under the late Government. But he ventured to think there was a difference in that Bill from the one now before the House; for, most assuredly, the then Secretary of State for the Home Department would never have brought in a Bill of the kind, throwing all the responsibility of the burden of the pensions for the police on the rates of the country. As the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home

Department (Mr. Hibbert) had now returned to his place, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) wished to protest, in the strongest language he could use, against the remarks of both right hon. Gentlemen, the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the President of the Local Government Board. A most base accusation—if he might use a word the Prime Minister once used against a body of Gentlemen in the House—was it to say that those on the opposite side of the House were opposed to any pensions for the police. On the contrary, they had done their best to carry out the law as at present in existence for pensions for the police—the Superannuation Act. Especially they had taken care the police should have everything they were entitled to by the law; and it was hard that they should have to stand such an accusation, when they had never made any complaint of police pensions. He did not say there were not many policemen who would rather have the present Bill, giving them an absolute right if they remained for a certain time, if their character was good, or even, under certain circumstances, if their character was not so good, that they should have the right to a certain amount of pension, though, in the opinion of the local authority, they ought not to be entitled to such a pension as named in the Bill. But the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary both knew perfectly well that all the police did not conduct themselves in the same way, and that it was, therefore, a valuable provision to entrust the local authorities with—namely, that of distinguishing between the good and the bad men in the force—he should rather say those who had not conducted themselves so well. There was another class of men, who, having served their country very well, might at a certain time, or on a certain occasion, disgrace themselves and the force to which they belonged. Under a Bill such as this, there was no power of dealing with such a case, except by reducing these men—that they should not have the pension they were entitled to. Take, for instance, a superintendent who, on some unfortunate occasion, after 20 years' service, disgraced himself by getting drunk. By the Bill there was nothing for it but to reduce this man to the

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson

ranks. But when there was the power of giving this man only a certain portion of his pension, you got rid of such men as soon as you could, giving them a far less pension than those men who served well and creditably to the end of their time. All such power would be taken from the local authorities by the Bill. But the knowledge that the pension might be reduced would not be without its influence on the men's conduct, and the lack of power to diminish a man's pension without reducing his rank might destroy that influence, because there would be more hesitation to visit a man with extreme punishment. The right hon. Gentleman, he thought, had a liking for local authority, and thought that, generally speaking, local authorities discharged their duties to the best of their ability. So that in these respects the right hon. Gentleman ought to have left a little more to the discretion of the local authorities in the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman said there should be no discussion now, except of the general principles of the Bill; but the one principle that should find discussion with a good attendance of hon. Members was that principle of placing the whole of the expenditure on the rates. On what principle was this proposed? The Government paid half the expenses of the police force, half the cost of their clothing; but when they came to the question of pensions, "No, not a farthing," said the Government, "will we pay; you have had what was necessary out of the Police Superannuation Fund, and, if not sufficient, out of the county or borough rate, and must continue to do so," though by what they had done they had admitted to the full that the Police Force was for the benefit of the whole country—an Imperial Force that should be subsidised out of the Imperial funds. This, in the Bill, was absolutely denied. On that main principle he opposed it. However, as the question of principle could not be discussed now, he hoped an opportunity for discussing it would be afforded on the Motion to go into Committee. While pensions had been paid in England, he admitted that in Scotland the interests of the police had been neglected. He hoped the second reading would be postponed to a future day, when the House would have an opportunity of fully discussing the measure.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, it appeared to him that the principal objection of his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) to the Bill was that the whole burden of police superannuation was to be thrown for the first time on the county rates.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELLOT observed, that he had not said so.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, that he had certainly understood that that was his hon. Friend's main objection to the Bill. In point of fact, however, the rates of a county were practically liable for the whole of the police superannuations at the present moment. There were many boroughs, and one or two counties, where the superannuation funds were now absolutely bankrupt, and where the whole charge fell on the rates. The Bill had been held over for so many years that he hoped the House would, on the present occasion, give it careful consideration, so as to settle the injury done to a large body of faithful public servants, and which they had been more than patient in bearing. If they looked at the question as affecting local authorities, they ought to consider whether it would not be necessary, supposing superannuation to be done away with altogether, to largely increase the pay in order to obtain really efficient policemen; and it appeared to the Committee which had inquired into this subject that a system of deferred pay after a given term of service, combined with direct pay, was a better method of retaining efficient men in the Force than increased pay simply. He hoped the Bill would not only be read a second time now, but would become law this Session.

MR. BARRAN said, he had great pleasure in supporting the Bill, believing it would offer a strong inducement to men to enter the Police Force who were the most eminently fitted to discharge the duties of such a position. From his experience as a member of the Leeds Corporation, he was able to say that they had, from time to time, increased the pay of their police, and he had found that the more facilities they gave them for insuring annuities, the better quality of men did they get. It was of the utmost importance to have as intelligent men as possible; and whatever expenses were incurred, he was sure the public would get a *quid pro quo*

for it. He believed the Police Force in Leeds was equal to that of any force in England. They had very little trouble with their men there, and they gave them every encouragement. They were not treated as mere machines; but much sympathy had been shown them, and the result had been greater efficiency. It would have been a good thing if the provision laid down in this Bill had been made years ago.

MR. ROUND said, he could understand that the hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), who had himself been at the Home Office, should regard the Bill as, to some extent, his own child, and should, therefore, entertain a feeling of affection towards it. But the majority of the Representatives of agricultural constituencies viewed with disfavour the disposition of the Government to increase the charges of the local ratepayers. He, therefore, appealed to the Government not to ask them to pass the Bill in its present form, but to give them some help from the Treasury towards defraying the charges which the measure would throw upon them. In the county which he represented, the police were recognized to be an efficient and exemplary body of men. But, nevertheless, objection was taken to the increased charges under that Bill. Those local burdens fell entirely on one description of property, all personal property being exempted, although the police were as much employed to protect the owners of personal property as to protect the owners of real property. In the interest of the ratepayers of the country generally, he hoped that, before the Bill was put down for Committee, ample time for full discussion of its provisions would be granted to those hon. Members who were not there that night, and who took a very deep interest in the question of local taxation.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that there was no desire on the part of the Government to deprive hon. Gentlemen opposite of any opportunity they might wish to have for the full and proper discussion of that Bill; but if the Government had failed in endeavouring that night to advance the measure a stage, which, after all, did not conclude the matter, and which did not raise the question as to the source from which the funds were to be derived, they might

have been blamed for not being in earnest in pressing the Bill forward. It was said that the Gentlemen who had on the Paper Notices of Motion against the Bill were absent; but there were only two hon. Gentlemen who had such Notices on the Paper—namely, the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) and the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks), and they were both present that night. As to the general matter, after what his hon. Friend the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) had said, he thought the House would take it as established that, after he was 55 years of age, practically speaking, the policeman had done his work; and that to keep him longer in the Force was of no advantage either to him or to the public, but was really wasting the public money by paying him a considerable salary for doing work for which he was unfit. That was the whole object and aim of the Bill. In the Metropolitan Police the men were generally enlisted at about 25 years of age. Then, at 55, the men would have had about 30 years' service; and that was the extreme time they were fit for that service. What was the use, then, of keeping them after they had reached 55, and paying them 25*s.*, 30*s.*, 35*s.*, or 40*s.* a-week? It was wisdom on the part of the Representatives of the ratepayers, and it certainly was the duty of the Representatives of the public purse, out of which half the charge for the police was defrayed, that some system should be established by which that waste could not take place. There were a good many cases in which men were kept who really ought to be superannuated. The hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had reminded him that he was always in favour of the localities dealing with those matters, and so he was; and he did not think there was anything in the Bill inconsistent with that view. The Bill had been carefully framed, and he had given the draftsman instructions, as he always did, never to let the words "Secretary of State" appear in the Bill if he could avoid it. He had no desire to extend the authority of the Home Office. He hated Departmental centralization. He hated the influence of London Offices, which he believed produced a great deal more harm than good in the administration of

the country. He thought the more they could keep the administration of those things in the country itself the better. But, when the Government itself were making a contribution to local funds, it was a clear economical principle that they should see that the money was applied to an efficient Force; and if the local authorities of a county or a borough chose, under a miserable and mistaken policy, to keep men in the police who were worn out, rendering the Force so far inefficient, the Government ought not to contribute the large sum it did in aid of local funds for their maintenance. The Government, by that Bill, was not seeking to interfere in each county with the administration of the Police Force; it was only laying down a general rule, which he ventured to say was consistent with sound political economy—namely, not to retain men who were, to all appearance, worn out; for of those who knew anything of the question, how many could say that a policeman after the age of 55 years, and who had seen 25 years of service, was other than worn out in his feet by the number of hours spent in walking? That was the principle of the Bill. It was said the measure would increase the rates. He did not believe it would increase them at all. If a county kept its Police Force on a proper footing, and did not give 25s. or 30s. a-week to cripples, he believed it would not have to pay a farthing more than it paid now. With reference to the objection that had been urged that they were putting money on the rates, he wished to point out that they were not doing that, because the money was on the rates already. For example, Gloucestershire paid £1,262, another county paid £3,000 out of the rates, while the whole contribution by the counties of England amounted to £70,000. It had been stated that there was a difficulty in getting men for the Metropolitan Police Force. They had not the least difficulty in getting men for the Metropolitan Police Force. At present they had the names of 2,000 men on the books who were ready to enter that Force any day. It was the greatest security they had for the efficiency of the Force when they put the men under the cognizance that their pensions would depend on their good behaviour. The same principle was found to operate in the Civil Service, where the thing that a man most feared

was the loss of his pension. Under these circumstances, and with the understanding that the matter was open to full discussion afterwards, he hoped the House would now economize time, and consent to the second reading of the Bill.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he must congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the altered tone of the remarks which he had addressed to the House on the second reading of the Bill. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) did not think it necessary either to oppose the second reading of the measure, or to quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman in consequence of the speech he had delivered. He was prepared to agree with all that had been said as to the economy and usefulness of a system of pensions. It did not necessarily follow, however, that because they approved of a system of pensions that, therefore, they were bound to approve the particular system which the Government had brought forward in this Bill, or the source whence those pensions were to be derived. He was glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that full opportunity would be afforded particularly for a discussion of the latter subject. There were two points, however, which he wished to refer to. He could not quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that there was no interference in the Bill with local government. There was interference with the local authorities as to the mode of granting pensions, and as to the necessity in many cases of granting pensions at all; and he must confess that, to his mind, even with the modifications which had been made, the interference was greater than it need be. They must bear in mind the fact that the duties of the police in some parts of England were different from those in other parts, and that a man who might be properly superannuated in the Metropolis or in any of our large towns would, if stationed in the rural districts, be both at that time and for many subsequent years perfectly capable of discharging his duties. Therefore, to lay down a hard-and-fast rule, under which a man not exceeding the age of 50 years, after serving 25 years, would be entitled absolutely without any discretion on the part of the local authority to a pension, was a provision which ought not to be

inserted in a Bill of this kind. Then, with regard to the sources from which the money was to come, the right hon. Gentleman had stated that the Bill did not impose any burden on the rates. He would admit that in many counties, where there had been a desire to act fairly towards the Police Force, the rates would not necessarily be charged under the Bill to any very great extent more than they were at present. His own impression, however, was that they would be, because a greater discretion was given to grant a pension, and the amount would probably be increased. It therefore increased the liability of the rates to be burdened; and he hoped that when they came to discuss this point better reasons would be given than had hitherto been urged why that liability should be imposed on the rates alone. There was a strong feeling prevailing in many parts of England that no increase should be placed on the rates at the present moment. He trusted that when they came to discuss the provisions of the Bill in Committee they might have some proposal placed before them which would, at least, impose on the Treasury as great a proportion of the pensions as it now bore of the maintenance of the police. If the country benefited, as it would do, from an increase in the efficiency of the Police Force, arising from a better system of pensions, he did not think it was quite reasonable not to impose any further burden on the Treasury.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he felt bound to return his grateful thanks to the Government for having brought forward this Bill a third time, and must be allowed to express the hope that, whatever measures they might drop, they would, at least, not allow this measure to drop. It would be much better, he thought, that the Government should not bring in a Bill of this kind at all, rather than they should raise hopes and cause disappointment by bringing it forward every successive Session only to allow it to be dropped. He hoped, therefore, that, if necessary, the Government would keep the House together till Christmas to pass the Bill. This question had been before Parliament for a long time. During the late Government a Committee had inquired into the matter, and they had agreed to the principle

of giving an indefeasible right of pension to constables after a certain number of years' service, say 25 years. The reason for that would be seen, when they remembered that constables were forced to contribute $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of their pay to the pension fund. This matter of police superannuation was even in a more unsatisfactory state in Scotland than in England, for the 3,600 Scotch constables had, at present, no pension at all. As a consequence, Scottish constables often left the Scotch Force, and enlisted in the English Police for the sake of getting some sort of pension. He hoped the Government would press the Bill forward, so that it might pass this Session.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he thought the financial basis of the Bill was unsound. Every superannuation fund was actuarially unsound, for the simple reason that the number of persons in each Police Force taken separately was too small to form a secure system of insurance, and superannuation and insurance were the same thing. The Bill proposed to maintain this unsound system. The true and economical remedy was for all the funds to be thrown together, and for the Government to guarantee the loss, which, under such an arrangement, would not be very serious. He objected to the pensions being guaranteed out of the rates. He also wished to know why the whole of the burden should be placed on land alone? The police took care of a man's personal property, and not of his land; and, therefore, it was unfair to place all the burden upon land. The Government ought to be especially careful on matters of local taxation, as they had already been beaten once or twice on that question.

SIR MASSEY LOPES said, he was not all averse to the principle of the Bill; but he had calculated that if it passed in the state in which the House now had it before it, the loss to the ratepayers in England and Scotland would be something like £200,000. He had taken the trouble to procure a Return of 10 typical counties and 10 typical boroughs, showing how the sums now raised were appropriated. His object in procuring the Returns was to ascertain whether the ratepayers would gain or lose by this transfer, and whether any fees at present paid into the

Exchequer would be transferred to the superannuation fund. He found that in this last respect the gain was almost *nil*. The total fees for 10 counties and 10 boroughs were £35,000; of this amount £14,000 only was applied to the Police Superannuation Fund, and £20,000 to the county and borough rates. If this £20,000 was transferred to the Police Superannuation Fund, an equivalent must be raised from rates. If these 10 counties were typical of the 56 counties in England and Wales, the loss of the ratepayers would be £95,000; and if these 10 boroughs were typical of the 145 boroughs, the loss of the ratepayers would be £43,000. In Scotland there was no superannuation fund at present, and he reckoned that the establishment of the proposed scheme there would amount to a tax upon the ratepayers of at least £50,000 a-year. In his opinion, that would be a very great aggravation of the grievance already existing, and he did think it a very great hardship. After all, pension was only deferred pay; and if the principle that the Government should pay half the police were carried out, the Government ought to pay half the superannuation.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed for Thursday 10th July*.

REVISION OF JURORS AND VOTERS LISTS (DUBLIN COUNTY) BILL.

(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan.*)

[BILL 124.] CONSIDERATION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."—(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

MR. HEALY said, he desired to make it clear that there should be additional places provided for holding Revision Courts and polling in County Dublin; and, therefore, he proposed to move a new clause which would effect the purpose.

MR. SPEAKER said, he must point out that the hon. Member would not be in Order in moving a new clause at that stage without Notice.

MR. COURTNEY said, he would suggest that the clause should be proposed on the third reading.

MR. PARNELL said, he thought that some trouble would be saved if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would make a statement as to the intentions of the Government. There would then be no delay. The purpose of the Bill was to secure that voters should not be deprived of their right to the franchise by reason of any imperfection in the way the Revising Barrister did his work; and the object of his hon. Friend's (Mr. Healy's) clause was to secure that end.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER) said, that the Government were desirous that the Bill should pass. They also concurred in the object desired by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy); and in that view they thought it desirable to lighten the work of the Recorder, and provide a separate Revising Barrister.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN rose to Order, and called attention to the fact that the Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill was the Question before the House. He contended that the Solicitor General for Ireland was not entitled to speak upon any other subject. ["Order!"]

MR. HEALY asked, as a point of Order, whether the Solicitor General for Ireland was not entitled to make a statement, in order to show the Irish Members whether or not the Motion should be made?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN, resuming, was met by loud cries of "Order!"

MR. HEALY: Walker, Walker!

MR. WARTON asked, was the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan in Order in mentioning the name of a Member?

MR. SPEAKER having called on Mr. WALKER,

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER), resuming, said, he believed it would save the time of the House if he were allowed to proceed. He was not in a position to give any pledge; but he believed he might say, now that as all the memorials had been sent in the proposals of the hon. Member for Monaghan should receive careful attention from His Excellency.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill, as amended, *considered*.

Mr. WARTON said, he desired to move an Amendment to meet the case of the Revising Barrister, whose salary was £100 a-year, being ill, and employing a substitute at a salary of five guineas a-day. If the duties of the substitute occupied more than 20 days, where was the additional sum to come from? He would move the omission of Clause 3.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 3.—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Mr. COURTNEY said, that the words of the original clause had not been altered, and the hon. and learned Member's argument had been based on a misapprehension.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN supported the omission of the clause.

Question, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to*.

Bill to be read the third time upon *Thursday*.

INTESTATES ESTATES BILL [*Lords*].

(*Mr. Courtney.*)

[BILL 168.] SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed*.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday*.

DEAN FOREST AND HUNDRED OF SAINT BRIAVELS BILL.—[BILL 184.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "next," in order to add the words "21st July,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'next' stand part of the Question."

Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Bill to be read a second time upon *Monday 14th July*.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.—[BILL 1.]

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment on Second Reading [19th May] read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Adjourned Debate be postponed until Monday next."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Mr. RITCHIE said, he thought the time had now arrived when the Government ought to make up their mind as to whether they intended to proceed with this Bill or not. The matter was one which affected a very large number of important interests. He understood that there had been extensive negotiations between the Government and the shipowners as to what was to be done with reference to this Bill; and after the long speech which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade in moving the second reading of the Bill, it was quite time that the mercantile community should know whether the Government really intended seriously to proceed with the measure that Session or not. The Government had announced their intention very unexpectedly of proceeding with the London Government Bill on Thursday next. That Bill was, however, in its infancy; and if the Government were determined to have one large measure this year they had better proceed with one upon which they had made some progress, and on which there had already been discussion, rather than enter into the arena with such a Bill as the London Government Bill, in regard to which they knew it was hopeless to expect to make any material progress that Session. Seeing that the Merchant Shipping Bill was a matter which affected very important interests, the Government ought seriously to make up their minds as to what they intended to do. There had been a rumour that they intended not to proceed further with the Bill; and if they had arrived at that conclusion it was time they should take the House into their confidence, and not hang up such important interests as those which were concerned. If they had made up their minds and intended

to proceed with it no further, the sooner it was taken off the Paper the better.

MR. COURTNEY said, he fully recognized the anxiety of the hon. Member and of all hon. Members who were interested in shipping to know what was to be done with this Bill; but he was not in a position to announce what course the Government intended to take in the matter. His right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade was not in his place at that moment; and he was unable to say more than this—that it would depend on the progress made with Business during the next fortnight what measures the Government would press forward. He believed it was the desire of hon. Members that this Bill should go on; and he had no wish to throw any obstacle in the way of its further progress so long as there was a hope.

MR. RITCHIE: Is there a hope?

MR. COURTNEY said, that no doubt on Monday next the President of the Board of Trade would make an announcement in regard to the Bill.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, the House were placed in a somewhat extraordinary position, seeing that there was not a single Cabinet Minister upon the Treasury Bench. They had been told that another right hon. Gentleman whom he did not see in his place—the Home Secretary—proposed to proceed with the London Government Bill on Thursday; but the second reading of that Bill could not be expected to be decided in one night. The Government would find it necessary to allow three or four nights for the debate. They had now reached another very important Bill; and his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury, when asked to give some information in regard to it, was able to give none whatever. Surely something ought to be done to relieve the natural anxiety of the great shipping interests throughout the country as to whether the Government intended to proceed with this Bill or not. Her Majesty's Government had had a very good stroke of fortune in the course of that evening, and had been able to get through a good many Bills. He thought they ought to have shown some gratitude in return by inducing some Cabinet Minister to remain in his place—some responsible Minister of the

Crown, who would be able to tell the House what Bills were intended to be gone on with and what were not. The Merchant Shipping Bill was one of the most important Bills which could be pressed upon the attention of the House, and he thought the House had a right to know whether the Bill was to be proceeded with or not. If the Secretary to the Treasury could not inform them the best thing would be for the hon. Gentleman to send for one of his Colleagues who was a Member of the Cabinet in order that the House might be informed whether this was a serious Bill or not—whether it was one of those questions intended to be decided in the present Session, or one of the measures which would be sacrificed in the coming "Massacre of the Innocents."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, there were many serious questions involved in the Merchant Shipping Bill. In the first place, a great number of people believed that further provision ought to be made for the protection of life at sea. On the other hand, there were persons belonging to the shipping interest who had been very violently and almost personally attacked by the President of the Board of Trade; and there was a third class of persons who were deeply interested in shipping questions generally. All these persons were entitled to know how soon the matter would be settled. If the Bill were put on the Paper, first for one day and then for another, and the Government really did not intend to proceed with it, they were inflicting a great injury on all these three classes of persons. Above all, it must be remembered that a very violent attack had been made by the President of the Board of Trade upon different individuals; and it was absolutely necessary, whatever might happen to the Bill, that the debate upon the second reading should be continued, because the persons who had had these accusations made against them must be afforded an opportunity of refuting them. He therefore hoped that on Thursday a distinct statement would be made as to the course which the Government intended to take; and if the Government declined to state what course they proposed to follow, he should feel very strongly inclined to move that the Merchant Shipping Bill be taken as the first Order on Thursday.

MR. STOREY said, he had listened with surprise to the observations of the Secretary to the Treasury on the Merchant Shipping Bill; and, as the Representative of a shipping port, he desired to make one or two remarks. He had understood that the Bill was, at any rate for this Session, dead and buried. The reason he had come to that conclusion was this—the President of the Board of Trade, during the debate on the second reading, announced that he was willing to grant a Royal Commission for the consideration of certain questions which were raised in the Bill. A few nights after his hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr. C. M. Palmer), who had taken a foremost part in raising objections to the Bill, asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not propose to grant this Royal Commission, and, if he did, what would be brought under its purview? He had listened very carefully to what the President of the Board of Trade said on that occasion, and the next morning he consulted *The Times* newspaper in order to see if his impressions were borne out. What the right hon. Gentleman said was that, practically, every question which had been raised in the Bill, even including the burning question of over-insurance, ought to be referred to the Royal Commission if a Royal Commission were granted. That being so, was it not trifling with the House for the Secretary to the Treasury to come down and say that he was not sure whether the Bill was alive or dead. He ventured to tell the hon. Gentleman that it was dead—that it was dead as it ought to be; and the only course which the Government could take, if they really wanted to discuss these great questions in a proper fashion, and to enable the shipowners of the country to give an answer to the unjust allegations made against them, was to submit the whole question either to a Select Committee or to a Royal Commission.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he quite agreed with the hon. Member who had just sat down that the Bill was to all intents and purposes dead; but he could quite understand why the Secretary to the Treasury did not like to take upon himself the office of undertaker and decently inter it. If the hon. Member would put the Bill down for Thursday, the President of the Board of Trade

would probably be able to come down and take charge of the funeral obsequies himself.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he could not help thinking that the course taken in regard to this Bill was an extraordinary and an unusual one. They were now in the month of June.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR): For a few minutes.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, they were still in the month of June, and this was a little earlier than usual for making suggestions of this kind to the Government as to their not being entitled to keep an important measure upon the Paper in order to avail themselves of every opportunity they could for passing it into law. It was said that the measure was dead. There were a great number of persons who did not wish the Bill to be killed, although, no doubt, there were many Members who did not wish it to pass, and who desired to assist in killing it. Under these circumstances, the Government were taking no unusual course in naming that day week for the consideration of the Bill, instead of taking it off the Paper. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) himself admitted that it ought not to be taken off the Paper until there had been some further discussion with regard to it, even if the Bill were not proceeded with subsequently. He, therefore, hoped that the proposal of the Government to put down the Bill for Monday would be assented to.

Motion agreed to.

Debate further adjourned till Monday next.

MIDDLESEX REGISTRY OF DEEDS BILL.—[BILL 169.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Attorney General.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(Mr. Courtney.)

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that upon the second reading of this Bill he had asked his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury if he could offer any serious justification for going forward

with the measure; but he had failed to obtain any information on the subject to convince him that the measure was of the slightest value. Since that time he had put a Question to the hon. Gentleman, pointing out that the Land Transfer Commissioners in their Report had unanimously condemned the proposal, and had recommended that the Middlesex Registry should be abolished. When he put that Question to his hon. Friend he was very properly told that it was an argumentative Question, and that was the only answer he got. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hastings (Mr. Ince) then put a Question, asking whether under the Bill any economy was effected by the Government; and to that Question his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury had not been able to give a satisfactory reply. Having regard to the fact that the proposal of the Bill to make the Middlesex Registry a Government institution had been unanimously condemned by one of the most learned Commissions on the subject of Land Transfer, and also having regard to the fact that his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury, on being interrogated as to whether any economy would be effected by the Bill, had failed to give an affirmative answer, he was unable to see why the Bill should be recommended to the House. He imagined that the only reason why Her Majesty's Government intended to pass this Bill was that they might shovel the Middlesex Registry of Deeds into the Office of the Land Registry in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Surely it was a very mischievous policy to retain a useless institution simply because they had in one Office a Registry of Deeds and in some other Office a Registry of Titles. Her Majesty's Government did not propose in this Bill to carry out any reform whatever, either in the direction of economy or as to the mode of registering deeds. On the contrary, the Middlesex Registry had been condemned by an important Commission, and, during the interval which had elapsed since, it had grown worse instead of better. The decision of the Commission as to the mode of registering deeds in this Court tended to show that it was absolutely worse than useless, because it put persons to a very large and unnecessary expense. The Secretary to the Treasury

had assigned no reason for pressing the Bill forward; and he imagined that if his hon. Friend had really any reason to assign he would have stated what it was upon the second reading. Failing any satisfactory explanation tending to show that the passing of the Bill would be useful in point of economy, or in reference to the Public Service, he should feel compelled to move the adjournment of the debate, or to oppose the Motion for going into Committee upon the Bill.

MR. WARTON: Will the hon. Member move something?

MR. GREGORY said, that, having taken some interest in the question, he would make a suggestion to Her Majesty's Government as to the mode of dealing with the Bill. He was not opposed to the Bill as it stood; but he wished to see the measure carried further, and to have a Registry of Deeds for the county of Middlesex placed in the same position as the Registry which was proposed for the county of York—namely, a real practical Registry, not only for the purpose of deeds, but for the purpose of titles. He had taken a somewhat active part on the Committee which had been sitting upon the Yorkshire Bill, and he thought the Bill which had now come out of that Committee would be a working measure, that would have a real and practical effect upon the landed property of that county. He did not see why this Bill should not be made equally efficient with that which was already proposed for the county of York. He should like to see Middlesex put on the same footing and enjoying the same advantages in regard to the registration of deeds as were afforded to the county of York by the Bill now before the House. There was another Bill extending the registration in Middlesex, which had been brought in by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard). He believed that his (Mr. Gregory's) name was at the back of that Bill. At all events, he was prepared to support it, and it certainly went very much beyond the Bill which had been introduced by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. What he would suggest to the hon. Gentleman was this—that both Bills should be referred to a Select Committee to be dealt with in the same manner as the Yorkshire Bill. That Committee would take

the whole subject into consideration, and would introduce such Amendments into the Bill as would provide an efficient registration, dealing not only with titles, but with every question of detail which could only be properly settled by a Committee upstairs. Nor did he think the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee would involve very much delay. The Yorkshire Bill only took up three or four Sitzings of the Committee, who went through the provisions of the measure with a considerable amount of care and with great deliberation. He thought the Government could easily find Members who would devote a few days to the consideration of questions of this kind, and who would approach the subject with an earnest desire to deal with it properly and efficiently. He did not know whether his services would be of any value to the Government; but such as they were he would readily place them at their disposal for the purposes of such an inquiry as that which he suggested. He hoped the Government would entertain the suggestion he had thrown out, because he believed its adoption would really render the Bill an efficient measure, and one that would be of great benefit to all parties interested in the transfer of land in the county of Middlesex.

MR. INCE said, that all he asked of the Secretary to the Treasury was to allow the debate to stand adjourned. It appeared to him that the Bill, as it stood, was utterly useless. Either the Middlesex Registry was a good institution or it was a bad one. Either it worked well or it did not. If it worked well, then why not leave it entirely alone? If it worked badly, they would do no good by simply transferring it to "another place." He could not help suspecting that at the bottom of this Bill there was something else. Everybody knew that the Land Registry in Lincoln's Inn Fields had been, more or less, impracticable, and that the people who were employed in the Office there had little or nothing to do. It seemed to him that the object of this Bill was to provide them with something to do, in order to show some reason for retaining their services; but he hoped his hon. Friend would not persevere with the Bill simply for that object. He believed himself that the system carried

on in the Middlesex Registry at the present moment was carried on very efficiently by the gentlemen connected with the Office. Since the Bill had been before the House he had made it his duty to inquire, and he found that there was no cause of complaint as to the manner in which the business was conducted. On the other hand, he quite agreed with the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) that the system of registration was itself capable of great improvement; and he thought the House ought to take advantage of this Bill and the Yorkshire Bill being now before the House, either for referring them to a Select Committee and dealing with them in the same way, or, at any rate, for making the Middlesex Registry as efficient as possible.

MR. COURTNEY said, he was not at all wedded to any particular manner of proceeding with the consideration of the subject; and the suggestion of the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) was undoubtedly one which deserved attention, especially if the hon. Member would give the House the benefit of his very valuable assistance upon any Select Committee that might be appointed to consider the subject. There was no necessity for adopting the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Hastings (Mr. Ince) and adjourn the debate. He would withdraw the Motion for the Speaker leaving the Chair, and would move instead—"That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Mr. Courtney*.)

MR. LABOUCHERE remarked, that this Middlesex registration constituted one of the greatest humbugs that existed in the country. It simply existed for the benefit of lawyers and nothing more. It was objectionable whether in regard to the registry of titles or the registry of mortgages. No doubt, a lawyer, when anybody bought a piece of land in Middlesex, in order that he might get a fee for himself, sent some person or other to inquire whether anybody had registered a mortgage, and in that way put his client to unnecessary expense. The whole thing was a perfect farce, and the whole object of the present Bill was to perpetuate a farce, and to secure

compensation to certain persons who had very little work to do, and to others who had good salaries and no work at all. He would ask the House to look at the 7th clause of the Bill, where it was provided that certain persons, who were connected with the Middlesex Registry Office, on the passing of the Act should be entitled to compensation. The present Registrar was the son of a Lord Chancellor, and he had observed that Lord Chancellors, more than any other persons in this country, seemed inclined to job. They were constantly looking up some member of their family and giving him a fat sinecure. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members said "Oh!" but what were the facts of the case? He believed that Lord Chancellor Truro was a very excellent Chancellor, and he was also an excellent father. Lord Truro had a son, and he put that son into the Middlesex Registry Office, where he had received in fees for a considerable number of years something like £5,000 per annum; and what for? For doing absolutely nothing. Indeed, he suspected the noble Lord was never inside the Office in his life; but that he employed some sort of deputy to do the work. Nevertheless, he had received from the Office a net income of £5,000 a-year. If the Government would make an alteration, they should put an end to the Registration Office altogether, and not allow this money to be paid. Was it a reasonable thing to say that Lord Truro should have received £5,000 a-year for a considerable number of years for doing nothing? Surely it was not the mission of the House of Commons to provide this large outdoor relief for pauper Peers. He could not say whether Lord Truro was a pauper; but, at any rate, the House ought to take this opportunity of declaring that no more money should be given to Lord Truro in this way. Nevertheless, there was a positive clause inserted in the Bill—the 7th clause—which provided that because Lord Truro had received £5,000 a-year for 16 or 17 years, he was, therefore, to receive a similar annual grant for the rest of his life if they did away with the Office. The proposal was simply one for retaining the salary of Lord Truro, who was to be allowed to continue to eat into the Treasury to the extent of £5,000 a-year. What was the use of putting the country, at a General Election, to the trouble

of returning people who called themselves Liberals and Radicals, when they were found persistently perpetrating these jobs. Politically bad as right hon. Gentlemen opposite were, he was certainly of opinion that right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Ministerial side of the House were just as politically bad as the Opposition so far as the expenditure of the public money was concerned. He should certainly like someone on the Treasury Bench to get up and explain why Lord Truro was to have £5,000 a-year for the rest of his life. If no satisfactory explanation was afforded—and he did not think it possible to give one—he should oppose this Bill, which he regarded as a simple job, in every stage.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the only Motion before the House was that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. His hon. Friend had wasted a good deal of indignation and abuse upon the Treasury Bench, because, as a matter of fact, the real effect of the clause to which his hon. Friend had referred would be to reduce the emoluments of Lord Truro by one-half.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, it was not proposed that the noble Lord should receive half of the fees.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) remarked that the result of rejecting the Bill would be to give Lord Truro the whole of the sum he was at present receiving.

MR. WARTON said, there was a conflict of opinion between the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and the Attorney General as to the effect of the Bill. The hon. Member for Northampton contended that it would give Lord Truro his full income, whereas the Attorney General said it would only give him one-half. After what had been said by the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) he hoped, if the Bill went before a Select Committee, they would have power to consider the possibility of creating a Registry of Titles for the county of Middlesex; and he trusted that the Bill of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) would be referred to the same Committee.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he could scarcely have believed that the Secretary to the Treasury could have

been challenged to get up in his place and state one single reason why this Bill, which was a Government measure, should receive the sanction of the House, either on the ground of economy or of advantage to the Public Service, without being able to make a response. His hon. Friend had been challenged both by himself (Mr. Arnold), and by the hon. and learned Member for Hastings (Mr. Ince); but he had maintained a complete silence. He thought it was discreditable for the Government to attempt to pass measures in this way. If the Bill was really wanted, his hon. Friend ought to explain the reasons for it; and, if not, it ought to be rejected by the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 126; Noes 33: Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 144.)

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

[*Lords*].—[BILL 207.]

(*Mr. Mundella.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Mundella.*)

MR. DICK-PEDDIE expressed a hope that the measure would be postponed, on the ground that it had been sprung upon the House that night by surprise. He trusted that if the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in getting the Speaker out of the Chair, he would give some promise that the provisions of the Bill would not be discussed at a late hour of the night. The right hon. Gentleman must be well aware that the Bill was of great interest to medical men throughout the country, and also that there was strong opposition to some of the details of it. He therefore hoped that the consideration of the clauses would not be allowed to come on, except at such a time as would allow of the discussion being reported in the newspapers.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN concurred with the hon. Member that the Bill had been sprung upon the House—as almost every Bill had been in the course of the evening—entirely by surprise. The best proof he could give of that was that hon. Gentlemen who were most interested in the Bill with regard

to Ireland were absent. For instance, the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen who were Members for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket), who were seriously interested in the Bill, inasmuch as that University would be greatly affected by it, and both of whom had placed Amendments upon the Paper, were absent. The hon. Member for Carlow, who also entertained very strong opinions upon the Bill, was not in his place; and the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons), who was himself a medical gentleman, was another absentee.

DR. LYONS intimated that he was present.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he was glad to see the hon. Member present; but there were a great number of Irish Members who were not in their places, but who certainly would have been present if they had had the slightest idea that the measure was intended to be brought on. Many hon. Gentlemen would have put down Amendments if they had imagined the Bill was coming on. [*Mr. MUNDELLA dissented.*] The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill shook his head; but he might inform the right hon. Gentleman that he himself had a number of Amendments to put down; but, knowing that the Vote of Censure was to come on, he had not thought it of the least use to put those Amendments down. Many Amendments had been carefully considered, and would be placed upon the Paper; and it was only right that hon. Members should have an opportunity of seeing them before the clauses came on for discussion. The Government would certainly not have been able to reach the Bill in the ordinary course of events, and the result of the collapse of the Vote of Censure was that they had been engaged all the evening in running through the Orders. He was sorry that Bills should have been run through the House without any discussion at all, and that they should have been forced, as it were, down the throats of the House by four or five of the subordinate Members of the Government sitting on the Front Bench, who, *sic volo sic jubeo*, had thrust Order after Order down the throats of hon. Members. They had now disposed of four or five Orders, although, at the early part of the Sitting, it was not supposed that there

Mr. Arthur Arnold

would be the slightest chance of 'getting rid of the ordinary Business, or even of reaching them. In the ordinary conduct of Parliamentary work, the Government knew very well that they could not have got this measure on, and the measure itself was of such importance that he did not think it should be advanced a stage under such circumstances. He knew very well that all the right hon. Gentleman wanted was to move the Speaker out of the Chair, and that he did not propose to go further that night; but that simply meant that he would be able to take up the measure on any subsequent day up to the end of July at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, when hon. Members from Ireland and Scotland were away, and when the Government could fill up the Benches with their own immediate supporters and force any Bill they liked through the House. He did not himself think that hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench could feel proud of the way they were endeavouring to push forward a measure like this. He was quite sure that if they were proud of the way in which the Business had been conducted that night, the rest of the House were not; and when the public knew what had taken place, they would not be very proud of the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill. In order to show that the House had had enough of this system of shoving Bills through without discussion, simply by making use of the Government majority, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(Colonel King-Harman.)

MR. MUNDELLA said, that when the Prime Minister, at the early part of the evening, gave a list of the number of Bills it was proposed to reach that night, he (Mr. Mundella) himself had stated that he had no intention of making progress with this Bill beyond moving the Speaker out of the Chair. That he should have done, and intended to do under any circumstances, totally irrespective of what had happened in the early part of the evening. He had not the least intention of taking the House by surprise. There had been no lack of debate on the second reading of the Bill. ["Oh!"] He was astonished to hear that cry, because, on two occasions,

it had already been under discussion; on the first occasion for two hours, and again on Friday evening, when it was debated exhaustively, and the debate was not completed until 11 o'clock. It, therefore, could not be said that the debate on the second reading had not worn itself out. All he proposed to do now was to move the Speaker out of the Chair. He should then give ample time for hon. Members to put down Amendments, and he would promise the House that the Bill should not be brought on at an unreasonable hour, but at an hour when it could be fairly discussed.

MR. BUCHANAN reminded the right hon. Gentleman that, in the previous debate, several speeches were made and numerous Amendments suggested, especially by his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair). He thought the Vice President of the Council at that time made a promise to the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) that, on the Motion for going into Committee, an ample opportunity should be given for discussing the Bill. [*Cries of "Go on now!"*] One sufficient reason why he could not do so was that he would be out of Order. All he wished was to have some assurance from the right hon. Gentleman himself as to what Amendments he was willing, on behalf of the Government, to adopt. He should like to have that assurance before they got the Speaker out of the Chair.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR asked the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) to recollect the conditions under which the Vice President of the Council made the promise to him (Sir Lyon Playfair), as to affording an opportunity for discussion on the Motion for going into Committee. It was upon the first debate on the second reading, and the promise was conditional upon the debate being concluded on that day. It did not conclude on that day, however, but came on again on Thursday, when the Bill was discussed again. Therefore, the motive of the Government in offering a discussion on the Motion for going into Committee had already gone. He understood his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council to say that he did not intend to go on with the Committee until next week, so that there would be ample time for putting down Amendments. He was

quite ready to accept the promise of the right hon. Gentleman that Members would not be taken by surprise, but that ample time would be given for putting down Amendments, and that some time would elapse before the House would be called upon to discuss them.

MR. MACARTNEY wished to point out the position they would be in if the proposal now made were accepted by the House. It would only be possible, after the House had gone into Committee, for hon. Members to discuss the particular clause which was proposed to them; because, according to the strict Rules of the House, they could not go through the general proposals of the Bill. Now, this was a most important Bill. Its object was to regulate the future status and education of the Medical Profession, and to make it uniform throughout the Three Kingdoms. If the Medical Profession were once made to believe that the matter had not been fairly discussed in the House it would create great discontent throughout the country. It was patent to everyone present that a great number of persons who were interested in the measure could not have expected it to be reached. It had come on by surprise, and the Government were really endeavouring to steal a march upon the House by making a proposal of this kind. He did not think the Government were entitled to do anything of the kind; and, under the circumstances, it would be much more satisfactory, and would lead to the more calm and dispassionate consideration of the clauses of the Bill hereafter in Committee, if a discussion were allowed to take place on going into Committee.

MR. WARTON said, with regard to the observations of the right hon. Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair) as to the promise made by the Vice President of the Committee of Council, whatever promise was made by the right hon. Gentleman, it ought not to affect the course pursued by the House. Personally, he (Mr. Warton) protested against any such promise being made at all, because the House had an absolute right to discuss every Bill on the Motion for going into Committee. He, therefore, did not want a matter to be put as a favour with regard to which they had a positive right.

Sir Lyon Playfair

No doubt Ministers thought they were conferring a great favour upon the House, and some of them seemed to think that the House had no rights at all. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council had moved the Speaker out of the Chair; but the House had a right to a full discussion, not only upon the second reading of the Bill, but also upon the Motion for going into Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is going away from the Question, which is that the debate be now adjourned.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE wished to say a word in reference to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair), and from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan). His hon. Friend said they had been promised a full opportunity of discussing the measure on the Motion for going into Committee; but his right hon. Friend said that promise had fallen to the ground, because the debate upon the second reading had extended into a second day. But it must be remembered that on that second day it was only in consequence of the collapse of the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill that the Medical Bill was brought on, and that it came on when Members were unprepared for it. He trusted that the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Colonel King-Harman) would press his Motion for the adjournment of the debate, and he (Mr. Dick-Peddie) should certainly support him.

MR. BIGGAR said, he thought the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman) was justified in moving the adjournment of the debate, and for this reason—it was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to tell them on that occasion that he would not ask them to go further that night than to get the Speaker out of the Chair. The right hon. Gentleman also said that he would not bring forward the clauses of the Bill in Committee, except at a reasonable hour. If the right hon. Gentleman had said that he would not bring the Bill forward after 10 o'clock at night he could understand his promise; but a simple promise only to bring it forward at a reasonable hour was not suffi-

cient, according to his idea, of affording sufficient time for the discussion of a Bill about which, upon the details, there was ample room for a considerable amount of difference of opinion. There were a great number of Members from Ireland who were interested in the Bill, and also a great number of Members from Scotland, and, he presumed, from England too. For that reason he thought it was a Bill of sufficient importance to be made a first Order. The Bill was one which attracted the attention, not only of the rising generation of doctors, but also of medical men who were actually engaged in medical work, and the Colleges which had been endowed for the purpose of providing medical education. The vested interests of the Professors were also largely involved in the question; and he thought hon. Members ought to use every exertion in order to secure the proper discussion of the Bill. It certainly was a measure which would require a great deal more attention than the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council seemed inclined to devote to it. It ought to be one of the great measures of the Session. Indeed, he was inclined to think that if it were passed into law, which he presumed it would be, it would be the most important of the measures which would be passed that Session. It was, therefore, only reasonable that sufficient time should be given to the House for the consideration of the details of the Bill, and that it should not be brought forward at a time when proper discussion would be out of the question.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he quite agreed with the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) that this was the most important Bill the Government had brought forward that Session. It was so important and valuable a measure that it certainly ought not to be rushed through the House after midnight. It was one of the Bills which ought to have the most prominent place on the Paper, and he would suggest to the Vice President of the Council that he should make arrangements with his Colleagues to have it put down on Thursday next instead of the London Government Bill. It was a Bill which dealt with the interests of the existing generation in a much more important manner than the London Government Bill was ever likely

to do. Many hon. Members were anxious to take part in the debate upon the Motion for going into Committee upon the Bill; and it was unfair to them, to the House, and to the Bill itself to make progress with the Bill in the way now proposed. He, therefore, hoped his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman) would press the Motion for Adjournment to a Division.

DR. LYONS appealed to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill to name some day for the Committee that should be at a little distance off, so that ample time might be given to the numerous persons connected with the great Medical Corporations who desired to have a discussion upon a question so vitally affecting their personal interests. Many of these Corporations had written to him, expressing their belief that their interests were about to be compromised in a very serious way. The propositions which were made the other day by his right hon. Friend near him the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair) had met with very general acceptance; and hopes were entertained that, if they were adopted, the measure would not have the destructive tendency, in regard to the Medical Corporations, which was now feared. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would listen to the representations which had been made to him.

MR. BIGGAR said, he rose to a point of Order. He thought it was desirable that the hon. Member should address himself to the Chair, instead of to the Vice President of the Council, and that he should not deliver his remarks in a conversational tone which the general body of hon. Members were unable to hear.

DR. LYONS said, the principal object with which he had risen was to request the Vice President of the Council to give ample Notice to the House before proceeding to consider the details of the Bill in Committee; and, further, to suggest that if it was found necessary to take a second night for the Committee, he would take it upon the next day, for this important reason. A great number of persons were coming over from various parts of Scotland and Ireland, in order to watch the discussion; and he knew, as a fact, that a large number of persons representing Medical

Corporations would desire to be present. They were all men of high influence and importance in connection with their Profession; and there were, as the House could see, special reasons why they should know how long they were likely to be detained here. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would bear that circumstance in mind, and would give the House some hope that the proceedings in Committee would be continued from day to day.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he had no right to speak again, except by the leave of the House; but perhaps he might be permitted to say that he had not the least intention of taking the Bill in Committee for at least a week to come. He would put it down for that day week, not with the intention of taking it then, but with a view of fixing a day when it would be taken, because it was impossible for any Member of the Government off-hand to fix the precise time when a Bill might be taken in Committee. He would promise to bring it on at some reasonable hour after next Monday week.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that, considering the nature of the Bill, and the vast importance of the principles it involved, they would hardly be justified in allowing the House to go into Committee next week, and for this reason—that the Bill which passed the House would not be the Bill now before it, but the Bill very greatly amended. Many hon. Members were anxious to put down Amendments; and his own opinion was that it was desirable to have a complete discussion on going into Committee, and before considering the Amendments. The Bill was of considerable importance to all medical men, and it was highly desirable that before going into Committee they should have before them the Amendments which it was proposed to introduce. For these reasons he would give his support to the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR remarked that he did not often find himself supporting the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman); but if the hon. and gallant Member went to a Division, he should be most happy to support the Motion for Adjournment. Whether the hon. and gallant Member went to a Division or not, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) and his

hon. Friends around him were determined that a Division should be taken on the question. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council certainly appeared to think that Members of Parliament were very innocent when he supposed they did not understand the extraordinary effect which the acceptance of the proposal to go into Committee would have. Everybody knew that the moment the Speaker was got out of the Chair the time for discussion on the part of the House would be practically gone. What would take place would be this—that the right hon. Gentleman would be at liberty to go on with the Bill in Committee on any day or at any hour of the night he might choose. Therefore, the House were asked by the right hon. Gentleman to surrender their control over the Bill. He must say that he thought, to use no harsher word, that it required a considerable amount of courage on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, or of any Member of the Government, to propose to go forward with any Bill of importance that day. It was perfectly notorious that not a single Bill on the whole list of 26 Government Orders was really down for discussion. No Member, even with the most audacious imagination, could, at the commencement of the evening, have contemplated a discussion on any one of them. He quite coincided with the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) in regard to the Bill which they were now asked to discuss at that hour of the night. He thought it was, with the exception of the Bill which had now passed away from that House to “another place,” the most important Bill of the Session which the Government had any chance of passing into law. In the course of three or four days they would be told that it would be necessary to abandon a number of Government measures; but this would not be included among them. Nevertheless, it was a Bill in regard to which hon. Members from Scotland and Ireland were justified in demanding a complete discussion at a proper time of the evening, and after due and fair Notice. What would have been said if a course like this had been proposed to be taken in regard to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill which dealt with the

interests of a large trade and community? What would have been said if a proposition of this sort in regard to that Bill had been sprung upon the House by surprise? It would have been resisted in the most strenuous manner. But here was a Bill which absolutely revolutionized the whole system of conferring medical degrees.

MR. SPEAKER rose—

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he quite understood the object with which the right hon. Gentleman had risen. He was afraid that he was travelling somewhat beyond the Question before the House; but he did not intend to enter into the general merits of the question. He was arguing in favour of the adjournment of the debate on account of the fact that a large number of persons in whose welfare they were interested had not received due Notice that the Bill was intended to be brought on that night, and were, therefore, not there in order to organize an opposition to the measure, or, at any rate, to take steps to secure the amendment of some of its provisions. If it had been anticipated that the Bill would have come on for discussion, he imagined that the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons) would have had influential deputations from the important Medical Corporations of Dublin waiting upon him in the Lobby to advise with him; and he was also sure that the right hon. Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair) and the hon. Member for the City of Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) would have had their medical forces organized outside, in order to bring pressure to bear upon the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council in securing the amendment of the Bill. Under these circumstances, he thought the facts he had put forward, in conjunction with those which had been brought forward by other hon. Members, established an unanswerable case against the Bill being further proceeded with that night. He would only add that he and his hon. Friends around him were determined, in the event of the right hon. Gentleman persisting in his present irrational course, to offer the Bill all the legitimate opposition the Rules of the House would permit him to do.

MR. WEBSTER said, he felt bound to support the Motion for the Adjournment of the debate. He exceedingly

disliked the idea of passing any stage of an important Bill by what might appear to be taking the House by surprise. After the unexpected collapse of the Vote of Censure that evening the House had become so disorganized that no one expected any important Bill would be likely to be brought on. It was impossible, he thought, to proceed with the discussion of the Medical Bill, especially at so unreasonable an hour (12.30).

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he felt bound to support the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman), and he did so because he was of opinion that it was not at all fair to those Gentlemen who were deeply interested in the provisions of the Bill, and who formed a very numerous class, that it should be sprung upon the House unexpectedly at that hour of the night. He certainly did not think that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council was acting in regard to the measure in a manner which could be regarded as satisfactory by those hon. Members who were interested in the details of the Bill, many of whom were at that moment absent from the House under the impression that there was no prospect of the measure being brought on. The Government would be setting an extremely bad precedent if they insisted upon the House entering upon so important a Bill at that late hour of the night; and he did not think hon. Members would be doing their duty if they did not rise in their places to protest against the action of the right hon. Gentleman in attempting to force the House under the circumstances to go into Committee upon the Bill. Not only was it the fact that Members of the House generally who were interested in the measure were absent, but many Members of the Irish Party, to which he had the honour to belong, were absent who, from the personal interest they took in the provisions of the Bill, would assuredly have been in their places, if they could have had the slightest idea that it was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to force the Bill on. Indeed, he could name one hon. Member who was interested in a special degree in the details of the Bill who was not in his place, owing to the unexpected manner in which the Orders of the Day had been reached. He therefore

joined in the general appeal which had been made to the Government not to go further with the measure that night; but to consent to the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman). He protested against the action of the right hon. Gentleman in endeavouring to force the measure on the House. The next thing they would have, he supposed, would be a proposal to force on the House at a late hour of night some measure of vast importance to Ireland. Such a thing, at any rate, might be expected if the Government went on in the way proposed by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now travelling beyond the subject before the House, which is a Motion for Adjournment.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he was about to show why he supported the Motion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for County Dublin (Colonel King-Harman). He supported it because he did not at all believe in the principle which had actuated the right hon. Gentleman in endeavouring to bring the Bill into Committee at that time of night. Though many hon. Members might not be interested in the measure, yet they knew that if they allowed an important Bill to get into Committee at such an hour a precedent would be set, and the time might come when some important measure relating to Ireland would be brought in and forced on the attention of Parliament by some Minister who took notice of the fact that there were not many Irish Members in their places. It was for that reason that he had occupied the time of the House in protesting against the action of the Government in attempting to force this most important measure into Committee now, and in endeavouring to deal in a manner that was not satisfactory or fair with so many Gentlemen who were deeply interested in the Bill, but were not now in their places. He had much pleasure in supporting the Motion for Adjournment.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he had no wish to interfere unduly with the Business of the House; but he was most anxious that the Rules should be observed with a view to the regular progress of Business through the House, as it used to be formerly conducted. He,

in common with a certain number of Members, had not the good fortune to be present during the short debates which had occurred upon the principle of the Bill. He, as the House knew, entertained what he considered a due deference for the House of Lords; but, at the same time, he thought it was asking the House too much to ask them to accept the principle of a Bill merely because it had passed the House of Lords. There had been protests from Scotchmen and Irishmen. Well, he was a Member representing a district in the centre of England. He was fully conscious, no one more so, of the enormous social importance of the Medical Profession. He believed there was no Profession which exercised so important a social influence; and he, therefore, hoped the Government would allow the House, under the circumstances, to adjourn the debate, with a view to the full observance of their Rules, by securing to themselves an opportunity of questioning the principle of the Bill before being asked to go into Committee upon it.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council would see that the demand for the postponement of the debate was not a very unreasonable one. On reflection, no doubt, the right hon. Gentleman would admit that, during the past few days, the Bill had made more progress than the Government had expected. There was a strong feeling, indeed, that the measure had been brought on unexpectedly, and to the surprise of the House. They all remembered that, according to the calculations of the majority of hon. Members in the House, a long debate was expected on the third reading of the Representation of the People Bill. That debate, however, suddenly fell through, and afforded the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council an opportunity to take up the discussion on this Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman would consider the temper in which he had been met by hon. Members on all sides of the House—hon. Members who wished to amend and improve the Bill—he would see that considerable change in the expressions of opinion, at any rate, had taken place since Thursday evening. On Thursday, all who took part in the discussion were anxious to further the Bill a stage, on the under-

standing that due time would be given to amend it, and for consultation with the different Bodies in the country, who were deeply interested in the principles contained in the Bill. He (Mr. Harrington) was sure the right hon. Gentleman would admit himself when he came down to the House that evening he had no expectation that he would be able to advance the Bill one stage. It was not unreasonable, considering that they had had a fair discussion on Thursday, that hon. Members differing widely from the Government with regard to some of the details of the Bill should desire to have further time for consideration before the next stage was taken. Certainly there was no desire on the part of these Gentlemen, or on the part of those they represented, to obstruct or delay the progress of the Bill in any undue manner. Considering all these circumstances, and the peculiar position they were placed in that evening through having the Bill sprung upon them by surprise, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman would, on reflection, regard the demand now made for the adjournment of the debate an unreasonable one. Reference had been made to the absence of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor); and he must confess that until he (Mr. Harrington) had heard that hon. Gentleman's speech on Thursday, he had not given much attention to the principles of the Bill. It had struck him then, however, that the hon. Member had convinced the House that he would be able to give a very valuable contribution to the discussion of the Bill on the present stage. Taking into consideration the views which the hon. Member had put forward, and the spirit in which he had met the right hon. Gentleman, even if there were no other matter to be taken into account, the right hon. Gentleman might well see that there was good ground for an adjournment. An hon. Member like the Member for Queen's County, who showed that he had studied the principles of the Bill, and who showed that he was determined to contribute largely to the improvement of the measure in Committee, had a right to expect some consideration at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill. It was not reasonable to press the present stage on that day.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 55; Noes 87: Majority 32.—(Div. List, No. 145.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BIGGAR said, he thought he was now justified in moving the adjournment of the House. The old theory always was, that if there was a substantial minority in favour of adjournment the Government should give way. If the Government did not wish to deprive the House of the advantage of the half-past 12 Rule, they should not persist in taking the Committee stage of a Bill at that hour. At the same time, the minority had certain rights; and as no solid argument had been offered on the part of the majority, he thought he was justified in moving, as he now did, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. MOLLOY seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House do now adjourn."—(Mr. Biggar.)

The House divided:—Ayes 45; Noes 86: Majority 41.—(Div. List, No. 146.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. MACARTNEY moved that the debate be now adjourned.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(Mr. Macartney.)

MR. MUNDELLA assured the House that he had no desire to take any undue advantage. In asking that the Speaker should now leave the Chair, he was only asking what it was originally intended to ask. All he wished to obtain was the removal of the block against the Bill, and surely that was not an extravagant wish. Hon. Members on both sides of the House must admit that nothing could be more ample or exhaustive than the debate which took place on the second reading. In order to assure the House that he would not take them by surprise, he had already engaged that the Committee stage should not come on for at least a week, so that ample time would be given in which Amendments could be placed on the Paper. He would go further, and say that the Committee stage should not come on later than 11 o'clock at night,

so that it should not be taken at the end of a late Sitting. He was persuaded he had done all he possibly could, and all he ought to do, to satisfy hon. Members. If the House would assent to the present Motion, he would immediately move to report Progress. He had already received a Scotch deputation in respect of the Bill, and to-morrow he was to receive a deputation of the constituents of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman). He would take care that everybody interested in the Bill should receive proper consideration; but now that they had reached the 30th of June they could not go on wasting nights.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, that the medical portion of his constituents would not be with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) to-morrow. They wrote to him a few days ago to know when the Bill was likely to come on. He, of course, concluded that to-day, to-morrow, and probably Wednesday would be occupied by the debate on the Vote of Censure; therefore, he told his correspondents not to waste their time and abandon their professional pursuits by coming over to-morrow. Only that day he had received a letter from one of the medical gentlemen concerned, asking that he and his colleagues should have ample notice of the Bill being brought forward. How could he (Colonel King-Harman) give ample notice when the Bill was brought on so unexpectedly, and at such a time of night? The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had said that there was an exhaustive discussion on the second reading. As a matter of fact, he (Colonel King-Harman) curtailed his remarks on the second reading, because he had no wish whatever to talk out the Bill; but he thought that the future stages would be taken at a reasonable time, and when everybody could be present. What was the state of the Front Opposition Bench? ["Hear, hear!"] Right hon. Gentlemen opposite cried "hear, hear!" It seemed to him that those right hon. Gentlemen knew very well that the proceedings that had taken place that day would cause the Opposition Benches to be empty. The cheers which had just been given were the best proof that some of the hon. Gentlemen opposite knew that the debate on the Vote of Censure would

Mr. Mundella

not go on. [Mr. WARTON: It was all arranged.] He would not go as far as the hon. and learned Gentleman; but he thought they had a right to complain of the way in which it had been attempted that night to hurry this and other Bills through the House.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, he could not pretend to imitate the fire and fury of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman). All he wished to do was to appeal to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney) to withdraw his Motion and allow the Bill to proceed. The House had had fair and ample time for the discussion of the Bill. To adapt their business to the convenience of Members who did not happen to be present on certain occasions would be a rather curious attitude to assume. Such a proceeding would bring the work of the House to a speedy collapse. He was persuaded that the Medical Profession of the Three Kingdoms were satisfied with the discussion which had already taken place. ["No!"] He did not speak without special knowledge of the subject. The Medical Profession were looking forward with considerable interest to the Committee stage of the Bill; because they were aware that many Amendments would be proposed which would tend to improve the Bill and make it acceptable to them. He protested against the unreasonable attitude which had been taken up towards the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, who had told them in the most straight-forward manner that he had not the slightest intention of taking the Bill at an unsuitable time; but that, on the contrary, his desire was to afford to hon. Members ample time to consult their constituents. He (Dr. Farquharson) hoped they would be permitted to carry the Bill up to the Committee stage that night.

MR. BIGGAR said, it was rather unusual for a Minister to expect to make progress with the 13th Order of the Day. Of course, it was very proper that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) should be as plausible as he could; but, at the same time, he should endeavour to act in a manner which would not outrage the intelligence of his hearers. Seeing that when the House met at 4 o'clock there was not the slightest probability of this Order being reached, the Government ought certainly to give way.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) thought the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) made a very fair offer, when he said he would not bring the Bill on after 11 o'clock at night. Considering that they had now reached the 1st of July, and that the Government had a great deal of business which must occupy considerable time in the transaction, the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman was very fair and reasonable. Under the circumstances, he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) suggested to his hon. Friend (Mr. Macartney) that he might well allow this stage of the Bill to be taken.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR called the attention of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney) to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Mayor (Mr. R. N. Fowler), who invited him to withdraw his Motion for adjournment, was one of the Members who had given no support to any of the previous Motions for Adjournment. The right hon. Gentleman had voted consistently with the Government in favour of the policy of rushing this important Bill through the House at a time when no one could possibly expect it to come on. He would be curious to observe whether the same moderate temper would be displayed by the Lord Mayor when another important Government measure came before the House, especially if that measure should come on on a day on which it was not expected, and at an hour when it could not undergo anything like rational or proper consideration. With regard to what had been said by the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Farquharson), he would like to ask what means the hon. Member had of discovering that the Medical Profession in the country generally were of opinion that the Bill had been sufficiently discussed? He invited the attention of the hon. Gentleman to the fact that in all the Divisions in favour of adjourning the present stage of the Bill the Members who represented constituencies where doctors largely abounded had gone into the Lobby with the Members who were in favour of postponement. The Vice President of the Council had that night reached a climax he should not have expected the right hon. Gentleman to reach in reference to a Bill in progress. For what had he done? It was almost unprecedented to find a Minister resisting three Motions for Ad-

journment, backed up by considerable minorities, especially when those minorities were made up of Members of all sections of the House, including several hon. Gentlemen representing Liberal constituencies, and who were consistent supporters of the Government in season and out of season. The right hon. Gentleman was treating the House with scant courtesy in pursuing this course. What did the right hon. Gentleman propose as a compromise? He promised not to bring on this Bill after 11 o'clock at night, and, in a moment of candour, he said what he wished to do was to get rid of this blocking system. Exactly; he wished to remove from this Bill the safeguard which was considered necessary by those who wished to see it properly managed, and to have their Amendments duly and adequately considered. He thought that statement of the right hon. Gentleman, and his attempt to ride rough-shod over two-thirds of the House, was a confession which ought to make Members persevere in seeing that this Bill was brought on after due Notice, and when those who wished to have it amended would be able to do so. He hoped the hon. Member would rise superior to even the blandishments of the Lord Mayor, and proceed to a Division.

MR. HARRINGTON wished to put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether he thought he was improving the prospects of the Bill by this proceeding? Some hon. Members had displayed hostility to the Bill which, a few days ago, they were not inclined to display when the right hon. Gentleman took them into his confidence and was more conciliatory. There was another matter the right hon. Gentleman would do well to consider. He had to deal not only with Members who were now present, but with a large number who were absent that night, and who, when they found that the Bill had been taken in their absence, would be disposed to keep it a pretty long time under discussion. Considering the very calm manner in which this discussion proceeded a few evenings ago, and the desire that was shown on all sides to give it fair play, he thought it would be well for the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether he was advancing the interests of the Bill by this action. He had proclaimed it as his

desire to remove the Bill beyond the control of those who wished to delay its fair discussion. He thought they were entitled to pin the right hon. Gentleman to that statement; but he believed that on reflection the right hon. Gentleman would see that that statement was by no means calculated to win the favour of Members who were now absent. The best attitude the right hon. Gentleman could assume with regard to the Bill, if he really wished to facilitate its progress, would be, not to spring a surprise of this kind upon Members who were now absent, but to give them a fair opportunity of consulting those who were deeply interested in the Bill. As the other stage of the Bill was taken at such a time that the discussion upon it was not reported, he thought the House was not making an unreasonable demand in asking the right hon. Gentleman not to press it now. What the right hon. Gentleman had said was all very well, and he had no doubt as to the *bona fides* of the right hon. Gentleman; but it was not unreasonable to ask that a week's consideration should be allowed before the Bill was again taken. The right hon. Gentleman would greatly facilitate the progress of the Bill, and disarm the opposition of hon. Members, by giving them that fair and free discussion.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 33; Noes 75: Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 147.)

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 78; Noes 29: Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 148.)

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES
(IRELAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT
BILL.—[BILL 231.]

(Colonel Colthurst, Mr. Findlater, Mr. Parnell,
Mr. Deasy, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Shaw.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed
"That the Preamble be postponed."

Mr. Harrington

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he had no wish to oppose the Bill; but he should certainly like to know what the object of it was. He had never seen it, and did not know whether, as a matter of fact, it had been printed.

COLONEL COLTHURST stated that the Bill had been printed and in the hands of Members for some days.

MR. MACARTNEY asked if any statement had been made to the House in explanation of what the provisions of the Bill were?

COLONEL COLTHURST said, the Bill was of a very simple nature. It was designed to remedy an error which had been committed in consequence of taking the opinion of a learned counsel in regard to five or six tramways in the county of Cork. The presentment which had been made in the cases in question had been rendered invalid through an informality; and the object of the Bill was to place these tramways in the position they would have occupied if the error had not been made.

MR. MACARTNEY said, there were other tramways in Ireland which had run out because the Companies had not fulfilled the obligations imposed on them by the law. Why should an Act be passed simply for the county of Cork, and not extended to other counties in Ireland? He believed that in all the four Provinces of Ireland—Ulster, Leinster, Munster, and Connaught—tramway powers had run out solely because the provisions of the Act of Parliament had not been complied with. Under those circumstances, he did not see why a Bill should be brought in to remedy any defect in the county of Cork, and passed through the House at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning. In the interests of the money of the ratepayers he felt it his bounden duty to protest against the Bill.

COLONEL COLTHURST wished to point out that the Bill had already been read a second time, and its principle affirmed by the House, and it had now been in print for a week or 10 days before the House. Of course, it would be impossible for a private Member to bring in a Bill to remedy all the defects of the Tramways Act of last year, so far as the different localities in Ireland were affected. The mistake in this case arose from an erroneous opinion which had been given by a learned counsel, and

until that moment he had not heard a word of opposition raised against the Bill. It was simply to correct a mistake which had been made by the Grand Jury in making a presentment.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he would ask one question, with the view of saving time. He understood the hon. and gallant Member to say that the Bill was introduced to obviate the consequence of a mistake which had been made by the Grand Jury. Had the Tramway Bills to which it related been passed by the Grand Jury?

COLONEL COLTHURST: Yes.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Under a misapprehension?

COLONEL COLTHURST: Yes; into which they were led by an erroneous opinion of counsel.

MR. WARTON: Such misapprehension has had the effect of preventing the Bills from being proceeded with?

COLONEL COLTHURST: Yes.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I understand the matter now, and I will withdraw my opposition.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday*.

TRUSTEES OF SETTLEMENTS BILL.

[BILL 255.]

(*Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Henry Allen, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Ince, Mr. Elton.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [23rd June.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSHELL) expressed a hope that the hon. Member would postpone the second reading, as the Government were in communication with others in reference to it.

MR. TOMLINSON said, it had already stood over for some time; but at the request of the hon. and learned Gentleman he would not object to a further postponement.

Debate further adjourned till *Thursday*.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 1st July, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—New Parishes Acts and Church Building Acts Amendment * (171); Post Office Protection * (172); Educational Endowments (Ireland) * (173).

Second Reading—Improvement of Lands (Ecclesiastical Benefices) * (131).

Report—Newcastle Chapter * (130).

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) * (141); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) * (142); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) * (143); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) * (136); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders * (137); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers' Act) (No. 5) * (139); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers' Act) (No. 6) * (140); Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) * (158); Customs and Inland Revenue * (147); Benefices (Tiverton Portions) Consolidation Amendment * (154), and passed.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

EARL CAIRNS: I beg to give Notice that, on the Second Reading of the Representation of the People Bill, I shall move, as an Amendment—

"That this House, while prepared to concur in a well-considered and complete scheme for the extension of the franchise, does not think it right to assent to the Second Reading of a Bill having for its object a fundamental change in the constitution of the electoral body of the United Kingdom, but which is not accompanied by provisions for so apportioning the right to return Members as to insure a true and fair representation of the people, or by any adequate security in the proposals of the Government that the present Bill shall not come into operation except as part of an entire scheme."

EGYPT (TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, who had given Notice of his intention to move to resolve—

"That the terms of the agreement between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France, as indicated in the correspondence recently presented to Parliament, are such as in the opinion of this House will not lead to the establishment of tranquillity and good

government in Egypt, and will fail to produce results adequately corresponding to the sacrifices which England has made and may be called upon to make in that country,"

said: My Lords, before the business of the evening begins, I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice; and it is necessary that I should accompany it with a very few observations. Your Lordships are aware that there stands in my name, on the Paper for to-night, a Notice of a Motion, condemning the preliminary agreement which Her Majesty's Government have come to with the Government of France in respect to Egyptian matters; and your Lordships must also be aware that a somewhat similar Motion was intended to be moved last night in "another place." My Lords, we have the Votes of the House of Commons before us; and inasmuch as I can hardly otherwise make myself intelligible with regard to what occurred in the House of Commons I may be permitted to refer to the ordinary sources of information, and to remind your Lordships of that which is reported to have occurred in that place. You will remember that last week my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), on the part of Mr. Bruce, gave Notice of a Motion, and said he would ask Her Majesty's Government for a day on which the Vote of Censure there might be brought forward. A day was afterwards asked for, and a day was accorded at once by the Prime Minister; and, as far as I know, there was no intimation given, or a doubt expressed, of any objection on his part. Last night, when the other House met, the Prime Minister is reported to have moved for the postponement of the Orders of the Day in order to give effect to his promise; but scarcely had he resumed his seat, when certain other Members of the House of Commons alleged that it would be inopportune and injurious at this moment to raise the particular question involved in the Notice of Motion of Vote of Censure. My Lords, the Prime Minister, while admitting and implying that he was bound by the promise which he had given, used words so remarkable, if they are correctly reported, that I must refer to them; and I am not surprised—indeed, I think no one can be surprised—that they produced a very great effect upon

Members of the House of Commons. Mr. Gladstone said—

"With respect to what has fallen from my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, I wish him to understand that I am a most reluctant party. I have to say, on the part of the Government, that, so far from coming down here in the glee with which we may very often contemplate Party conflicts when we feel we are in the right, on this occasion I come down here with a deep sense that I am, under the pressure of circumstances, and as the choice of evils, giving facilities for bringing forward a Motion which we feel to be most inopportune and most injurious to the public interests."

Your Lordships will not be surprised to hear that, when the House of Commons went to a division, those words of Mr. Gladstone largely influenced Members on the Liberal side of the House. Certainly, a most remarkable scene took place. The whole Treasury Bench voted with the Opposition; and I believe I might almost say that the whole Liberal Party, including Mr. Gladstone's personal Friends, voted against him and the Government in the other Lobby. My Lords, the House decided that the Orders should not be postponed, and the Vote of Censure consequently fell to the ground. It was a decision which has been welcomed by many persons. Some have said that it was inopportune and injurious to bring forward this question at this time. Now, being responsible for a somewhat similar Motion, I desire to give the most formal and emphatic denial that I can to such a statement as that. I do not believe that, handled with common prudence, such a question need have been injurious to the public interests. The questions with which we, at all events, should have had to deal were questions which were not before the Conference. They were preliminary to the Conference; and if they had been handled with common discretion and prudence, I can conceive no objection to discussing them; and certainly no possible mischief to the public service as likely to arise, or arising from them. The Conservative Party, as a whole, in both Houses, have already shown their emphatic reprobation of the course which has been pursued in this matter. But, my Lords, the course, on the other hand, taken by the Prime Minister was, I venture to say, utterly unprecedented in the annals and the traditions of Parliamentary practice. It is perfectly true that the Vote of Censure was shelved; an undesirable object was removed out of the way; the word of

promise was kept to the ear; intentionally, or unintentionally, it was broken to the hope. Mr. Gladstone, I see, has been complimented on his extreme dexterity and adroitness. I think his Friends would do well to reflect before they offer him such compliments as this. They seem to me to be very left-handed. He is plainly in this dilemma—either this great and powerful Minister was unable to secure the adhesion of a single follower, or there was, or was believed at least to be, a wish for defeat on his part. My Lords, whether it was an accident, whether it was a manœuvre, whether it was Party tactics, I repeat, deliberately, whatever it was, I will leave him to reconcile the fact that on Friday he made no opposition to granting a day for this discussion; and that on Monday evening, at the eleventh hour, he comes down to the House and tells it that it is most inopportune and most injurious to the public interests. I do not care to press this point further; but your Lordships may be sure that there are many persons out-of-doors who will speak of it in far rougher and plainer language than I have used. Now, the last point I have to put is an important one, and it is this. The real question is, is this statement made by the Prime Minister in the “other place” on his own responsibility and couched in words of greatest gravity? He believes a discussion of this question to be most inopportune and most injurious to the public interests. I am placed in a difficult position this evening, whether or not to go on with the Motion that stands in my name; but I remember what has been the practice—I might say the invariable practice, I believe, of this House—of deferring to the judgment of a responsible Minister when he tells us that it is dangerous to the public interests to discuss a particular question. My Lords, I trust it will be very long indeed before in this House we ever have reason to doubt the word of any Minister who makes such a statement to us; and, therefore, I ask the noble Earl opposite now whether he adheres to the statement of Mr. Gladstone; and, whether he will assure the House that, in his opinion, the discussion of this question would be fraught with danger, and even with public inconvenience? If the noble Earl answers this Question in the affirmative, I shall be consulting, I believe, the feelings of your Lordships’

House on the one hand, and I shall be doing right, I believe, on the other, if I abstain from pressing the Motion at present.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I rise to answer the Question which the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) was good enough to give me private Notice of—a Question which he has prefaced with some statements that appear to me to show some soreness on the part of the noble Earl, both with regard to what passed last night and with regard to the obligation which he feels in not bringing his Motion before your Lordships to-day. As usual, the noble Earl managed to make something like a personal attack on the Prime Minister. In the most unwarrantable manner, he twice made insinuations that there seemed to be something of a manœuvre in what took place last night. I observe that a right hon. Friend of mine, in answer to a similar insinuation, answered that there was nobody but the person who made the insinuation in or out of the House of Commons who would have done it; but as I happen to have heard that a Member of your Lordships’ House made a similar remark, I took the liberty of writing to Mr. Goschen to ask him to clear up the matter, and I will venture to read to your Lordships the answer which Mr. Goschen has given; and I cannot conceive its not being regarded as absolutely conclusive as to the charge of manœuvre which the noble Earl brings forward against us. Mr. Goschen says—

“My dear Granville,—In reply to your question, you may assert in the most unqualified manner that no one connected, directly or indirectly, with the Government has had the slightest inkling of any idea on my part to oppose the postponement of the Orders of the Day, and, indeed, I had abandoned the idea myself. The whole action taken was taken in entire independence of the Government; and, as far as I am concerned, was simply giving effect to the opinion which I had expressed to the House when Sir Stafford Northcote gave Notice that some Motion would be proposed by the Opposition—namely, that any debate and Division on the French Agreement would be most injurious to the public interests.”

I trust now we shall not hear anything more of manœuvres and understandings between the Government and any of their followers. My Lords, the noble Earl has reproached Mr. Gladstone, because he said his Friends had complimented him on the adroitness of the

course which he had taken. As far as my observation goes, I am not aware of any Friends having complimented Mr. Gladstone on any such supposed merit; it was entirely from his opponents, who tried to fix this charge of adroitness on Mr. Gladstone. The noble Earl says nothing would induce him, after a responsible Member of the Government declared that there would be injury caused by a certain Motion to the public service, to press that Motion. I am afraid that is a little indirect reproach on the Leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons; because he did press and vote for the Motion after that assertion had been made by Mr. Gladstone. Either he or the noble Earl cannot consistently be right in the principle they lay down. My Lords, with regard to the Question which he has put to me, I have no hesitation in saying that I agree with what Mr. Gladstone has said. More than that, I wonder the noble Earl ever had any doubt whatever as to this House proceeding with this Vote of Censure after what passed in the House of Commons last night; but, beyond that, I say this opinion of the inexpediency and the disadvantage was one which I have held ever since the Notice was given. We considered it most carefully. We all thought, not for any private reason, but for reasons obvious to all persons who had considered the subject, and which, of course, influenced instinctively the majority in the House of Commons yesterday, that it must be a disadvantage that a deliberate Vote of Censure should be proposed; that there should be a discussion begun, the House being imperfectly informed on all the questions more or less connected together; and that at the moment when the Conference was opening, and when the most difficult and delicate negotiations were going on. There is nothing more incumbent upon a Government than to show great sensitiveness whenever a Vote of Censure is *bond fide* brought against them, and to give the earliest opportunity for that Vote to be decided one way or the other. We considered it most carefully whether we ought to give a day. Here, no day is required; and we came to the conclusion that we were bound in honour to give a day as soon as possible in the other House, and that was done. Yesterday, the whole thing, as Mr. Goschen's letter

shows, was a complete surprise. In truth, Mr. Gladstone did not refrain from giving expression to what was felt, and the result was a majority of 40. When you come to compare all the people who voted, against their opinions, in favour of the question of suspending the Orders of the Day, it will be found that a very large majority of the House of Commons was agreed as to the utter inexpediency of going on with the Vote of Censure.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I am glad that the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) has had the opportunity of reading the letter from Mr. Goschen; because, undoubtedly, the circumstances, as they appear in this morning's newspapers, rather remind one of those valient duellists who are punctual to appear on the field, but who take care that a magistrate shall have private information of what is going to take place. Even after that explanation, while I should say that it entirely clears away any suspicion that Mr. Goschen had any kind of previous intimation, it is impossible to deny that the whole circumstances are very curious and unprecedented. The noble Earl and the Government appear to have felt that this discussion would be most injurious to the public service. Well, it has happened again and again in Parliamentary practice, that when a Government has been of opinion that a discussion upon foreign affairs would be, at a particular moment, inexpedient, they have always immediately stated their opinion to Parliament, and, according to the invariable rule of Parliament, an appeal of that kind has been listened to. But the noble Earl, having this strong belief that the Motion was dangerous and inexpedient, carefully kept that belief to himself; and if it had not been for the accidental speech of Mr. Forster, which, as it were, drew the statement out of Mr. Gladstone, we should never have known that it was inexpedient. It is very odd that in spite of the perfectly accidental character of that avowal of Mr. Gladstone there was a division; and it is curious that Mr. Gladstone's personal influence and example should not have been able to draw any of his followers after him into the Lobby. The contagion of mad rebellion seems to have seized them all; and those who never rebelled before on this occasion lifted up their heels against their master. It is very mysterious to those

who only look on the reported circumstances of the case. There will be recorded, I have no doubt, for the benefit of future historians, circumstances, not of a private, but of a less public character, which may throw some light on the facts. I am told, on very good authority, that the two Gentlemen whose duty it is to marshal the forces of the Government were, during that division, at the door of the Lobby into which the Government and the Opposition went, and that, when asked by Liberal Members which way they were to go, instead of replying with enthusiasm, as might be expected, "Of course, you are to follow Mr. Gladstone," they immediately replied—"The bulk of the Party is going the other way." And it is remarkable that after that, the Party voted against Mr. Gladstone in sufficient numbers to neutralize his formal vote, and to give effect to his expressed opinions. My noble Friend (the Earl of Carnarvon) has been attacked for speaking of a "manœuvre." Well, we will not use any big words; we will call it a contrivance; but, at all events, it was very ingenious and exceedingly successful. It has had this effect—that Mr. Gladstone has kept his promise, entirely freed from the inconvenience that that promise might have brought upon him. It is impossible to conceive a more striking example of a strict adherence to principle, combined with a complete enjoyment of the advantages of setting all principle at defiance. Why the Government are anxious to avoid a discussion on this subject in the House of Commons—that is, of course, a matter upon which speculation will be rife; but some people will have it that the Government have had a diplomatic rebuff in the Conference, and that the Conference will disappear. I should not like to entertain such a gloomy view. I, myself, am inclined to believe that the Prime Minister has had information, as many of us have had, as to the probable results of a Division; and that the prospect of gaining even that moderate majority which he secured on a late occasion appeared to him more problematical than most of his Friends were disposed to assert. Under those circumstances, I think his prudence is to be commended. As for us, we are sorry not to have the opportunity of expressing our opinions to-night; but I cannot say that otherwise

I regret the issue to which in this House the matter has come. I am glad that the Government should announce, in such a very distinct manner, their apprehension of the results of a full and free discussion of what they have done, and that they should show that they would like to defer it to a more convenient season, towards the middle of August. I feel, at all events, that the conduct and views of the Conservative Party on this question will record their opinions plainly before the country. No one can charge us with having touched this matter uninvited, or with having dealt with any questions not fairly placed before us. If the Government did not mean this question to be discussed, why did they depart from all diplomatic precedent by producing their Agreement in the very middle of negotiations; and why did they announce, in such a marked manner, that the Conference was to deal with no questions of policy, and only with questions of finance? The question, whether the stipulations that have been made with France are expedient or not; whether they are just to Egypt, or whether they are not; whether they are comfortable or not to the honour and highest interests of Great Britain—these things are absolutely independent of any decision to which the Conference may come as to the question of the advance of a loan of £8,000,000 to Egypt, or the reduction of interest to which the bondholder may submit. The political question and the financial question are absolutely separate; and I cannot see how the discussion of the political question, how the determination of the issues which the Government themselves have placed before us in regard to the future policy of Great Britain, can affect the financial question which the Conference has to determine. But this is clearly not a matter which can guide our judgment on the present occasion. In deference to the uniform precedent and practice of this House, the announcement of the Government that this discussion would be injurious to the public service must govern our conduct.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, the last portion of the observations of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) shows exactly what we should have had to encounter if we had refused to give a day

in order to afford an opportunity for the discussion of the Vote of Censure. We should have been told, in still stronger terms, that we were running away because we were afraid to meet it. That is a position which no Government can afford to occupy. It is impossible for any Government to remain under a proposed Vote of Censure without giving to Parliament an opportunity of dealing with it. If we were to refuse, it would be inferred that the Government were not prepared to meet Parliament on that subject. The question of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) rested upon this—that he was ready to defer to the statement made by a responsible Minister that the discussion would be injurious to the public interests, and that, therefore he would not proceed with it. That has been the general rule; and I always understood that that rule meant that such statement should be accepted as decisive, and that no observations should be made, such as have now been made by the noble Marquess, the ground of injurious accusations against the Government. The noble Marquess says that the Prime Minister, having had access to the usual means of information, is acting on the principle that—

“He who fights and runs away,
May live to fight another day;”

and that the Government are sheltering themselves under the statement that this discussion would be prejudicial to the public service. I protest altogether against that line of argument. It seems to me that one of two things should be done—either no such rule as that which I have mentioned should be considered at all; or, when it is stated by the Government that it is prejudicial to the public service that there should be a discussion, that statement should be conclusive, and any observations or discussion—for this is a discussion—should be reserved for the fitting opportunity when the negotiations are concluded. That seems to me to be the rule that underlies the Constitutional practice of the country, and the necessities of the case. What are the necessities of the case? It is utterly impossible for Parliament itself to discuss negotiations. Negotiations must be conducted by a responsible Government, and that Government must have the confidence of Parliament while conducting them. My noble Friend

(Earl Granville) has dealt with the notion that there was any manœuvre in this matter. What occurred in the House of Commons yesterday took the Government by surprise; but it is not entirely without precedent. If the noble Marquess searches the pages of *Hansard* he will find that, in 1863, the House refused to agree to the Motion for suspending the Orders of the Day in order to proceed with a discussion. The circumstances may have been unusual; but the result seems to be that Parliament has wisely refused to enter into a discussion which Parliament agrees with the Government would be prejudicial to the public service.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—PARSONS-TOWN AND PORTUMNA RAILWAY. QUESTION.

THE EARL OF ROSSE asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether it is their intention to offer facilities for the re-opening of the Parsonstown and Portumna Bridge Railway, which has been closed for the last five years, and has passed into the hands of the Loan Commissioners?

LORD THURLOW, in reply, said, the Public Works Loan Commissioners held the line referred to at present as mortgagees in possession. They had no power whatever to work the line, but only to execute, from time to time, the repairs which might be required to prevent the line from falling into a state of deterioration. It was their earnest desire to dispose of the line at the earliest possible moment, and they were prepared to entertain any reasonable offer which might be made. Some four years ago they had hoped that they were at the point of concluding a sale; but, unfortunately, and without any fault of theirs, the transaction went off. The Commissioners believed that, at the present moment, circumstances were more favourable for effecting a sale than they had been for some time past; and they hoped and had some confidence that before long they might be able to dispose of the line to some substantial people, and that it might be re-opened for public traffic.

NEW PARISHES ACTS AND CHURCH BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to further amend the New Parishes Acts and the Church Building Acts—Was *pre-*

sent by The Lord Archbishop of CANTERBURY; read 1^a. (No. 171.)

POST OFFICE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law with respect to the protection of the Post Office, and to offences committed in relation to the Post Office—Was presented by The Lord THURLOW; read 1^a. (No. 172.)

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND)

BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to re-organise the educational endowments of Ireland—Was presented by The Lord PRESIDENT; read 1^a. (No. 173.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 1st July, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer) * [267]; Great Seal * [268].

Second Reading—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders * [259].

QUESTIONS.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—KILDYSART BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Land Commission has been called to a resolution of the Kildysart Board of Guardians, complaining of the inconvenience and expense to fifty-six suitors in that union, who were obliged to travel distances of twelve to seventeen miles to have their land claims heard at the late sittings of the Sub-Commission at Kilrush; whether, in consequence of the complaint of inadequate accommodation at the Kildysart Courthouse, the guardians of the Kildysart Union have placed their board-room at the disposal of the Sub-Commissioners; and, whether they will be requested to arrange for the future to bring their court within easier reach of poor suitors?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Chairman of the County Clare Sub-Commission reports as follows;—

"Last September we sat at Kildysart, to save the tenants the journey to Kilrush, and found the Petty Sessions House there quite insufficient for the accommodation of the Court. We received no intimation that the Guardians had placed their Board room at the disposal of the Sub-Commission. The Kildysart Union is of large area; accordingly, with a view to the convenience of the parties, and with the approval of the solicitors on both sides, we arranged that the cases nearer Kilrush should be taken up there, whilst those nearer Ennis should be heard at that town. The tenants all received notice of the time their cases would be heard at Kilrush, and they were, in fact, not delayed an hour from the time mentioned in the notice. None of the tenants expressed the slightest dissatisfaction at having to come into Kilrush."

MR. O'BRIEN: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to state that the arrangement of the Sub-Commissioners was made entirely to suit the convenience of the tenants?

MR. KENNY: Relative to the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, may I ask whether, at this season, Kilrush being within easy drive of Kilkee, a well-known seaside resort, if the convenience of the Sub-Commissioners, for the purposes of personal enjoyment, is of greater importance than the convenience of the tenant farmers of the county Clare; and if he is aware that this arrangement is come to annually by the Court?

MR. TREVELYAN: I will answer that Question with Notice. In reply to the hon. Member for Mallow, I may say that I have given him all the information I have on the subject.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF — GARDINER.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If a man named Gardiner, of Kilmoon, Lisdoonvarna, county Clare, was sentenced, on June 19th last, at the Ballyvaughan Sessions, to a week's imprisonment for waylaying and assaulting a man named Edward Mulqueeney; if Gardiner has been for some considerable time under police protection, having a police hut and five policemen stationed near his house, on his own representation that he was in personal danger; if Gardiner is also permitted to carry arms; and, if it is the intention of the Government to continue police protection to him?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is not a fact that Gardiner was sentenced to a week's

imprisonment for waylaying and assaulting Edward Mulqueeney; but he was fined 2s. 6d. for a trifling assault. Gardiner has for some time been under police protection, but not, as stated in the Question, on his own representation. On the contrary, he rather objects to it. But the police authorities consider it necessary for his safety, as his house has been fired into, and he has been the object of other outrages. He is licensed to carry arms.

MR. KENNY: Is it not a fact that this man Gardiner only got the option of a fine, and that he really was sentenced to a week's imprisonment?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am not informed.

PRISONS (ENGLAND)—CHATHAM CONVICT PRISON — VISIT OF MAJOR BLAIR, R.M., TO ONE OF THE CROSSMAGLEN CONVICTS.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, With what object did Major Blair, R.M., recently visit one of the Crossmaglen prisoners in Chatham Prison?

MR. TREVELYAN: Major Blair visited the prison, and saw one of the convicts, not by direction of the Executive, but because he expressed a wish to see him. I understand that he desired to learn something about his wife and neighbours, and endeavoured to have himself transferred to some Irish prison.

MR. HEALY: Are we, then, to understand that this visit was undertaken purely at the man's own wish, and not at the instigation of the Government?

MR. TREVELYAN: It was, Sir.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE POST OFFICE AT ATHLONE.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the assistant divisional magistrates of Athlone overlook and open letters received in Athlone; whether they have their residence over the post office; and, whether they are so acting in accordance with the instructions of the Executive?

MR. TREVELYAN: A Constabulary officer has private apartments over the Post Office at Athlone. He lives there to suit his own convenience, and not by direction of the Government. He enters

the house by a private door, and his rooms are quite separate from the Post Office, with the business of which he never interferes in any way.

WEST INDIES—THE ENGLISH CHURCH AT GRENADA.

MR. HEALY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What reply has been sent to the Petition addressed to Lord Derby by the taxpayers of the Island of Grenada against the vote of £260 by the Legislative Council for the repair of an Anglican parsonage at St. George; and, is it the fact that three-fourths of the Islanders are Catholics; that the Protestant Church there has been disestablished; that the vote was carried against a majority of the unofficial members of the Council; that the Petitioners cite the local Act of 1874 against the validity of the vote; that, although the Anglicans form only a fourth of the population, they comprise amongst their number some of the wealthiest inhabitants; and that they have hitherto had a monopoly of all religious endowments?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: We have only received a copy of the Petition referred to. The original, which must come through the Governor of the Windward Islands, has not yet reached us. We have, however, already sent a despatch to the Governor asking for information as to the obligation of the Colonial Government to undertake the repair of this parsonage. We have further directed him not to allow any part of the money to be expended without further instructions. But we are not yet in a position to give a final decision. The statements contained in the second part of the Question are, in the main, correct; but we have no official knowledge of the relative wealth of the different communities.

MR. HEALY: Would the hon. Gentleman kindly state how soon the Government can give their definite decision?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY was understood to say that it would be given in about a week.

NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES—MR. CORRY CONNELLAN'S PENSION.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, The name of the person

in receipt of the pension of £436 at page 545 of the Estimates of 1883-4; and, if he can say whether it is or is not the fact that Mr. Corry Connellan receives any sum out of the public purse?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, the name of the person referred to was Corry Connellan, and he was in the receipt of the annual pension stated.

MR. HEALY: Then I beg to give Notice that I shall call attention to this subject as a public scandal. I shall ask the Government, whether it is a fact that this person, who was hunted out of Ireland for being guilty of a disgraceful offence, which cannot be mentioned, is at the present moment receiving from Her Majesty's Government a pension of £436 per annum?

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS AT BALLINROBE.

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the unsatisfactory state of the postal arrangements now existing in the district of Partry, Ballinrobe, county Mayo; whether it is a fact that there are only two sub-offices in the vicinity of Ballinrobe, one of them being four miles from the last-named place, and the other seven miles further on, viz. at Tourmakeady; whether it is a fact that there is no office between Tourmakeady and Maam, a distance of twenty to twenty-five miles; whether all the inhabitants of Maamtrasna, Derrypark, and the Partry Mountains, including the police of at least a dozen barracks, huts, and "protection posts," are compelled by the absence of postal accommodation to drive to the Tourmakeady office; whether it is a fact that there is no money order office at Tourmakeady, and that the poor people in that district, and to the west of it, who desire to change money orders are obliged to go into Ballinrobe, a distance in some instances of at least thirty Irish miles; whether it is a fact that only one postboy, at a salary of 18s. a-week, is employed in the delivery of letters and parcels between Ballinrobe and Tourmakeady, and is compelled to travel twenty-two Irish miles every day, on some days carrying a weight of nearly 56 pounds; whether the smallness of his salary precludes such postboy from obtaining assistance in the carry-

ing of heavy parcels; whether the Postmaster General is aware of the inconvenience resulting to the inhabitants of the district of Partry, Ballinrobe, from the non-existence of a Sunday post, while Sunday postal services are in existence in the rural districts surrounding Partry; and, whether he will inquire into the grievances set forth in this Question, and will take steps to insure the speedy removal of such grievances?

MR. FAWCETT: I have received no complaints as to the unsatisfactory state of the postal arrangements in the district of Partry, county Mayo. It is true there are only two sub-offices in the vicinity referred to—namely, at Partry and Tourmakeady; but the vicinity is very sparsely populated, and the amount of correspondence is very limited. It is a fact that there is no office between Tourmakeady and Maam in a direct line; still the sub-offices at Aasleagle, Leenane, Clonbur, and Curnamona supply parts of the district lying between the two places. As regards the want of postal accommodation felt by the inhabitants and the police at Maamtrasna, Derrypark, and the Partry Mountains, I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to supply me with more definite information on this subject. A money order office has been authorized at Tourmakeady, which will be opened on the 1st of August. The wages of the rural postman between Ballinrobe and Tourmakeady have been raised to £1 a-week, and as he uses a horse the weight carried is not beyond his ability. In regard to the absence of a Sunday post to Tourmakeady, if a Memorial on the subject be forwarded, and it should be found that the Memorialists receive as much as two-thirds of the correspondence, the proportion required by the rule affecting the establishment of Sunday posts, I shall be happy to comply with their request.

EVICTIIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF BRYAN MERRIMAN.

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that a labourer on the estate of Earl Fitzwilliam, named Bryan Merriman, was evicted from his dwelling on the 16th instant, at Newcastle, county Wicklow, with wife and eight children;

whether Merriman took an active part in getting up a requisition to the sanitary authorities for building labourers' cottages under the Act; whether Earl Fitzwilliam opposed the project on the ground that additional cottages are not wanted; whether Merriman was proceeded against by means of the Sanitary Act; whether the sanitary authority refused to evict him; and, whether there are any vacant cottages in the district for labourers of the class to which Merriman belongs?

MR. TREVELYAN: Merriman was not a tenant of Earl Fitzwilliam's; nor, indeed, was he a tenant of anybody. He lived in the gate lodge of a widow lady, who is a tenant on Earl Fitzwilliam's estate. He had no legal right to this lodge, and he refused to pay rent for it. Although he had no claim on Earl Fitzwilliam, he has, through that nobleman's agency, been provided with another house, which he occupies as caretaker at 1*d.* a-week, until such time as one can be built for him. I am not aware that Merriman took an active part in getting up a representation under the Labourers' Act, beyond the facts which I mentioned in replying to a former Question—namely, that he took some steps to obtain the benefits of the Labourers' Act himself, but that his application did not fulfil the requirements of the Act, and could not be complied with. As to Earl Fitzwilliam's action with regard to the proposed schemes under the Act in that district, I am informed that he dissented from the taking of his lands; but having undertaken to build himself, the Sanitary Authority accepted his proposals, and did not proceed with those cases in which they had intended erecting cottages on his property. On a previous occasion I stated that several months ago proceedings were taken against Merriman under the Public Health Act, and an order was made for the closing of his house on sanitary grounds; but that subsequently the Sanitary Authority did not desire that the order should be carried out, and the matters complained of having been abated, the man was not at the time disturbed. Though I have no positive information, I think it unlikely that there are many vacant cottages in the district; but it appears that one was made available for this man, and I hope that through the operation of the La-

bourers' Act other deficiencies are in course of being supplied.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES
(IRELAND) ACT, 1883—THE GRANARD
JUNCTION TRAMWAY COMPANY.

MR. BIGGAR asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that at the Spring Assizes for the county of Longford, in this year, the Grand Jury of that county granted a guarantee of five per cent to the Promoters of the Granard Junction Tramway Company, on a certain small portion of the barony of Granard, without giving previous notice to the occupiers of said small portion that this large guarantee would be imposed upon them; that, inasmuch as the presentment was thrown out by the Privy Council for informality, and a new application will be before the same Grand Jury, on next Friday, for a new guarantee in respect of same, and the public notice again not specifying any portion of the barony to be charged, whether the Lord Lieutenant will issue instructions to said Grand Jury that some notice should be given to the occupiers of the portions of the barony proposed to be charged with this heavy responsibility; and, further, that, inasmuch as the only substantial means of profit to pay the said Promoters five per cent on the paid-up capital of said Company will be the carriage of goods from the proposed station on the Midland Great Western Railway Company's Line to the town of Granard, he will ascertain, for the information of the cess-payers, what has been the average delivery, either by freight or tonnage, of goods out of Ballywillan (the present station on said Railway for Granard goods) per month, or for the last three or any three months?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER), in reply, said, that this Question only appeared on the Paper to-day, and he was unable to make a full statement on the matter. He might say, however, that it was not the province of the Lord Lieutenant to issue instructions to the Grand Jury under the Act. With regard to the 3rd paragraph of the Question, the information sought for could only be got on application to the Railway Companies, and the Government had no means of obtaining it.

Mr. Biggar

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — EVICTIONS
AT GWEEDORE.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that some eighty families are to be evicted this week on the Olphert, Nixon, and Stewart estates, in the parish of Gweedore, county Donegal; whether the greater number of these families are excessively poor, and were preserved from starvation by charitable relief during the summer of last year; whether one of the landlords is Chairman of the Dunfanaghy Board of Guardians, and the son of another Vice Chairman; and, whether, in view of these facts, and of the repeated refusal of the Dunfanaghy Board of Guardians to give out-door relief, the Government will take steps to insure that out-door relief shall be available for the evicted families during the month following the evictions, according to the power vested in the Guardians by the 11th and 12th Vic. c. 47?

MR. TREVELYAN: Evictions are, I understand, about to take place, as stated. The district is a very poor one, and a number of the people received a good deal of charitable assistance last year. Mr. Olphert is Chairman of the Dunfanaghy Board of Guardians. I am not aware whether either of the other landlords mentioned is a son of the Vice Chairman. The power to give out-door relief, to which the hon. Member refers, is expressly vested in the Guardians, "if they see fit." The decision rests absolutely with them, and the Local Government Board cannot interfere.

MR. O'BRIEN asked, was it not a fact that the Sub-Commissioners have made very large reductions in the rents on the farms of the persons to be evicted; and, whether, as it was in order to deprive the poor people of the benefit of these reductions they were now being evicted, the right hon. Gentleman would not think fit to interfere in the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am not aware about the question of redistribution; and I have no means of interposing in the matter, except by extra official advice.

FRANCE AND CHINA—MEDIATION.

MR. BORLASE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, having regard to the commer-

cial interests of England in China, and to the fact that hostilities have been renewed between French and Chinese troops, Her Majesty's Government will use their best endeavours, as an intermediary between the two Powers, to bring about an understanding, and thereby to prevent bloodshed, and the international complications which may follow, should it be in contemplation (as reported in *The Observer* of Sunday last) to subject a Chinese Port to bombardment in retaliation for the attack on the French convoy at Langson?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The French and Chinese Governments are aware that our good offices would always be at their service; but to offer mediation, unless at a time when Her Majesty's Government had some reason to suppose that it would be acceptable to both Governments, would do harm, and not good.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the noble Lord could give the House any information as to what had recently taken place in Tonquin between France and China?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he did not think it would be at present desirable to enter into that matter. The Notice of the Question strictly referred to mediation.

LAW AND JUSTICE — THE COUNTY
PALATINE OF LANCASTER.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it will not still be possible to make further arrangements for the trial of Admiralty and Probate cases in the County Palatine of Lancaster?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he had already answered this Question. If there had been sufficient judicial strength a Judge would have been appointed for the purpose, because it was felt that Lancashire had great claims.

FRANCE AND MADAGASCAR—HOSTILE
OPERATIONS — THE VOTE OF
CREDIT.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that a credit has been proposed by the French Government for the blockade of Madagascar and for the permanent occupa-

tion of Tamatave, Majunga, Vohemar, and other Malagasy ports; and, what steps Her Majesty's Ministers are taking to protect British commerce and to obtain compensation for the serious injury inflicted upon British subjects by the French invasion of Madagascar?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government are not aware that such a credit has been proposed. At the same time, I am not wishing to throw any doubt on the report to which the hon. Member refers. As regards the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I have nothing to add to the reply which I made to his similar Question on the 10th of June—namely, that an efficient Consular staff is watching over the interests of British subjects, and that claims for compensation cannot be settled till the conclusion of hostilities. If the hon. Member desires any information respecting Her Majesty's ships on the station, my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty will be able to supply it?

MR. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT: I understand from the answer of the noble Lord that it may be taken as a fact that a credit has been proposed by the French Government for the permanent occupation of what practically amounts to the East Sea Coast of Madagascar. I would, therefore, ask the noble Lord whether Her Majesty's Government acquiesces in this occupation of Malagasy territory by the French?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; what I said was, that the Foreign Office had not received any information on the subject. At the same time, I wish to point out to the hon. Member that the Foreign Office is not necessarily obliged to have information as to every subject of which the hon. Member reads an account in the newspapers.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Then I beg to give Notice that when Her Majesty's Government introduce their proposal for the neutralization of Egypt and the Suez Canal, I shall move to add the words, "Madagascar, Tonquin, and Tunis."

HAMPSTEAD HEATH ACT, 1871.

MR. D. GRANT asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Why the public highway on Hampstead Heath, described in section forty-one of

"The Hampstead Heath Act, 1871" (34 and 35 Vic. c. 77), as the "road or public way on the Heath leading from Telegraph Hill to Golder's Hill," has been in part converted into a bridle road and closed to carriages, and in another part is so badly kept as to be useless or dangerous; and, whether there is any reason why the right of user, reserved by the same section of the Act to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and to Sir Spencer Wells, should not be extended to the general public, if such right did not previously exist?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: I beg to inform the hon. Member, in reply to his Question, that although the words "road or public way" are used in "The Hampstead Heath Act, 1871," the road to which he refers never was anything but a rough bridle or cart track across the turf of the Heath, and it still exists in the state it always has been in, except that a portion of it, which was utilized by the Board when they made a ride for the use of equestrians, was improved, and this is, of course, in a better condition than the part which the Board did not utilize. No vehicular right of way exists over the Heath, except, perhaps, as regards certain vehicles going to Sir Spencer Wells's or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners' property; and the Board do not consider it to the public advantage to allow vehicles generally to be driven over the Heath.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)— THE MAHDI.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that the Great Kabbalish Tribe have joined the Mahdi, and that the 46th Regiment have been ordered to Keneh?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No information of the kind referred to has been received. The General Officer Commanding has not reported any actual orders to the 2nd Battalion Cornwall Light Infantry; but the following telegram received from him on the 22nd June shows that such a step was in contemplation:—

"Cairo, 22nd June, 1884, 5.40 P.M. Tribes in front become troublesome. Sussex Battalion leaves Assiout for Assouan, Wednesday, to support Egyptian troops and give confidence to Natives. Shall send, if necessary, another battalion to Kench, where tracks from Eastern

Soudan about. Rumours current of tribes threatening Korosko, Assouan, Keneh. Friendly tribes in desert east of these places watching enemy, and behaving well up to last accounts."

EGYPT—STATE OF THE PRISONS.

MR. W. E. FORSTER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can inform the House what steps Her Majesty's Government will take to prevent cruel injustice in Egypt, and especially cruelty in Egyptian prisons and the imprisonment of innocent people, while Her Majesty's troops kept the Egyptian Government in power?

MR. HEALY: Before the Prime Minister answers that Question, I wish to ask him whether it is a fact that the alleged cruel injustice rests solely on the statements of Mr. Clifford Lloyd? I wish to point out that these alleged cruelties must be things not unknown to Mr. Clifford Lloyd from his experience of Ireland, where many persons were imprisoned without trial, and where Her Majesty's troops enabled Mr. Clifford Lloyd to carry on a system by which men were imprisoned without any charges having been made against them.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think I should advance the knowledge we possess with regard to this question by mixing with it either any reference to Irish transactions, or, indeed, any reference to Mr. Clifford Lloyd. The Question does not refer to Mr. Clifford Lloyd; and I think in my answer I had better not bring in the controversies with which that gentleman's name has, unfortunately, been connected in Egypt. My right hon. Friend is quite aware that he must be content with a summary answer to the important point he has put. At the close of his Question he refers to the presence of Her Majesty's troops in Egypt, and we entirely agree with him in what he appears to suggest—namely, that the effect of a military occupation is to impose upon us a very heavy responsibility with regard to Egypt. What I have to say is that really the substance of the description of what we shall do to prevent cruel injustice in Egypt is that we shall continue to do what we have been doing. [MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Oh, oh!] I am very sorry to hear that an hon. Gentleman who is totally ignorant of the question meets my declaration with marks of

mockery. If he will permit me, I will continue what I have got to say—that we shall continue to do what we have been doing, and that we have no reason to be dissatisfied up to the present time with these results. The information conveyed to us, upon what we think very responsible and most sufficient authority, is that very great and beneficial changes have been made in the management of Egyptian prisons, and great improvements introduced, although, undoubtedly, they are, as everyone would expect, still far behind the practice and condition of prisons in civilized countries in the West. [MR. HEALY: No, no!] With regard to unjust imprisonment and oppressive imprisonment, this great difference has been introduced into Egypt—that is, that no such imprisonment can take place, and no such oppression can be practised, without its constituting a legal offence, liable to prosecution before the Courts. Beyond this, I have to say two things. First of all, there is an important discussion now going on, and a scheme in preparation, with respect to the action of the police in Egypt, upon which we shall shortly be in communication with the Egyptian Government. Further, my noble Friend (Earl Granville) informs me, that as we have had occasion to refer to Sir Evelyn Baring recently upon the general progress made in the matter of reform in Egypt since our occupation, he hopes to be able to communicate in a short time some information rather more detailed than what I have now given to the House.

MR. CHAPLIN: With reference to the reply of the Prime Minister, I wish to ask whether Her Majesty's Government consider that the steps they are now taking are adequate and effectual for preventing this cruel injustice in Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: I thought I had stated that we thought, with respect to the condition of the prisons, which was the question immediately put forward by my right hon. Friend, that the Reports show that the changes which have been effected, considering the time, and considering the difficulties, were quite as much, or even beyond, what could reasonably be expected; and as to the amount of practical good that has been effected, speaking generally, the impression made upon our mind is that the

progress of these reforms has been far from unsatisfactory.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Perhaps my right hon. Friend will allow me to ask him whether the Government will continue to take care that the reforms which they have introduced shall be carried out under the supervision of some Englishman, and not left entirely to Native officials?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, under the present state of Egyptian law, it is possible to imprison 1,000 men for a considerable length of time without trial, as was the case in Ireland under the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster)?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have stated that false imprisonment or oppressive treatment is now a criminal offence in Egypt, and may, like other criminal offences, be brought before the Courts. With respect to the Question of my right hon. Friend, I think I can give no answer to it, which is really more effective than the statement that we recognize our responsibility in the matter; and that our duty is, therefore, to promote the adoption in Egypt of those measures which, on the whole, we think best calculated to attain the end we have in view. Of course, we must look, in a material degree, to the assistance which Englishmen and the Natives of European countries are peculiarly competent to render; but it would not be right for me to lay down any general rule, which would tend very much to discourage all practical improvements among the Egyptians themselves.

MR. GORST: I should like to ask whether, when the Prime Minister says the Government is sensible of its responsibility, he includes the duty of using their influence to secure that high officials, such as Zebehr Pasha, who were guilty of cruelty, are adequately punished?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not see how that can be done; but, at the same time, if the hon. and learned Member has in view any particular case of cruelty, I should be much obliged to him if he will kindly state the particulars of the case to us, so that we may be able to give him a more direct answer.

MR. CHAPLIN: I am very sorry to be obliged to press the right hon. Gentleman; but what the House of Com-

mons wants to know is, whether the Prime Minister will hold out any hope to Parliament that the Government will take steps more effectual than those they have taken up to the present for the prevention of the cruelties which have been described by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, and which, I undertake to say, have sent a thrill of horror through the country?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think the hon. Gentleman will do well to withhold his judgment a little until he is in possession of fuller information on this subject. What I have to say is, that we shall persevere in the course which we have already pursued; and I believe that the results of that course have been quite as favourable—in indeed, in the opinion of competent judges, more favourable—than, in all the difficulties of the case, we had reason to expect they would be.

MR. CHAPLIN: In consequence of the extremely unsatisfactory reply of the right hon. Gentleman, I shall take the earliest opportunity I can obtain to call attention to the horrible cruelties which are now being practised in Egypt under the responsibility of the English Government, as described by Mr. Clifford Lloyd. The accuracy of that gentleman's account not having been impugned, I shall move a Resolution on the subject.

MR. HEALY gave Notice that when the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire moved his Resolution on this subject he would call attention to the cruelties committed in Ireland by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, and would ask whether a person guilty of such cruelties as he had committed in Ireland was not totally unworthy of credence?

SPAIN—QUARANTINE.

In reply to Mr. O'SHEA,

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that all vessels from France were subject to quarantine in Spain, as were also all vessels from England; but the Foreign Office were not aware of the precise number of days. Seven days' quarantine was imposed on all persons arriving in Spain by railway.

MR. STOREY asked whether, in the judgment of the noble Lord, quarantine in the case of vessels arriving from England at Spanish ports was neces-

sary; and, whether he would communicate with the Spanish authorities on the subject with the object of removing a restriction so prejudicial to British shipping?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It is well-known that the Spanish authorities have accepted the principles of quarantine, and therefore any general remonstrances with regard to it would be perfectly useless. When any instance of the abuse of the quarantine regulations is brought under the notice of the Foreign Office it will be examined on its merits, and representations made to the Spanish or other Government.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Mr. RYLANDS asked the Prime Minister, Whether, having regard to the backward state of Supply, he would state that Supply would be the first Order of the Day on Thursday?

MR. GLADSTONE: Arrangements have already been made for taking the second reading of the London Government Bill on Thursday; and in the event of the debate not being concluded on Thursday evening we should propose to continue it at a Morning Sitting on Friday. Whether we can get on with Supply on Friday evening or not, we propose to take it on Monday. I quite agree with my hon. Friend that it is necessary that progress should be made with Supply.

SIR WALTER B. BARTELOT asked what class of Estimates would be taken on Monday?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Army Estimates.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the Prime Minister if he could state whether the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill would be proceeded with on Thursday?

MR. GLADSTONE was understood to reply in the negative.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked whether it was the intention of the Government to take Morningittings on Tuesdays and Fridays?

MR. GLADSTONE: If it had been intended to take Morningittings on Tuesdays and Fridays a Motion would have been made to that effect. The Morning Sitting on Friday next, if there be one, will be without prejudice to any future proceedings, and will only be taken in case of it being necessary for

the purpose of carrying forward the debate on the London Government Bill. If the debate on that Bill is concluded on Thursday, the Government will not ask for a Morning Sitting on Friday.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, that the debate on the second reading of the London Government Bill could not, under any possible circumstances, be concluded in one night.

MR. GLADSTONE: That is the reason why I have proposed to provide a means for continuing the debate.

MOTION.

—o—

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)— SMALL POX EPIDEMIC.

RESOLUTION.

DR. CAMERON, in rising to call attention to the Small Pox Epidemic in London; and to move—

“That, in view of the alarming increase of Small Pox in London, this House calls upon Her Majesty's Government at once to apply to the Metropolis those rational principles of prompt and direct preventive administration, the efficacy of which in circumscribing Small Pox Epidemics has been demonstrated by the experience of Glasgow and other large towns,”

said, he should make no apology for bringing a subject of such great importance under the notice of the House. The President of the Local Government Board had told them the other day that nearly 400 persons had died of small-pox in London during the present year, and that the mortality was 10 per cent; so that there must have been about 4,000 cases. Now, it might be said that there was nothing very alarming in that; but it was the way in which their experience told them how all epidemics commenced. There would probably be a decline in the mortality during the hot weather, owing to the plentiful ventilation which the warm weather promoted; but there would be a resumption of the virulence of the epidemic when the cold weather set in, and they might expect a serious epidemic in London next year. That was the case when the great epidemic of 1870-2 broke out. The mortality was much less than it had been during the present year—not half the amount. In 1870 it was 1,000, and in 1871 it was close on 8,000. The same was the case with the epidemic of 1876-7, in the first year of which the mortality was not

at a greater rate than it had been this year; also with the epidemic of 1880, when there was a mortality of 471, which was succeeded by a mortality of over 2,000 in 1881. The Metropolitan Asylums Board had recognized that fact, for they had accommodation for 1,600 small-pox patients, and were increasing that accommodation in view of next year. They had hired, he believed, a hospital at Poplar, and were endeavouring to purchase land for the purpose of establishing camp hospitals. The Local Government Board recognized the fact also, for in a Circular issued on the 23rd of June they recommended the appointment of assistant vaccination officers and house-to-house visitation. Now, the system proposed in his Motion was no untried system. In the present year they had had a small touch of this epidemic in Glasgow; but they had had only 10 deaths in 133 cases. The outbreak commenced last year; but the cases, instead of increasing from week to week as they had done in London, had been reduced from 10 to 5, and then almost extinguished. The population of London was about eight times the population of Glasgow; and if they multiplied the mortality in Glasgow by eight they would get the mortality which ought to have occurred in the London population, had the same system been adopted, with similar results. By the adoption of the Glasgow system they might have had a saving of 300 lives, and close upon 3,000 cases of small-pox in the present year. *The British Medical Journal* of January 21, wrote—

“To those who have watched this outbreak, and have read the detailed accounts of its progress given in the different fortnightly reports, it must be quite clear that the disease has been kept within bounds and its extension limited by the energy and vigilance of the members of the sanitary staff of the city. Their promptness in tracing cases and immediately isolating those affected, together with the judicious use of re-vaccination in the case of those exposed to infection, has undoubtedly been the means of saving Glasgow from a severe small-pox epidemic, such as is now taxing all the resources of the sanitary authorities in London.”

The total death-rate in Glasgow per 1,000,000 during the entire duration of the epidemic of 1870-4 was 1,560; while the mortality in London during the same period was over twice as much, or 3,287. If they worked out that, they would find that if the Glasgow results had been secured, they would have saved about

3,000 lives and 15,000 cases in that epidemic. Let them take the entire 14 years between 1870 and 1883. The average small-pox mortality in Glasgow was 115 against 400 in London; and, working out the process, they would find that the saving of life during those 14 years, had the Glasgow results been secured in London, would have been close on 9,000, and that indicated a saving of close on 45,000 cases of small-pox. The Glasgow experience was not the only case in point. He might quote Manchester. During those 14 years, while London had an average mortality of 400, the average in Manchester had been 160, against 115 in Glasgow. Taking the figures for 10 years, from 1874 to 1883, the average annual mortality from small-pox was—In London, 234; Manchester, 82; Glasgow, 46; Leeds, Oldham, and Bradford, 42. This was not a matter of merely local importance; it was a matter of great national importance, for they were constantly sending out the disease to affect other parts of the country. What was the reason of the difference? It was simply a case of the efficacy of direct action as contrasted with circumlocution. He would explain to the House the difference between the London and Glasgow system by three illustrations. Let them take a can of dynamite with a fuse a yard long burning in it. According to the Glasgow system, the policeman who discovered it would think it his duty to pull out the fuse and put an end to the whole thing. In London, taking the small-pox analogy, the duty of the policeman who saw the fuse burning would be to report the matter to Scotland Yard, who would report to the Home Office, who would consult the Home Secretary, who would order out some officer to pull out the fuse, by which time, of course, the explosion would have taken place. Or, take the case of a mad dog, a constable at Glasgow would kill it; but in London it would be his duty to report to the parish authorities, who would report to the veterinary authorities, who would send a veterinary surgeon, who would report to the Local Government Board, who would issue a Circular calling attention to the risk of hydrophobia, and recommending the establishment of a hospital for patients. The third illustration was the cattle plague, in which the same difference between direct action and circum-

location would be observed. Glasgow laboured under great disadvantages in regard to small-pox. It contained a number of tenement houses, in which 100 families or more were often housed. From 1855 to 1864 the mortality from small-pox per 1,000,000 in Glasgow was 570, against 232 in London. But in 1863 a change was introduced. They had a very intelligent Medical Officer of Health, Professor Gairdner, who laid down the maxim that—

“Vaccination should be not only freely offered but systematically pressed upon the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, as well as of the immediately infected houses.”

And he directed the arrangements to be made. Now, in Glasgow they had none of the costly vaccination paraphernalia of London. Glasgow was much worse vaccinated than London—at all events, they had no army of Inspectors, and their vaccinators did not participate in the premiums paid to vaccinators for doing their duty, at a cost to the country of some £15,000 a-year. They had no vaccination stations kept up out of the Imperial funds. But everything was under one man—Dr. Gairdner—the result being that in the 10 years in which the system had been adopted the Glasgow death-rate from small-pox fell from 570 to 194; whereas the London death-rate increased from 232 to 470. A new Medical Officer stepped into power—Dr. Russell—one of the most energetic and sagacious Medical Officers in the whole Kingdom; and that gentleman found a flaw in the system that had been adopted by his predecessor—

“When I entered on office,” he said, “in 1872 and in the spring of 1873 small-pox again became epidemic. I saw that the system of making a note of persons ready to accept vaccination and then going with a doctor next day was not successful, while if at the first visit the operation was offered it was accepted largely. I therefore had the epidemic officers all trained, and made Dr. Carmichael responsible for the collection and supply of lymph, and any primary vaccinations necessary.”

The result was that from 1874 to June 5, 1883, they had had only 45 deaths from small-pox in Glasgow. Multiplying those figures by eight would give them 360 deaths in a population equal to London; but the actual number of deaths in London from small-pox during the same period was 8,989, or 8,629 more than it should have been on the Glasgow ratio, and that number of deaths

signified 45,000 cases of small-pox. The expense at which these satisfactory results had been obtained was, as Dr. Russell had said, trifling. Dr. Carmichael got some £80 per annum. The revaccination was simply an extra accomplishment of the epidemic Inspector. The expense saved had been very great. He ventured to say that the law expenses which had been forced upon the Metropolitan Asylums Board had been 1,000 times the salary of Dr. Carmichael; and the cost of providing hospital accommodation, and treating the 45,000 cases which had arisen in excess of what should have arisen, must have been many thousands of times as great. The hospital accommodation provided by the Metropolitan Asylums Board was 1,600 beds. The Commission which a couple of years ago reported on Small Pox Hospitals stated that there should be accommodation for 2,100 small-pox patients, capable of increase to 2,700. In Glasgow, since the system had been in full swing, the highest number of persons that had ever been in their hospital was 40. Now, that was the system that he wanted to be adopted in London. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) deprecated despotic action in this matter, “calculated to wound the affectionate feeling of the suffering poor;” but his hon. and learned Friend must be under a misconception as to what he really proposed. He did not advocate any new compulsory power; he did not ask for any compulsory notification of disease; he did not advocate any new vaccination system. He simply advocated the rational application of the existing machinery. By such application thousands of lives might be spared, tens of thousands of illnesses, and many a pang of the affectionate feelings of the suffering poor, and also of the suffering rich. He asked the President of the Local Government Board to give effect to the dictum of Dr. Seton, the Medical Officer of his own Department, that nowhere where due vigilance was used need small-pox spread. In London, unfortunately, it was nobody’s business to do anything effectually in respect to the prevention of small-pox. The only thing that was done well in connection with the matter was the sending of Reports from one Office to another, and issuing circulars and handbills. He might be told that

first-class arrangements were made for the isolation of the sick by the Metropolitan Asylums Board. He admitted it; but it was not their business to make that provision. The Board administered funds supplied by the poor rate, and they had no right to allocate 1s. of those funds to the maintenance of free hospitals to persons who were not paupers. The Local Government Board had been repeatedly asked what was the law upon the point, and they had as repeatedly refused to answer the question, because they knew that if they answered they must say that the Metropolitan Asylums Board had no right to expend that money in securing such isolation in cases of small-pox. Now, coming to revaccination, the Local Government Board maintained vaccination stations in the Metropolis at the expense of the nation; but as soon as an epidemic of small-pox arrived, the universal complaint was that there was no lymph. Among the witnesses who gave evidence on this point before a Royal Commission was Mr. Shirley Murphy, a gentleman at present employed in the National Calf Lymph Establishment of the Local Government Board, and the same evidence as that given by him was also given by Dr. Browning, the Medical Officer of Health of Rotherhithe, and it exactly accorded with his (Dr. Cameron's) own experience. He had come across a Medical Officer who, to put down small-pox at his own expense, opened a vaccination station, where persons could be revaccinated gratis at a certain hour every day in the week. A great number had availed themselves of it; but he had to give it up because he could not get any lymph. It was not the business of the Local Government Board to supply lymph. In 1880, after having pressed the matter for a good number of years, he (Dr. Cameron) had succeeded in getting the right hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Dodson), then President of the Local Government Board, to introduce and start a calf-lymph vaccination station in London. Well, what occurred then would illustrate the whole policy of the Local Government Board in this matter. The subject had excited a great deal of attention abroad. In Holland they had introduced the system of calf-lymph vaccination stations. They were worked there with great success; and so interested were the Dutch medical men

at the head of the system in the effort being made to establish it in this country, that they sent over a representative here—Dr. Van Dooremal—to wait upon the Local Government Board, with the offer that, if the Government would pay the bare outlay, they would come over and undertake to start the system, and for some time direct its working. He had the information from the gentleman himself. Well, the Local Government Board refused that offer. First, they would do nothing until one of their officers had made a tour of the Continent to visit the different calf-lymph establishments there; and then they kept the country waiting for 12 or 18 months before they established a calf-lymph station for themselves, because, forsooth, they could not get a stable in which to stable two or three calves in all London! That was a positive fact, and that was in the face of the epidemic of 1881. The cry then everywhere was that there was no lymph. Human lymph could not be multiplied, but calf lymph could. In economical Belgium a single calf would produce lymph enough to supply 500 persons; and the calves might be hired by the week for 10s., and afterwards returned to the owner, and after a short time become fit to be fatted and killed, so that in Belgium 500 persons might be vaccinated for 10s., or about one farthing a-head. Suppose they were twice as extravagant, they might still vaccinate with calf lymph at a halfpenny a-head. In London, notwithstanding the expenditure on national vaccination, no effective means were taken for supplying lymph. It was nobody's business. In Glasgow they had no grant from Government; but their Municipal Authorities and their Medical Officer of Health knew that they had to deal with small-pox, and, knowing that, the Municipal Authorities at their own expense kept up a vaccination station for their own supply. In London, the Imperial Exchequer paid half the expense incurred by the Metropolitan Asylums Board in the treatment of the pauper sick, including, of course, small-pox cases also. During the epidemic of 1881, a servant man of his in London, living with his family in a house with 20 other people, had been seized with small-pox. As he was not a pauper he could not be removed to the workhouse hospital, and he (Dr. Cameron) was himself glad to secure the

man's immediate admission to Highgate Hospital on payment of £4 4s. But if that man had been friendless he might have been left in that crowded house, as far as any action of the medical or sanitary authorities went, and have thus spread an epidemic first among the other occupants of the house, and from them throughout the neighbourhood. He (Dr. Cameron), on that occasion, asked the Medical Officer of the district if he would look after the revaccination of the other people in that house, and that gentleman replied that it was not his business to do so; but that what was his duty he would do—to report the outbreak to the vaccination officer, who in turn would communicate with the public vaccinator. But he afterwards discovered that nothing was done. The custom was, it seemed, for the public vaccinator to issue bills over the neighbourhood during the presence of small-pox, actual or apprehended, intimating to those of the public who desired to get vaccinated to attend at a certain station, possibly two or three miles distant, at a certain hour on a certain day, when they could have the process performed. The consequence of such a course in dealing with a matter requiring the most urgent promptitude was that the system necessarily failed as a preventive one. Vaccination to be an effectual remedy against the disease must be prompt. Vaccination ran its course more speedily than small-pox, and, overtaking or anticipating it, it exhausted the pabulum upon which small-pox fed before the disease had time to develop. But if delayed for four or five days after the infection, then vaccination was useless to arrest a disease which had already taken hold; and, in such circumstance, the vaccinator might save his trouble. In Glasgow vaccination or revaccination was performed on the spot to everyone requiring it. In the last epidemic in Glasgow, in a tenement containing 66 families, a case of small-pox occurred, and it was not discovered to be small-pox until after the death of one of the persons. Then 24 of the occupants had caught the contagion. When the Medical Officer of Health had visited the place, upon discovering the nature of the disease, he had the 24 persons removed, the other persons, to the number of 152, revaccinated, and the place disinfected. From

the first case 24 cases had arisen. From those 24, promptly dealt with, not a single case of infection occurred. In the present epidemic in Glasgow there had occurred 133 cases, and 1,100 persons had been revaccinated. Upon asking the President of the Local Government Board what the system in London was, he was told what had to be done was that the vaccination officer, with such assistance as the Poor Law Guardians might give him, made detailed visits to the houses and streets infected for the purpose of detecting unvaccinated children and urging on the people to have themselves and their children revaccinated and their houses disinfected. Now, that was a system which they would not submit to in Glasgow. Such a system was too inquisitorial. The object of those visits was to urge the people to present themselves without loss of time at the vaccination station, where revaccination would be successfully performed if they attended. It was a very good system in theory, but defective in practice, because the people neglected to comply. Handbills and placards were issued informing people where and when the operation would be performed gratis; but the place was too often at a great distance from the people's homes, and the consequence was that frequently they did not go. In London the persons who were revaccinated were not, for the most part, the persons who had been exposed to infection, and whom, in the public interests, it was most desirable to revaccinate. Prior to Dr. Russell's—the Glasgow Medical Officer of Health—time experience showed that if a single day were allowed to elapse between the chance of infection and vaccination, the probabilities were against the persons infected voluntarily submitting to vaccination. In Glasgow, therefore, revaccination was offered at the time and on the spot. In the last epidemic he had found that, if a supply of lymph could only be insured, a number of Medical Officers of Health were willing to undertake the work of revaccination. It was asserted that District Medical Officers of Health were allowed to perform the duty; but the all but nominal fee payable only in the case of adults and only in successful cases, which were two out of three, would not reimburse them the cost of the lymph, to say nothing of remunerating them for their

trouble. A Medical Officer of Health told him that on the removal of a case of small-pox from a house he told the inmates that they would be revaccinated if they would go to the vaccination station at a certain hour on the Monday or Tuesday following; but if days elapsed vaccination would be, in most cases, a mere farce. If any of the persons had taken small-pox it would be too deeply rooted in their constitutions to be checked; and the result would be that they would be sowing the seeds of infection among the mothers and children assembled at the station. While in Glasgow 95 per cent of those revaccinated were the persons whom it was desired on public grounds to have revaccinated, in London probably not 5 per cent came within that category. Dr. Bonney had mentioned to him, as a forcible illustration of the working of the London system, the case of a tailor whom he found laid up with small-pox, and having seven pairs of trousers hanging in his shop ready for pressing. These the doctor could not himself order to be disinfected, but had to communicate with the Medical Officer of Health. Ultimately the trousers had been sent home before this functionary appeared on the scene, and some of them might possibly be wearing by hon. Members of that House. The disease was propagated in a similar way by laundresses and hucksters, whose clothes and goods were dispersed before the machinery for disinfecting could be got into operation; and yet people told you that isolation, revaccination, and disinfection was carried out, and wondered why small-pox should spread. A case, illustrating the circumlocution and delay of the London system, occurred at the institution in the parish of West Ham.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That is not in London.

DR. CAMERON: No; it was on Wanstead Flats, on the outskirts of London, and was practically a part of London, and whatever affected that district, in the way of infectious diseases at all events, would affect London. It appeared that in the early part of last month three of the girls in this institution were found to be suffering from small-pox. Anxious to have them removed to an infectious hospital, the gentleman who reported the case applied to the vaccination officer, who referred him

to the relieving officer, who referred him to the Medical Officer of Health, who could do nothing. He then wrote to the President of the Local Government Board, who wrote that an official reply should be sent. He next went to the Asylums Board Hospital at Homerton, whence he was referred back to the vaccination officer, and ultimately he had to apply to a "pay hospital" at Highgate, where the patients were taken in; but even there they had no ambulance, and he was obliged, next, to go in search of an ambulance, which he found at Notting Hill. In these proceedings a whole week was occupied, to the great danger of the spread of the disease throughout the whole institution, and a considerable number of cases occurred. In Glasgow the responsibility for all necessary action, as regarded both the suffering and the possibly infected, was concentrated upon one Authority, and all the prescribed processes were promptly carried out. The disinfection of a room might involve the destruction of the paper on the walls; but it was not obligatory on the Local Authority in London to repaper the room, and, therefore, proper disinfection was often evaded. This was a source of danger that would be lessened if a process, submitted to compulsorily on public grounds, were followed by the repair of any damage that was unavoidable. The Royal Commission, of which they remembered, recommended that the whole business of dealing with small-pox cases should be handed over to the sanitary authorities. They went far beyond what he asked on the present occasion. They had recommended the compulsory notification of infectious diseases. He did not ask for that on the present occasion. They made some important recommendations as to isolation, and these had been carried out. In accordance with their recommendations, the Metropolitan Asylums Board had taken over the ambulance system, and they had established hospital ships—the *Atlas*, *Castalia*, and *Endymion*, and the camp at Darenth. He could not help thinking it was a pity that the Commission did not visit some of the large towns where the disease had been successfully grappled with, and see what was being done there; and it was still more of a pity that Dr. Buchanan had not made himself acquainted with what had been done in these towns, so that

he might be able to tell the Commission. If they had gone to these large towns they would have found that the success elsewhere was greatly owing to the fact that isolation, notification, and revaccination were taken hand-in-hand and applied concurrently. Isolation, disinfection, and revaccination must be worked together. In consequence of the neglect of the two latter in London during the last epidemic, the means of isolation were insufficient; and, notwithstanding what had now been provided, the cry was still for more camps and more hospitals. He did not ask the President of the Local Government Board for any inquisitorial system. Let him authorize a free supply of lymph and the payment for prompt revaccination of infected households. Let him authorize the Metropolitan Asylums Board to spend money in this matter, as he authorized them to illegally expend money on the isolation of non-pauper cases. The House would protect the Board from any loss. They would provide an indemnity for the small sum that would be needed. If the President of the Local Government Board must have legislation, let him provide for giving lymph and a moderate fee for prompt revaccination of infected households during epidemic; let him constitute District Officers and Assistant Medical Officers of Health; let him legalize what was non-illegal—the reception of non-pauper cases into the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board—and let him provide for the payment for articles destroyed. That would save the house-to-house visitation which prevailed in London; it would save those willing to get revaccinated the trouble of going to the vaccinating stations; it would save any increase in hospitals, ambulance, and additional vaccination stations and officers. In Glasgow they had applied the same principles as had been applied in London, and the only difference was in the mode of administration. He had repeatedly urged during the last epidemic that something should be done. The President of the Local Government Board admitted an urgent necessity for reform; but what he wanted to do was to wait until the passing of the London Government Bill enabled him, with greater facility, to carry out the recommendations of the Commission. If he waited until the London Government

Bill passed he might have to wait for a very long time. They knew what fascination was exercised by snakes over birds. It seemed to him that permanent officials exercised a similar power over Ministers. His right hon. Friend proposed to move the Previous Question to his Resolution on the ground that he objected to “swap horses while crossing the stream.” So did he. What he wanted simply was to utilize the present machinery. As he had said, most of what he asked for could be accomplished by a stroke of the pen; everything he asked could be done by Government assuming responsibility for a few thousand pounds. No great courage was needed here, and he was sure an indemnity would be given. They rather shirked responsibility; but if they did not want to take any responsibility in the matter, the legislation would not be half so difficult to carry as the Cholera Prevention Bill. He had explained what he wanted to the right hon. Gentleman and to the officials. The right hon. Gentleman admitted what was wanted, but the officials were adverse to any change; and the officials being adverse, the President of the Local Government Board asked them to postpone the whole matter till the London Government Bill passed. He supposed when a few more epidemics had swept over London, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was in Opposition, he would advocate what he (Dr. Cameron) was strongly urging in this matter. In the name of humanity, he implored his right hon. Friend to think, and judge, and act for himself. Let him, by all means, accept the advice of medical experts on purely medical points. The principles laid down by his advisers were precisely the principles they had adopted in Glasgow. But let the right hon. Gentleman trust his own common sense for administration in a matter of the greatest importance. In the presence of a great emergency—the almost certainty of thousands of deaths next year, should present arrangements continue—he had to beg and implore the right hon. Gentleman to cast resolutely aside that fussy and expensive policy of “how not to do it” that had so long prevailed in London. Let him burst asunder the humiliating trammels of red tape, assert himself as Minister of Health, and “stand between the living and the dead, and

stay the plague." The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

DR. FARQUHARSON seconded the Motion of his hon. Friend, not in a spirit of hostility to the Government, but rather in a spirit of candid criticism. It was of the utmost importance that their institutions, from time to time, should be examined and taken to pieces, to see whether they were in harmony with the circumstances of the age in which they lived. Although his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) deprecated the use of alarming statements on the approach of small-pox and other epidemics, as likely to create panic, he believed that a discussion on the subject raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow would do good. It was very disheartening to the advocates of vaccination to see these epidemics sweeping over the country from time to time; and a great encouragement was often given to those anti-vaccinators who were doing such great and irreparable damage throughout the country. These epidemics which appeared from time to time showed that the protection they had at the present time was still insufficient. The question then arose, whether the protection was insufficient in itself, or whether the machinery was not properly worked? They knew perfectly well that, in all great epidemics of small-pox, those who were properly vaccinated escaped altogether or slightly. He wished to pay a tribute to the efficiency with which the private vaccination of this country was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Buchanan and Dr. Seton of the Local Government Board, through whose exertions the proportion of unvaccinated children was now reduced from 10 to 4 per cent. The question might be put, why did they have these serious epidemics, and why did one case cause the disease to spread to such an extent? The fact was, there was still a very considerable number of unvaccinated people, and of people who had been insufficiently vaccinated. He could not too strongly advise revaccination. There was no doubt that a person who had been vaccinated in childhood ought to be revaccinated after a certain number of years. There was but very little inconvenience in the operation, and he should like to see revaccination made compulsory in this country. To stamp out small-pox

altogether they must have early detection, and they could not have early detection in an efficient degree unless they had a compulsory system of notification of disease in this country. The extent to which small-pox was concealed in London was appalling. There must be prompt and thorough disinfection, and prompt revaccination of infected households. His hon. Friend had pointed out that the machinery in London was very defective as compared with that of Glasgow, where the system was under the superintendence of Dr. Russell; and he thought it only reasonable to give a trial to the better system. Several eminent witnesses before the Royal Commission recommended that the matter should be placed under the direct control of the Local Government Board, instead of under that of the Guardians, and that suggestion he thought worthy of consideration. He thought the question of the cause of epidemics was one which would well occupy the attention of the Local Government Board. They had a most able and most experienced staff, although it was, perhaps, already overworked. He hoped that the President of the Local Government Board was prepared to say something in this direction.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in view of the alarming increase of Small Pox in London, this House calls upon Her Majesty's Government at once to apply to the Metropolis those rational principles of prompt and direct preventive administration, the efficacy of which in circumscribing Small Pox Epidemics has been demonstrated by the experience of Glasgow and other large towns."
—(Dr. Cameron.)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in moving the Previous Question, said, that he rose as against his hon. Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), who had an Amendment on the Paper, because he did not think it advisable that the House should divide upon the Motion before it. The question had been brought before the House as one of practice only, and not as a question of principle, as the principles of the Mover appeared to be the same as those of the Local Government Board. The hon. Member had not, however, placed it before the House in that scientific way which might have been expected from one of his high scientific attainments. He had compared the cases of London and Glasgow, and had

spoken of the high mortality in London in very general terms, as if in the Metropolis alone the mortality was high. But he would remind the House that it was not alone in London that the mortality from small-pox was high. The same system prevailed throughout England as prevailed in London. That was one of the faults which he found in the speech of the hon. Member. The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) had not really said much as to the Motion he was seconding. He had made a useful and valuable speech upon small-pox generally and its statistics; but he had certainly said little in support of the Motion of the hon. Member for Glasgow. Now, if he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) were inclined to be facetious on a serious subject, he should say that the Mover and Seconder were only agreed in the matter of trousers; and, considering that these Gentlemen hailed from the Northern portion of Her Majesty's Dominions, he should say they were animated by the patriotic intention of altogether abolishing those articles of attire. Passing to the Motion itself, he would readily admit that there was in London, as compared with the Provincial towns, a high rate of mortality. At the same time, in many Provincial towns the mortality was very high indeed. Liverpool, for instance, suffered greatly from small-pox; and he thought that it could be shown that under a single Sanitary Authority they could have a very serious state of things existing as regarded small-pox. He did not think, therefore, that the hon. Member for Glasgow was justified in picking out the case of London as standing by itself. In Paris, he might parenthetically observe, the death-rate from small-pox was greater than in London. If the hon. Member for Glasgow were only prepared to contend that there was room for improvement in the sanitary arrangements of London, and in the Sanitary Authority of London, he was perfectly prepared to agree with him. It was one of the points urged by the Home Secretary, when introducing the London Government Bill, that unity in sanitary administration in the Metropolis was a thing very much to be desired. The hon. Member said it was nobody's business to do anything effectively. Well, he was sorry to say that statement was too much applicable to

London Government generally. The Local Government Board had gone as far as their powers extended to awaken the local authorities to a sense of their duty. Where Guardians had failed to provide accommodation in connection with small-pox, the Local Government Board had done their best to induce them to supply it. At the same time, he must observe that his hon. Friend did not seem to be thoroughly acquainted with the English vaccination system as contrasted with the Scotch system. The hon. Member had spoken of a contribution of one-half the expense from the Imperial Exchequer; but there was no such provision as he had described. More than that, he had given illustrations from the parish of Chelsea, and had declared that between the vaccination stations a distance of two or three miles intervened. That statement did not correspond with facts, because he would undertake to say that the distance was not greater than half-a-mile. Then the hon. Member had said that the District Medical Officer should be paid for the revaccination of persons in infected houses. As a matter of fact, they were paid for it. The hon. Member had, moreover, alluded to the case of a gentleman who had written certain letters to the newspapers and to the Local Government Board, and he had complained that, in face of the fact which the correspondence disclosed, the Local Government Board had refused to act; but the hon. Gentleman knew that that case occurred outside the limits of the Metropolis; whereas, as a matter of fact, there was no power at law to warrant the interference of the Local Government Board. In London, as he had pointed out to his hon. Friend in the month of May—although his hon. Friend now made the reply he then gave to his Question a matter of complaint—the great proportion of the cases of small-pox were dealt with by an authority which required, by Act of Parliament, to be set in motion by District Medical Officers, as distinguished from Medical Officers of Health. In Glasgow the first medical observer of a case of small-pox was usually the Medical Officer of Health; whereas in London it was the District Officer who became, as a rule, soonest aware of the occurrence. The hon. Member stated that in many cases

the vaccination stations were distant from the homes of the poor. As a general rule that was not so; and although some difficulty had been experienced in the case of Hackney in inducing the authorities to provide evening vaccination places, and though there was great delay in that case in carrying out the suggestion, yet many parishes had shown themselves eager to adopt every scientific precaution against the disease. The hon. Member did something like justice to the steps taken by the Metropolitan Asylums Board in their action upon the Report of the Royal Commission; but he seemed to imply—although he did not state his alternative—that the action of the Board was unnecessary.

DR. CAMERON: I did not say that. What I said was, that so much accommodation would be unnecessary if proper preventive steps were taken in the first instance.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Very well; he would not go into that. But the House must remember that there was a large shifting population, and also a large foreign population, in the Metropolis, and it was not easy to secure their vaccination; and it was among them that the disease frequently appeared. But the hon. Member raised a much larger question than that merely of small-pox vaccination when he suggested that the vaccination arrangements should be transferred from the Boards of Guardians to the sanitary authorities. His (Sir Charles W. Dilke's) own view was that, in London at all events, it was a great mistake that the sanitary care of the town should be divided, as it was, between three sets of authorities. Both with regard to small-pox and all other diseases it would be far better to concentrate the sanitary arrangements in a single authority. His own opinion in that matter was shown in the Cholera Bill he had introduced last year, in which one Sanitary Authority was provided for the whole Metropolis in connection with any outbreak of cholera that might occur. At the present time they had 39 distinct authorities. The hon. Member rather ridiculed the idea that such a matter could wait until the Bill dealing with the Government of London was brought forward. But it was impossible to treat this matter in anything like a satisfactory way unless in a measure embracing the whole ques-

tion of the Government of the City of London. He could not admit that his hon. Friend had made out any case for the substitution as regarded this one matter of one set of authorities, 39 in number, for another set of authorities equally numerous. The hon. Member had spoken, too, of rational and scientific principles in dealing with small-pox by vaccination and revaccination, and had said that it was not the principle but the administration with which he quarrelled. While he was not by any means prepared to contend that the state of things in London was in practice perfect, or anything like perfect, he would point out that when, for the purpose of actual results, they compared London with Glasgow, it seemed to be exceedingly good. In Kensington, in 1881, there was house-to-house visitation throughout the parish, a vaccinating officer with six assistants being specially engaged for the purpose. The greater part of the work was done in five weeks, the whole taking rather more than three months. As the result, 1,127 primary vaccinations and 2,156 revaccinations were done at the appointed stations, making a total of 3,283 for the parish, with its population of 120,000, against an average of 720 in the similar space of time of an average year. They were done at two stations, including one temporarily opened for evening attendance, and were done in such a manner that no case was unsuccessfully operated upon. The hon. Member said that in Glasgow 100 persons were vaccinated and 362 revaccinated in a fortnight; and that in the epidemic period, which lasted four years, the Officer of Health and his assistants vaccinated 4,406 and revaccinated 8,730 persons. But Kensington, under similar circumstances of of urgency, could, and did, vaccinate and revaccinate even larger proportions of its population. The hon. Member had charged him with being under the fascination of his own Medical Department; but the fact was, that the action he had taken was without advice from anybody, and entirely on his own responsibility. The hon. Member had suggested the use of calf lymph when humanized lymph was not available. There was, however, considerable objection to the use of calf lymph. In the first place, as compared with humanized lymph, calf lymph was much less easy

of removal from the "points;" it did not take with the same degree of certainty; in addition to which it soon lost its virtue, and great waste and expense would consequently be caused by its employment. His hon. Friend seemed to think that no good was done by house-to-house visits; but the fact was, a large amount of vaccination and re-vaccination had taken place through house-to-house visitation. The "station" vaccination had also been largely done, and done as a rule more efficiently, and also more cheaply, than by the house-to-house system. In the circumstances, he did not like to ask the House to negative the Motion of his hon. Friend, because there was, undoubtedly, existing a state of things which was not satisfactory. It was not, in his view, desirable that whilst the small-pox epidemic was raging they should during its course change the administration of the Acts. Under these circumstances, he begged leave to move the Previous Question.

Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put."—(Sir Charles W. Dilke.)

MR. ANDERSON said, he had frequently listened with much delight and satisfaction to the speeches of his right hon. Friend on foreign affairs; but he regretted that on the present occasion he had listened to his speech with the very reverse of satisfaction. He thought it was in the highest degree unsatisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman did not traverse a single important statement of his hon. Colleague, but took out some little points—such as the distance to the stations from the residences of the people—and spoke about calf lymph. But he did not attempt to touch any of the main points of his argument. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the case of Liverpool; but the state of Liverpool, instead of being a justification for London, only furnished another example of a bad system—breaking down when badly worked. Why had he not quoted Manchester? Glasgow was not the only large city where things were well managed. No allusion whatever had been made to Manchester, which was a great town, and where great and good results had been brought about. The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to make the House believe that the state of some

districts of London was as good as that of Glasgow, and mentioned Kensington in proof of that statement. But what were the facts? Between 1877 and 1881 the mortality in Kensington was 226 per 1,000,000. In Glasgow, between 1875 and 1884, it was 9 per 1,000,000. How could the right hon. Gentleman say that the state of any part of London was satisfactory when figures like these could be adduced? In Glasgow there was not a Government establishment to do it with national funds. In London there was. What was made of it? In London the principle was good; but the working was bad. There was too much circumlocution, too much red tape. If the right hon. Gentleman would set his mind to it, and compel officials to do their work in a different manner, he would bring out different results. If he could not do that, let him send to Glasgow and enlist the services of Dr. Russell. It would, however, be necessary, if Dr. Russell were brought to London, that he should not be smothered in officialism, and swathed in red tape. That was the curse in London. If Dr. Russell were brought to London, given full powers, and adequately supported, he (Mr. Anderson) had no doubt they would soon have in London results as good, or nearly as good, as were now brought out in Glasgow. There ought not to be, notwithstanding the fact that London was eight times larger than Glasgow, so vast a discrepancy in the percentage of mortality from small-pox. He admitted that in a town eight times larger there might fairly enough be rather more than eight times the disease; but if, instead of 9 per 1,000,000, it were 10, or even 12, there might not be much to say; but when, instead of 9 or even 12, it was 226, and that for the very best part of London, the condition was seriously wrong. The fact was, the whole country had a right to complain of London as a pest centre, and there must be some fault in the Local Government Department. The right hon. Gentleman had not informed the House, nor had he traversed the fact, that some time ago London was in a doubly better position than Glasgow. From 1855 to 1864 the mortality per 1,000,000 in Glasgow was 570. In London it was only 232. In these figures they had disclosed a state of matters in which Glasgow was twice as bad as London; and in a few years,

by simply changing the arrangement in Glasgow, and adopting a more rational system, and getting rid of red tape and circumlocution, they got different results. Manchester and other large towns had done the same, and why not London? Their contention was, that it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to see that the London system was altered, so as to improve the present condition of things.

Mr. HOPWOOD considered it was unwise to create a panic among the people by raising such discussions, and giving vent to alarming statements. He hoped the Government would not be driven to the adoption of hasty and despotic action.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 2nd July, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading—*East Indian Unclaimed Stocks * [269].

*Second Reading—*Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) [22]; Compensation for Improvements (Ireland) [71], *debate adjourned*; High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings) [121].

*Report—*Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) * [240]; Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * [227]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (the Labourers' Act) (Carrick-on-Suir) * [219]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) * [220]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Dundalk Waterworks) * [223].

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS—
CREATION OF PEERS.

Mr. LABOUCHERE gave Notice that, on Monday, he would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will advise Her Majesty to create such a number of Peers as will render it more difficult than it is at present for that House to throw out measures introduced into this House by Liberal Ministries,

Mr. Anderson

and passed by this House by large majorities; and whether he will submit to the appreciation of the House and the Country a measure which will insure that in future important Bills, which have received the assent of the Representatives of the People, will become Law without unnecessary delay?

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND)

BILL.—[BILL 22.]

(Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Gray, Mr. Mayne, Mr.

O'Sullivan, Mr. Marum.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. GRAY, in moving that the Bill be now read the second time, said, that he did not think it would be necessary for him to occupy the House at any length in discussing it, as the principle which it embodied—the election of Poor Law Guardians by ballot—had been approved by the House on several previous occasions, Bills of a similar character having been several times introduced. When the Bill was introduced last Session, it was accepted by the Chief Secretary; and, although the right hon. Gentleman did not give an absolute pledge, it was understood from what he did say that the Government would introduce a Bill themselves dealing with the subject. Not having any indication, however, that the Government intend to redeem that undertaking, and all parties having shown themselves of one mind as to the method of dealing with the abuses of the existing system, there was nothing left for the promoters of this useful reform but to press forward the measure again. He might say that since last year the measure had been recast in several points, and some useful improvements had been introduced into the Bill. In the first place, the Bill proposed to make better provision for the trial of Election Petitions. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was well aware of the amount of dissatisfaction that was caused in connection with the annual Poor Law elections. Ever since the elections of last March the right hon. Gentleman had had to answer a series of Questions dealing with disputes arising out of these elections; and, no doubt, the cases that came before the House only represented a tithe of those

which the Local Government Board had to consider. The invariable answer given by the right hon. Gentleman was that the Local Government Board had no power in the matter. There were two changes of a most important character made in the Bill since last year, to which he thought it his duty to call attention, lest it might be said that they were endeavouring to obtain a snatch vote from the House, without informing it fully on the matters with which the measure dealt. In the Bill of last year it was not proposed to alter the number of *ex officio* members on the Poor Law Boards; but under this Bill power to do so was sought. The proportion in England of *ex officio* Guardians to elected Guardians was one-third; whereas in Ireland the *ex officio* members constituted one-half of the entire Board. Now, he saw no reason why the same system should not apply in England and Ireland in this respect. In the original Act the proportion was the same in both countries—that was to say, at one-third—and the change to one-half was made by one of those amending Acts which so frequently pass through the House without any strict scrutiny. The *ex officio* Guardians in Ireland were, as a rule, men drawn from a single class—the landlords, their nominees, or the landlords' agents, who were somewhat more objectionable than the landlords themselves—although that was going a considerable distance, as he observed the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman) seemed to think. As a matter of principle, he did not see why *ex officios* should exist on Boards of Guardians any more than on Municipal Boards, or in that House; but if they did exist, it surely rested with the opponents of this Bill to show why a different system should be applied in Ireland to that which existed in England. In addition to this, the landlord might be possessed of 18 votes as against the single vote of the non-landed ratepayer; he might have six votes each in his capacity as landlord, lessor, and occupier. In this way one class could always secure the majority of Guardians, and so always have a working majority on the Board. Under this Bill it was proposed to limit the number of votes to be exercised by one single individual at any one Poor Law election to six, leaving it to him to elect in what capacity he

would exercise his votes. At the present moment there was no limit with regard to the age of a person voting at Poor Law elections, and they now proposed to fix that limit at 21 years. The property qualification had been done away with in Parliamentary elections; and, as he did not see why it should be retained in Poor Law elections, this Bill would enable any ratepayer to become a candidate for the office of Guardian. It also proposed to enact that no Justice of the Peace should be qualified to be an *ex officio* Guardian unless he was a ratepayer; and, in like manner, to do away with the power of proxy voting. Proxy voting was not allowed in Parliamentary or Municipal elections, and there was no reason why it should be allowed for Poor Law Guardians. There being no objection to the principle of the Bill, he hoped that the Chief Secretary would give facilities for its subsequent stages. Could not the right hon. Gentleman give to this Bill a little of the time he was devoting to the Sunday Closing Bill? He would venture to say that in the amount of time wasted on the Sunday Closing Bill a dozen useful measures for Ireland might have been passed into law. This matter had been now a long time before Parliament; all parties in Ireland were practically unanimous with regard to it; and he trusted, therefore, that they would have some assurance from the Chief Secretary that, the second reading being passed, facilities would be given which would insure that the Bill would become law this Session. The hon. Member then moved that the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR seconded the Motion. After the ample and clear statement of the hon. Member for Carlow, he did not think it necessary to trouble the House with any observations.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(Mr. Gray.)

MR. M'COAN said, the hon. Member for Carlow talked about the waste of the time of the House; but he forgot to remind the House how it was that this Bill, which he (Mr. M'Coan) had introduced last year and carried through the second reading, had failed to pass. The Bill was then accepted by the Chief Secretary; the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Har-

man) had waived his opposition; the hon. Member for Bridport, too, who had blocked the Bill, had removed the block; and it would have gone duly into Committee, and to a third reading, but for a fresh block entered by one of the hon. Gentleman's own Party the Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), and it would now have been the law of the land. The only conceivable motive for that action was the poor one of depriving himself (Mr. M'Coan) of whatever seeming credit might have attached to his passing the Bill through the House. Hon. Members opposite were always talking about "wringing measures from the Government," and he supposed the object of this proceeding was that hon. Members might go about the country denouncing the unwillingness of the English Government and Parliament to promote useful legislation for Ireland, and boasting how they had "wrung" this measure and that from both. He did not like to use strong language in the House; but outside of it, he would not scruple to characterize such tactics as they deserved. As regards this particular measure, however, he would not imitate the petty spite of the hon. Member for Roscommon, but would give the Bill his hearty support.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he was quite ready to support the application of the principle of the ballot to Poor Law elections; but he had the strongest possible objection to the abolition of the proxy vote. The whole intention of the Bill appeared to be to put the largest ratepayers and owners of property on a level with the occupants of the smallest tenements. He admitted, however, that minors ought not to be allowed to vote, and he was not aware that they were so allowed. But it was unjust not to allow proxy voting, as that would disfranchise those who had property in several Unions; nor was it right to forbid Justices to be *ex officio* members of Boards in Unions where they were not ratepayers. The hon. Member was thus in an unfair way abolishing the property qualification in one case while he retained it in another. The tendency of this Bill, as of all the legislation brought forward by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, was that there should be one law for the rich and another for the poor. The qualification for an elective Poor Law Guardian was

already extremely low, and this proposal to lower it would admit a class of ignorant and unsophisticated men, who would be very unlikely to vote according to their own consciences, but would vote according to the dictation of some local newspaper, or the paper of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray). From various circumstances, practically not one-half of the *ex officio* Guardians were able to attend or do work, and in fully three-fourths of the Unions in Ireland the elective Guardians had the practical control of matters. If this Bill were to get into Committee, while not opposing the proposal of the ballot, he would strongly object to any interference with the right of voting by proxy.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he was opposed to the Bill in its present form. He objected to the reduction in the voting qualification of the ratepayers. When they considered that rents in Ireland had been reduced in many cases below the valuation, they would see that while the tenants would be entitled to make a deduction, the landlord would have to pay his full half on the amount he represented in property. Then this Bill pretended to leave the multiple voter in the same position as before. This was not really the case. The elections were held at about the same time all over the country, and unless he could fly about like a carrier-pigeon, a man would have no chance of being able to vote at more than one or two. He himself held property in six different Unions, and if he were deprived of the right of voting by proxy, he must be unrepresented in four or five of them. Hon. Members below the Gangway talked of the grievance of non-resident owners, while at the same time they did all in their power to prevent residence by endeavouring to take away the rights of the owners. He could not himself be ranked as a non-resident owner, for he resided all the year in Ireland, except when he was called away by his Parliamentary duties; yet this Bill would deprive him of his rights as a resident. As regarded the qualification, although he had a high opinion of the intelligence of the Irish people, and believed that if they were only left alone they would be quiet and law-abiding, still he could not agree that a man who only paid 6*d.* a-year in poor rates should be qualified

to act as a Guardian. Supposing that the poor rate was 1s. in the pound, 6d. only represented an occupation of £1 a-year. Irish Members below the Gangway, whenever the law of England suited them, wanted to have the law of Ireland assimilated to it; but when it did not suit them, they did everything they could to prevent the law of England from being applied to Ireland. Would they be willing that the law of England should be applied to Ireland generally? If it were, the landlords would have a much happier time of it. Now, it had hitherto been a principle recognized in England that representation should follow taxation; and it should be remembered that as half the poor rate in Ireland was imposed on the landlords, the landlords were entitled on that principle to their fair share of representation; but who, under this Bill, was really the ratepayer—the man who indirectly paid his rates through his landlord, or the landlord from whom the rates were deducted? With regard to voting by proxy, he should be glad to see it done away with, and a system of voting papers substituted like that which was adopted at University elections. This would meet the convenience of the ratepayers, many of whom were infirm, aged, or sick, and some were females, who could not be expected to go great distances to vote.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA gave his most cordial support to the Bill. Parliament had adopted the principle that a property qualification was not requisite for Members of that House, and it could hardly be contended that a large amount of property or of occupancy was requisite to qualify a man to be eligible for the office of Poor Law Guardian. The important matter in connection with Poor Law elections was that the Poor Law Unions should be satisfied of the fairness of the principle, and of the popular nature of the principle, upon which the Guardians were selected.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan) had made some observations as to which he should not follow him, except to remark that he was personally fully aware of the very great service which that hon. Member had rendered on this question, and that the Government were perfectly ready to accept reasonable sug-

gestions on matters of public interest, from whatever quarter of the House they might come. Since the Bill had been placed in his hands he had been considering it by telegraph and by letter with the Local Government Board in Ireland; he had also had a thorough talk about it with the President of the Local Government Board in England; and, speaking generally, he thought he might say that the longer they looked at it the better they liked it. The President of the Local Government Board and himself were strongly of opinion that if any change was requisite in the management of local affairs in Ireland, the changes that should be introduced should be of such a nature as not to interfere with any large, general, and comprehensive scheme of local government which might be hereafter adopted in England or Scotland; and the principles and, as he imagined, the details of which might be extended to Ireland. One great section of the measure—Part II.—was, as far as he knew, perfectly new; but it had received the warmest welcome from the practical officers who at this moment were charged with the management of the Local Government Board in Ireland. With regard to the provisions of the Bill itself, he thought that the question of the ballot in Ireland, generally, was one already settled. It was impossible for either Party to quote the Report of the Poor Law Committee of 1878 either for or against their own view on this question, because on the cardinal provision of that Committee the division of the Committee on the point was about equal. He put much more stress upon the debates in the House itself—debates which had been very much influenced by recent Poor Law action in Ireland. He thought it might be fairly said that both sides of the House were glad to be rid of those scandals, be they great or be they little, which had accompanied those Poor Law elections; and the House of Commons would be glad, indeed, to be rid of the necessity of listening to detailed Questions and Answers with regard to those subjects. The Government, therefore, were more heartily than ever in favour of the Poor Law elections in Ireland being conducted by the ballot. The officers of the Local Government Board and the advisers in the Irish Office in London had gone

through this part of the Bill, and they were satisfied that, with one or two small alterations, it could be made a proper Code for conducting those elections. One alteration he thought extremely essential—namely, with regard to the preparation of the Register of Voters. The Government regarded the existence of such a Register as one of the most important provisions of the Bill. Probably the largest part of the disputed cases brought before the Local Government Board had been caused by there being no permanent list of voters. The Government thought the principle of the registration list should certainly be adopted; and in practice they would wish it to conform much more nearly to the Parliamentary system than he thought the Bill provided. Then, with respect to proxy voting—he was glad to have the opinion of the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County and the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney). The hon. Member for Tyrone objected to doing away with proxy voting; and the reason he gave why it was very desirable to maintain this was because a voter, who had property in several different Unions, had, and ought to have, the opportunity of recording his vote in the several Unions, or, more probably, in several divisions of the Union. The Government fully recognized the difficulty, and the Local Government Board intended to exercise the power which they had at present possessed of naming days for the Poor Law elections; and they would name those days with the desire of removing that objection which the hon. Member felt. The hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman) gave another objection which weighed with him very much as to the abolition of proxy voting. It was pointed out that a Poor Law election took place every year, whereas elections for a Member of Parliament took place every four, five, or six years. This objection led him (Mr. Trevelyan) to point out what the Government considered a very important omission in the Bill. The Government were of opinion that the yearly election of Poor Law Guardians was too frequent. On that point their opinion was strongly backed by the finding of the Committee of Poor Law Guardians. The Government could not possibly consent to any mea-

sure which would leave the Poor Law elections annual. Another objection put forward against the abolition of proxy votes was that property was not sufficiently represented. He thought that with the large infusion of *ex officio* Guardians in Boards of Guardians property would be sufficiently represented. Those gentlemen were all holders of considerable property compared with the great mass of the ratepayers, and whatever modifications might be made in the position of those who were placed on the bench they would always represent the sentiment of property. With regard to the second part of the Bill, the Local Government Board considered that it would be a relief from an extremely difficult, intricate, and, to them, oppressive function—the seating and unseating of Guardians in cases of dispute. In 1884 objections had been raised to 73 Guardians, and the Board made orders for unseating the Guardians in 13 instances only. In the present year 127 seats had been disputed; about 80 had been adjudicated upon; and in 10 the Board had set the returns aside; while, in 47, the correspondence was still progressing. This function would, by this measure, be committed to hands more suited to exercise it; though, at the same time, his own experience of the manner in which the Local Government Board had fulfilled an extraneous duty was that the very greatest impartiality and care had been shown in all the numerous cases that had come before it. The belief of the Government was that if the first part of the Bill were carried with Amendments—if a permanent and authoritative registration list was prepared—three-fourths or four-fifths of the cases now brought before the Local Government Board as to disputed elections would fall of themselves, and the addition of work to the proposed tribunal would be comparatively small. The Government had an objection to the system by which it was proposed to arrange the scale of costs—they would prefer that the costs should be fixed by the Lord Chancellor and the Council of County Court Judges. Of course, it might be argued that there was a Bill already before the House which it was proposed to apply to Poor Law elections in Ireland. That Bill had only passed the stage of second reading, and he did not think there could be any practical

objection to giving a second reading to this Bill, and allowing the disputed points to be settled during the later stages of the two Bills. As to the third part of the Bill, he did not propose to enter into details; but the general policy of the Government would be to assimilate the law in Ireland, as far as possible, to the law in England. He did not think that Irish holders of property could complain if the number of votes allotted to them was placed upon the same footing as in England, if only the change proposed by the hon. Member for Tyrone were carried out and the rate distributed in the same manner. The 2nd sub-section about minors not voting he thought should be accepted at once; but with regard to the 3rd sub-section he should prefer to suspend his opinion. The 4th sub-section the Government willingly accepted; and with regard to the 5th sub-section he should certainly, if this Bill passed into law this year, be inclined to leave the question of *ex officio* Guardians alone, to be dealt with by whatever English analogy might be set up by the Local Government measure which might be laid before Parliament. With regard to the qualification of the ratepayer, the Government held a strong opinion that the law should be continually assimilated in principle to that of England. The analogy of a Member of Parliament did not hold in the case of this Bill. In the outlines of its machinery the Government would be very willing to see the Bill adopted as an *ad interim* measure until the Local Government Bill was settled for England, and outstanding questions settled for Ireland. He could only hope that the House would give it a second reading then. Although he could give no promise, he would certainly say that there were very few Bills which he would rather see passed into law this Session.

MR. GIBSON said, that the Bill was by no means a novel one, as far as its chief features were concerned, for it had been before the House in previous Sessions. Last Session the measure would have passed, with certain necessary Amendments in Committee, but for the action of Members below the Gangway. This Session, although there would not be a Division on the second reading, the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland had practically killed the Bill. He would not, however, say that it was the

deliberate intention of the Chief Secretary to kill it, because it was difficult to discover, from his speech, that he had any deliberate intention whatever. The first part of the Bill, dealing with vote by ballot, might possibly in Committee have assumed a shape that would have removed many present objections. He should be quite ready to assist in any legislation that would have the effect of simplifying and rendering pure the proceedings at Poor Law elections; and if those objects could be attained by the introduction into the Bill of any subsidiary clauses he should raise no objection. But they ought not to forget that the Government already had before the House a Bill framed expressly for the improvement of Poor Law and Municipal Elections, and that was the right Bill by which to deal with the topic to which he was referring. The Government would not be permitted to introduce clauses into and drop clauses out of their Bills in consequence of opinions which they might form as to what would be pleasing to this or that particular portion of the House. They would be expected to act like statesmen, and, after having put certain proposals before the House, they would not be allowed to press them one day and to drop them the next without rhyme or reason. On the more doubtful points in the Bill the Chief Secretary suspended his opinion. When the Chief Secretary came to deal with proxy voting, he filtered out his meaning with—he must not say “art,” he was not allowed to say “manœuvre,” and he did not like to say anything which did not express his views—but the right hon. Gentleman adopted all the refinements of language to conceal from the House and the country that he was entirely changing the position he adopted last year, when he supported proxy voting in a well-reasoned speech, and placed an Amendment on the Paper for its preservation and amendment. The reason for the proxy vote was because the landlord had to pay, at all events, half the poor rates, and where he occupied he had to pay the whole; and, therefore, he was entitled to a reasonable voice in the expenditure of rates to which he made so large a contribution. The Chief Secretary pointed out last year that the landlord had a right not only to a proxy vote, but to a plural vote, and even indicated that, inasmuch as the plural

vote might be in the hands of those who could not exercise it in person, some machinery ought to be supplied which might enable them to exercise it. Why had the Chief Secretary changed his mind? Inscrutable were the workings of the human mind, and it was difficult to search out why the Chief Secretary had changed his mind. Last year the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly) had blocked the Bill, because he objected to the clause regarding proxy voting. The hon. Member was now in a country which offered great attractions for invalids; but he still seemed to maintain his influence even in his absence, for, in deference to his objection, the Chief Secretary now seemed doubtful about supporting the proxy vote. When it was argued last year that property was sufficiently represented by the *ex officio* element, the Chief Secretary said that that was an argument he should be sorry to put forward, because it amounted to this—that magistrates should always be taken from one class, the landlords. Now, when the Government were taking the magistrates less and less from the landowners, was the time for the right hon. Gentleman to read his recantation. The only reason the Chief Secretary had given for recanting his opinions of last year was that his right hon. Colleague the head of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) felt that there would be a difficulty in making a declaration in favour of proxy voting in view of the Local Government measure which they were promised. But if the Chief Secretary would not put down Amendments for the purpose of retaining proxy votes, he would find Gentlemen on the other side of the House ready to do so. The Session was not in its infancy; it was rather in its decrepitude, and any Bill which on the 2nd of July emerged from Committee with only a certain amount of tepid approval from some parts of the House was not likely to have a successful career. Therefore, if any difficulties arose in a subsequent stage of the measure, the Chief Secretary himself would have largely assisted in the creation of those difficulties. If the right hon. Gentleman had met this Bill as he did the Bill of last year its course would have been smoother; but now he might expect that the clauses of the Bill and the Amendments which might be pro-

posed would require much consideration.

MR. HEALY said, he did not believe that in this House, at least, the Chief Secretary's speech had given a death-blow to the Bill—he regarded that speech as, to some extent, satisfactory; and he was glad the Government had seen their way to accept the second reading. With regard to the reduction of the proportion of *ex officio* Guardians from one-half to one-third, he thought it was only right that they should now revert to the scheme of having only one-third of the Guardians *ex officio*. The proportion of one-half had been introduced in the House of Lords—a fact which was no recommendation to a proposal of that nature. Hon. Members above the Gangway who objected to that reduction of the number of Justices of the Peace on Boards of Guardians should remember that if a Radical Government came into power they might do away with the *ex officio* Guardians altogether; they might strike off magistrates as Lord Rossmore had been struck off, and they might put others on the Commission who held popular opinions. The thing might be done very much as purchase in the Army was abolished by Royal Warrant. Turning to the prospect of passing that Bill, he wished to point out that it was not enough for the Government to give a platonic assent to the measure; they must do something more than that. Certain Gentlemen were able to secure from the Government large facilities as to time for discussing their proposals; but Irish Members near him were not so fortunate. Chances of success were, indeed, often dangled before their eyes; but they were hardly ever allowed to see their Bills become law. They were told by English Members to produce their grievances, and when they produced them it was admitted that they should be remedied; but they never were remedied. It was acknowledged that they had brought in a very moderate Bill; and they wanted to get out of the region of mere promises. He hoped, therefore, that they would hear from the Government some distinct statement that that Bill, being one to which they attached some importance, the Government would devote to it as much time as they gave to Bills which the Irish Members did not want. Let them, for example, give

to it as many Afternoon Sittings as they had fruitlessly devoted to pressing forward the Sunday Closing Bill against the protests of Irish Members.

MR. J. H. M'CARTHY said, this Bill was an exceedingly good example of the unmeaning—he might even say the grotesque—nature of the relationship existing between England and Ireland. It was a Bill which entirely concerned the Irish people, and with which English and Scotch Members had no moral right to interfere. They had, unfortunately, the legal right to do so; but when, in a few Sessions, Ireland possessed a system of local self-government, these subjects would be dealt with in a far more satisfactory manner than they were at the present time. To quote Sydney Smith, he knew nothing of the internal condition of Timbuctoo that would justify him in supposing there was anything there so absurd as the Poor Law system of Ireland. The method of administering the Irish Poor Law might fairly be called the worst in the solar system. The perverseness and incapacity of the House to deal with Irish Bills was illustrated in the fact that the present Bill had been before Parliament for the last decade, and it had not yet passed. But it also afforded an instance of the perseverance and the proud patience of the Irish Members, who, like the hero of the Oriental story, had made their demands a little higher each time. They were not the Irish Members whom the Government cherished. The Irish Members dear to the heart of the Government were those Members who sat on the Government side of the House and offered a sleepy and servile adherence to all that the Government demanded of them. He was not surprised to find that the Representatives of the anti-Irish landlord Party opposing the measure, because it was essential to their existence that they should oppose every Bill promoted by the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The landlord Party were now beaten to their last entrenchment, and in a little while a Representative of that Party would be as rare in Parliament as the Mastodon or the Dodo. But, somehow or other, they did not seem so ready for the fray as formerly. They had not adorned their speeches on this occasion as on former occasions with insults to the

priests of the faith of the Irish people. They made no allusions to the Land League, a body which had been incessantly assailed in their speeches in former debates on this subject. It was not unnatural that the landlord Party should dislike the Land League. If it had not been for the Land League nothing whatever would have been done for Ireland. As it was, that organization had given Irish Members strength to demand that the Government should treat with proper respect the measures which they brought forward concerning their own local interests. It was satisfactory to know that the Government were recognizing the demands which they had made. The Government had done wisely in consenting to the second reading; and it was hoped that their promise and support was not merely nominal, but that it would this year become law. If by some means of enchantment—some subtle influence of political bacshesh—the Government could fancy it a Coercion Bill its passage would be very speedy.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed for To-morrow*.

COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 71.]

(Colonel Nolan, Mr. Martin, Mr. Biggar, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Small, Mr. Sullivan.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

COLONEL NOLAN rose to move the second reading of the Bill, when—

MR. WARTON, rising to Order, said: I submit that as the Bill has not been printed, the Motion for the second reading ought not to be allowed.

MR. HEALY: That is no objection. On a former occasion the late Speaker permitted the second reading of a Bill to be moved which had not been printed.

MR. SPEAKER: I have to say, in reply to the point of Order raised, that the fact of the Bill not having been printed is not a fatal objection. It is for the House to judge whether the fact should interfere with its further progress.

COLONEL NOLAN proceeded to move the second reading. The Bill had been presented on three previous occasions; but unfortunately, through an accident,

it had not been printed this year. However, the House was familiar with its previous provisions, and any change which might be in it this year was in the direction of modification.

MR. WARTON: I rise to Order.

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. and learned Member not to "rise to a point of Order" when there is no point of Order before the House. If he persists, I must call the attention of the House to the practice of the hon. and learned Member in rising to so-called points of "Order," when he has really nothing to bring forward.

COLONEL NOLAN, resuming, said, the object of the Bill was to give compensation to tenants for improvements in towns having a population under 50,000. He did not seek to give a tenant of a town building the same interest in his house as the tenant of a farm had in his holding; but he thought that some consideration ought to be shown a tenant of a house in a town who improved the letting value of the property by building offices or making other erections. Many landlords did not look after their houses at all, and the tenantry very often had to allow them to go to decay or to leave them. If the tenant spent money in improving the property he held, when the lease expired he might have to pay an increased rent, or give up the improvements whenever the landlord wished to take possession of the house. This state of things had a very bad effect, as no guarantee was given to tenants who made improvements, and those who did not make them were not encouraged to increase the value of the property, which they held. The Bill proposed to give compensation to the tenant when he had actually increased the letting value of a house, though not for any fancy improvements. He thought that if the Bill were passed with some limitation, perhaps, to towns numbering 30,000 or 40,000 inhabitants, the towns in Ireland would be greatly improved in appearance. As the Bill had not been printed, he would undertake that the Committee stage should not be taken without full Notice being given; but he hoped the House would allow the second reading to be taken then.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Colonel Nolan*.)

Colonel Nolan

MR. TREVELYAN said, he had no doubt what the duty of the Member of the Government who was attending to the Business that afternoon was in reference to this Bill—the only possible course he could adopt was to ask the House to adjourn the debate. There was no Rule which forbade the second reading of an unprinted Bill; and the House might, perhaps, have allowed it on rare and special occasions. This was not, however, such an occasion; and the description of the Bill, as given by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (*Colonel Nolan*), made it plain that the Bill included an important and novel principle which the House ought to have distinctly before it. He could not regard the Bill as in the least a Bill of small proportions, or so pressing that they should deviate from the usual custom. He must, therefore, ask the House to adjourn the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Trevelyan*.)

MR. HEALY said, that, in his opinion, the hon. and gallant Member could not resist the Motion of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, which was not unreasonable. He hoped the Government would on a future occasion be able to consider the Bill in a favourable light, as there was a strong feeling on the subject in Ireland.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till *Wednesday* next.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (PROVINCIAL SITTINGS) BILL.—[BILL 121.]

(*Mr. Whitley, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Lewis Fry, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. Stagg, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Agnew*.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. WHITLEY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he was sure that on this subject, at least, he would have the sympathy of every Member of the House, for the question of cheap and ready justice near to the place where the cause of action arose must be a matter of very deep interest to a great trading community like this country. It had occupied the con-

sideration of Parliament more or less for many years past, and in the year 1872 a Royal Commission reported on the subject. That Commission recognized the great evils which attended the existing system. They admitted that under the system of centralization which had prevailed for a long time in this country causes of action in the great manufacturing and commercial districts of the country were transferred to the Central Courts in London at a very great expense to the suitors. Now, the port of Liverpool, which he represented, though a great commercial centre, and with an immense mercantile marine business—its tonnage being greater than that of the Metropolis—had, up to the present time, no Admiralty Court, and the causes had to be brought to London at very great expense, and oftentimes with very great difficulty, as in the case of sailors, who had to be kept in order to bring them to London as witnesses. This caused a great amount of dissatisfaction on the part of the commercial community, and for a long time past they had been very anxious to secure for the great towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire and other great commercial centres Courts giving that access to speedy justice which could only be secured in immediate connection with the localities. In their Report, the Judicature Committee of 1872 did recognize the difficulties and expense to which suitors in these great centres were put, and they recommended, with regard to Liverpool and Manchester—

“That there should be four sittings in each year for the trial of civil causes in the Superior Branch of the Courts of Liverpool and Manchester; that the duration of these sittings should not be limited; neither should it be necessary for the same Judge to be in attendance during the whole sitting; and that two Judges should be empowered to sit at a time when that course should be deemed more convenient.”

Earl Cairns, who was a great authority on this subject, went a great deal further, and more in the direction to which he asked the assent of the House. His Lordship said—

“I am of opinion that the arrangements suggested in the Report taken in connection with the thickly-populated part of the country, and especially of the towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire, are utterly and entirely inadequate.”

Now, that pointed to what they desired to accomplish by this Bill. They proposed by the Bill that there should be

districts set apart by the Crown in the centre of Lancashire and part of Cheshire if the Crown should think there was no objection to it; and under this Bill there would be power to extend the system to other communities, such as Bristol. There was a unanimous feeling in favour of the Bill. He believed every commercial community had reported in its favour, and every legal Society throughout the country, with one exception, had unanimously supported it. What, then, were the difficulties which presented themselves? In 1879, the present Attorney General brought forward a Motion to the same effect as the present Bill; and, in proposing that Motion, he said that—

“Continuous sittings in the great centres of industry were the only remedy for the present state of things.”

The evil had been admitted again and again by the Attorney General, the Home Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and now, he believed, on the part of the Government, by the Lord Chancellor. But its supporters were met by the old cry—“Put it off till a more convenient season.” They were told that the Treasury had great difficulty in finding the money; but they believed that that was a difficulty more imaginary than real; for, if he was correctly informed, the fees of the suitors would more than compensate for any addition to the number of Judges. The Attorney General said, last night, in answer to a Question by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), that he admitted that there was a great hardship in Admiralty cases, and that there was no provision whatever with regard to them at Liverpool. Now, what was the provision that they were told was to be given to them? They were told that there was to be in future three Assizes; but he would point out to the Government that it was the recommendation of the Commission that there should be four Assizes to deal with civil causes. He understood that the Attorney General’s present idea was to give them three for civil causes and an additional one for criminal business. But even if that was the case, it was really not sufficient to meet the emergencies of business. To give an idea of the causes which arose in connection with Liverpool and Manchester, he might say that last year, at Liverpool Assizes, there were 252 causes actually tried. Besides

that, there were 150 Liverpool causes tried in London, owing to the present system of non-continuous sittings; while in the Chancery Division in London there were Liverpool causes to the number of 300, making a total of 702. In Manchester, last year, 203 causes were entered for trial at the Assizes; 150 Manchester causes were tried in London, which otherwise would have been tried at Manchester; and there were no fewer than 487 causes in Chancery which ought to have been tried at Manchester, but which were tried in London; making a total of 840. No provision whatever, he understood, was made for any but civil causes; no provision was to be made for Chancery causes.

[Mr. COURTNEY: Oh, yes; there is.] He was misinformed if that was so. He admitted that they had a very eminent Judge in the Chancery Court of Lancashire; but unfortunately, as the House would see from the number of Chancery causes he had quoted as having been transferred to London, they could not avail themselves of that Court to the extent that they desired, because its jurisdiction was confined to the county of Lancaster. There was not the slightest provision made in the Rules of the Judges for the trial of Admiralty causes; but they were to go on in the old fashion of bringing up the witnesses to London at immense expense, and often with great detriment to the cause itself. Their opponents were certainly neither the commercial world nor the suitors, and he believed nine-tenths of the House would say that the case for the Bill was irresistible. He felt that the Judges did the best they could with the time at their disposal; but there were difficulties in the way. They asked, however, that the Treasury should not stand in their way, and that the number of Judges should be increased, especially the number of eminent Judges, to deal with Probate cases. They felt that, in the interest of suitors, such an arrangement was absolutely necessary, and that it was not right that they should again and again be told that the Treasury could not pay, or that the convenience of Her Majesty's Judges should stand in the way. They were told that they were opposed by a section of the Bar. He should be very sorry to find that was the case. He looked upon the Bar as a highly honourable class of

men; and while it might be objected by some members of the Bar that it would do away with the old Circuit system, to which they had been accustomed, and cause some inconvenience to them, they would be the first to admit that it should not stand in the way of a Bill which would bring so much advantage to those whose interests were committed to them. He therefore appealed to the members of the Bar to meet the unanimous wish of the commercial community and of the legal bodies throughout the country. He was sure that the proposals of the Bill would in the end be as beneficial to the Bar as to the other classes of the community. At the same time, he had always felt that, if necessary, the interests of any one class must be sacrificed for the general good, and there was no doubt it must be so in some cases; but he did not think that the Bar would contend that their private interests should stand in the way of a great public good. There was not a Member connected with the county of Lancaster who would not speak in the strongest terms as to the way in which this Bill had been urged upon them by their constituents. The support came not from one quarter, but from every quarter. As he had already said, the Attorney General and the Home Secretary had spoken in favour of the principle of the Bill; and he was sure the President of the Board of Trade would, if he had been present, have said that Birmingham had spoken in the strongest way in its favour. He therefore asked the House to assent to the second reading. He would be quite willing to leave the Bill in the hands of the Government for further consideration, and he did not want—particularly at the present time—to unduly press it. But he did ask the House to affirm the principle contained in the Bill—a Bill to which the commercial communities had been looking forward to with the greatest anxiety; and he was sure that the House by supporting the Bill would gain the gratitude of the commercial classes of this country—the classes to whom the prosperity of the country was greatly owing.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in seconding the Motion, acknowledged the great readiness which the Government had shown to make an advance in the direction of the demands which were uni-

versally pressed by the Representatives from Lancashire. By pressure which was brought to bear upon the Government by a deputation which waited on the Lord Chancellor they had succeeded in obtaining what he could not but regard as an important step in the direction of their demands, and the desire shown by the Government to consider the object of this Bill was an encouragement to go on. In agreeing to the second reading of the Bill, he did not urge every provision in this Bill so much as he wished to press for still further efforts on the part of the Government to meet the wishes of the great commercial communities. He moved last year for a Return of the surplus of suitors' fees derived from Courts in Salford Hundred and other parts of Lancashire; and the Solicitor General would see from that Return that it supplied him with a sufficient rejoinder to any who were disposed to remark that the adoption of the object of this Bill would entail large cost upon the Treasury. He thought, too, that the hon. and learned Gentleman would admit that there had been a disposition to centralize the administration of our law far more than in any other country, and possibly more than was for the advantage of this country. They were all proud of the conglomeration of population which was called London; but no one could forget that in Lancashire alone there was a population equal to that within the Metropolitan area, and it was not wise or just to demand that population should at all times resort to London for the administration of justice. With regard to the Admiralty causes, there was some force in the objection that might be raised as to the desirability of keeping the Admiralty jurisdiction as far as possible on one line, if not in the same hands, because the administration of justice in the Court of Admiralty was naturally very technical. In the reply which the Attorney General made to him on the 16th June, he said he intended to make considerable change in the Assize arrangements of the county of Lancaster, and that announcement was generally received with satisfaction in the county. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman announced that there would be one Equity Judge sitting in Manchester for dealing with Chancery cases; but the remark on that point was not very

precise, and possibly the Attorney General might be able to give a more certain statement as to what would be done in that direction.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

MR. MORGAN LLOYD rose to move that the Bill be read a second time that day three months. He did not object to the Bill as a member of the Legal Profession, but as a Member for a Welsh constituency, and that because it proposed to absorb either the whole or a portion of North Wales in the Liverpool scheme. That was a proposal to which the people of North Wales, or the larger proportion of them, strongly objected; and he believed that it would be equally objected to by the great county of Chester, which it was proposed to include within it. He thought that any scheme for altering the method of the administration of justice should be undertaken by the Government—for it was impossible for any private Member to carry out a scheme calculated to affect the country at large. This scheme was evidently brought forward in the interests of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham being added just to strengthen the case of Liverpool. He did not object to any extension of judicial power as far as Liverpool, or Manchester, or Birmingham were concerned; but he did object to this piecemeal attempt to deal with the matter. The Circuit system had worked well hitherto. Whether there was some change desired in the system he did not at that time propose to inquire; but there was less necessity for local centres than there was before the development of railways. The Bill proposed to establish Courts at Liverpool, which were to be independent of London, except so far as the right of appeal was concerned; but they ought to consider what was to happen to the rest of the country. It was clear that the people of North Wales would have to go to Liverpool to get justice, and if they did not choose to go to Liverpool for it they would have to do without it; and the Bill, therefore, seemed to have been drawn utterly regardless of the convenience of the people of North Wales. If they were to have continuous sittings at Liverpool, there ought to be a reconstruction of the whole Circuit system,

But whatever might be said with regard to an alteration of the present system, the Bill seemed to him so thoroughly objectionable that it would not be safe even to read it a second time; and he did not think it could be so amended in Committee as to be made a satisfactory measure.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months."—(*Mr. Morgan Lloyd.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. WEST said, he wished to make a few observations on the ground that he had had a longer experience of the working of the administration of justice in Lancashire than most people in the House. He had often remarked that Lancashire was the most long-suffering population he knew in the whole Kingdom with regard to the administration of the law. He had frequently remarked from the Bench and elsewhere that they had for many years put up with a system which was not at all adequate to the demands of a population so large, so wealthy—he would not say so litigious; but a population which liked to settle their matters in dispute in Courts of Law quite as well as any other part of the country. His hon. Friend who last spoke had used an argument which he thought was a very good one, when he said a magnificent and entire scheme for a more satisfactory administration of the law all over the country would be better than this Bill. He quite agreed with him in that; but if Lancashire had to wait until such a scheme were prepared, it might have to wait many years. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) said the people of Lancashire were grateful to Her Majesty's Government for the way in which they had taken in hand proposals for giving greater facilities for the administration of justice. He would like to point out what were the great advantages for which the hon. Member for Salford was so grateful. Lancashire had for a considerable time complained that it had only four Assizes in the course of the year, and that the time allowed at these Assizes was not sufficient.

He (Mr. West) did not agree with many persons who said that those times were altogether inadequate. They were very inadequate at times; but that was not the normal condition of affairs. Two years ago the time allowed was perfectly inadequate. He hardly liked to say the time was scandalously insufficient; but his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Charles Russell), who had more business there than he had, would remember that the actual number of cases tried in Court did not equal the number of remanets when the Judges left Manchester. At Manchester and Liverpool there were four Assizes a-year; but it was now proposed that instead of four there should in future be only three Assizes; and it might be assumed that the sittings of the Court would be more protracted; but instead of being longer the sittings were to be shorter.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL): No; that is not so.

MR. WEST: His hon. and learned Friend said they were not; he would therefore give the dates according to the scale published in the Schedule of the Order in Council. His experience was a good deal older than that of the Solicitor General, and he had known in times long gone by the sittings extended by the Judges returning to an Assize town after they had finished the work elsewhere. The dates which had been fixed were—Manchester, October 25; Liverpool, November 5. That was only eleven days, although the usual time had been a fortnight. There were to be no Winter Assizes, and persons who would otherwise have had their cases tried in January would now have to wait to the Assizes which commenced on February 15th and extended to March 1st. The April Assizes were to be done away with, and in its place there was to be a sitting on the 15th of June, the 26th of June being fixed for Liverpool Assizes. This was the great change for which the hon. Member for Salford was so grateful. He thought he could remedy the present evil in a very simple and effectual way; but he would not at present detain the House with his plan. He was opposed to continuous sittings, for which he did not believe there was sufficient business in Lancashire whatever local practitioners might think. But when he knew what was the scheme

which the Government had offered to Lancashire in exchange for the proposal of continuous sittings, he considered it a mockery. The scheme of the Government was utterly destructive of the interests of the Bar. Gentlemen would be taken from London in the midst of the most pressing times of business to go to Lancashire. As the only alternative to such a proposal as that proposed by the Government, he would give his hearty support to the second reading of the Bill.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he thought the speech of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. West) had rather been in condemnation of the scheme of the Judges and the Lord Chancellor for the re-arrangement of the Circuits than a speech in support of the Bill. Now, it was inconvenient to discuss a scheme that was not before the House. He agreed with the remark made by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Whitley), that neither the interests of the Bar nor the interests of any class should stand in the way of necessary change in the interest of the public convenience; but first there must be a demonstrated necessity for the change, and it must be shown that the proposed remedy was efficient. He wished it to be distinctly understood that he did not say the present arrangements in Manchester and Liverpool were adequate and satisfactory. He did not think they were adequate or satisfactory. He did not think the new scheme of the Lord Chancellor met at all the needs of the case; but he thought, at any rate, it would serve as some means of testing the reliability of the figures which the hon. Member for Liverpool had put before the House, and of testing more accurately the extent of the evil which existed and the necessity for dealing with it, and whether the measure now before them was adequate. The figures of the hon. Member did not fairly represent the case—they were vitiated by the assumption that the Admiralty, Chancery, and Probate cases which were now heard in London would hereafter be heard at Liverpool and Manchester. He grouped together a number of cases tried at Manchester and Liverpool respectively, to which he added the number of cases emanating from Manchester and Liverpool, and tried in London. He proceeded, without any sort of classification of these cases, on the assumption that if

there were continuous sittings in Manchester and Liverpool all these cases would be tried there; but a closer examination of the various categories of cases showed that very many of them would still be tried with greater convenience and advantage in London, and not in Manchester and Liverpool. The hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. West) had objected to the Government scheme on the ground that it did not give longer, but shorter, sittings of the Judges in Manchester and Liverpool; but, as he understood, the Judges would be not only empowered, but enjoined, to continue their sittings until they had finished the cause lists, going back to Manchester, if necessary, after the Liverpool business had been finished. He was not prepared to say that this scheme was adequate to the needs of the case; but he thought if put in force it would serve as some means of testing more accurately the extent of the existing evil, and of providing a means of remedying it. As to the scheme proposed in the Bill, there were some difficulties which the promoters had not faced. The Bill started with the initial and insuperable difficulty that it did not ask for an increase of Judges who should devote their time to dealing with the litigation which arose in Manchester and Liverpool; but it proposed that the Judges who were to hold almost continuous sittings should be selected from the existing Judges. Was it to be supposed, in the face of the statements made by the Lord Chancellor again and again, that Judges could be spared from London and the other Circuits to go on those sittings? He thought it was perfectly clear that they could not, and it was quite obvious that no practical effect could be given to that scheme at all, unless there was a provision for additional Judges to serve. That being so, the question arose, If the Bill passed would it meet the needs of the case? He thought it would not; and, in his opinion, the case of Lancashire, of Birmingham, Leeds, and Newcastle—in fact, of all the great centres—needed a consideration which they had hitherto failed to attain. He thought the Bill was crude and imperfect, and that it did not provide a remedy for the evils which existed, though he thought these evils had been exaggerated, and therefore he thought it was unworthy the acceptance of the House.

MR. GREGORY was of opinion that the Bill as it stood would lead to a considerable waste of valuable judicial power. The proposal to make these Courts hold continuous sittings during the whole period when the High Court was sitting was a great waste of power; and he thought it would be much more advantageous that an Order in Council should be passed directing that the Judges should sit in these towns as long as there was any business to bring before them. He did not think there would be the amount of business which his hon. Friend anticipated. He did not think his hon. Friend had a right to assume that all the local cases which were now tried in London would under his Bill be tried in their respective localities. On the contrary, there would be found to be many reasons why certain cases should be tried in London. He appreciated the efforts of his hon. Friend in endeavouring to meet existing evils in the Bill; but he must protest against the waste of judicial power which it entailed.

MR. TOMLINSON said, the object of the Bill was one in which he was interested as representing a borough in Lancashire (Preston). He should say nothing about the part of the Bill which dealt with the Queen's Bench Division, as he had had little experience of that branch of the Judicature. He had had some experience, however, of the working of the Chancery Courts, particularly of the Chancery Court of the County Palatine, which was at present in full vigour, notwithstanding that, as at present constituted, it did not meet all the wants of the district. He should support the second reading, in order to express his sense of the insufficiency of the mode proposed the other day by the Attorney General of dealing with trials in the County Palatine of Lancaster. He believed that the proper system of dealing with the cases which would come properly before the Chancery Division would be to take the County Palatine Court as the model, and extend it so as to make it a branch of the High Court, and then in other parts of the country establish tribunals of a similar kind. He would let the Judges have London and also district sittings, and in that way a great deal of the existing evil might be met. That, or some such arrangement as that, was, he believed, the only one which would meet the

wants of the Chancery Division in Lancashire. He would not go into the other branches of the Judicature with which he was less acquainted; but the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold), he thought, inadequately appreciated the necessity of sittings of the Admiralty Court. Perhaps that might be owing to the fact that Manchester was not yet a seaport, and that his attention had not been directed to the subject. He considered that a provision for the trial of causes in the Admiralty Division was quite as much a necessity as for Courts of Chancery. He should give his support to the Bill, which, however, he thought required amendment in many details.

MR. MUNTZ supported the Bill on the ground of the expediency of having local tribunals at which causes arising in the districts could be conveniently heard; and he would point to the hardships felt by the people of Birmingham in having to go to Warwick, 20 miles away, to try the most miserable causes. There could be no harm in passing the second reading of the Bill as proof of the earnestness of the demand for reform.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the Bill very deeply interested the constituency which he represented (South-West Lancashire), and it had fallen to his lot to introduce a deputation from Manchester and Liverpool to the Lord Chancellor in favour of continuous sittings in those towns. The Lord Chancellor and the other authorities received them very kindly, and listened to all that was said, but, at the same time, intimated that the demand could not be acceded to. Now, it appeared, the Government were going to reduce the number of Civil Assizes from four to three; and, at the same time, as far as Manchester was concerned, they were going to shorten the time during which these sittings would be held. He had himself once or twice put Questions to the Attorney General on the subject of advancing the Admiralty and Probate causes which were for hearing in the district; but the Attorney General, in reply, though he hoped something might be done, had always said he did not think a Judge could be spared from London for that purpose. He contended that it would be an enormous advantage for a Judge to go there and try the

cases as long as they came up. It was one of the matters which had been most strongly pressed on him by the magistrates of the County of Lancaster, and he believed every Member for that county would tell the same tale. He was quite aware of the objections raised to the present proposal. In the first place, it was said there was the scheme brought forward by the Government; but he contended that that scheme being incomplete, the hon. Member for Liverpool had no course to pursue but to bring forward his Bill. Then it was said they should wait for the whole scheme of the Government; but while they were doing so they would have no scheme at all. Again, when they were dealing with a Profession like the Bar, they must remember that nothing could be more inconvenient for suitors than to make such regulations as would prevent them from selecting the most able counsel. He was bound to say they would have a Bar at Liverpool and Manchester; but all the leaders of the Bar must necessarily be in London, and nothing could be more unfortunate for the suitor.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, it must be remembered that the question with which they were dealing was not a new one, and had not arisen only since the present Government came into power. He remembered a discussion on the question some years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down held a position in the Government; and he had no doubt that if he considered it a subject to be dealt with he and those associated with him would have dealt with it. But the right hon. Gentleman and those who were associated with him considered it a matter not easily to be dealt with; and, considering the fact that the matter had not been dealt with since, he thought that circumstance might be accepted as evidence that the question was not one to be disposed of readily. They must be careful that in trying to do away with one evil they did not get another. No doubt in a certain sense they were all agreed that hitherto the provision made for the administration of justice in Lancashire and in other populous parts of the country had been inadequate. That fact, he believed, was not contested, and that difficulty was proposed to be dealt with in this Bill,

and it proposed to deal with it in a particular way. His objection was not to dealing with the evil, but to the manner of dealing with it. The Bill proposed to have a Judge at Liverpool to sit the whole legal year there, the same thing to be done in Manchester, and the same thing in Birmingham. If that were done, he was of opinion that they would do a great deal more than was necessary in those centres, and it would be to the prejudice of London and the rest of the country. There was not, as far as experience went, sufficient work to keep a Judge at work in each of those centres the whole of the year. The experience of Birmingham was that there was not sufficient business to keep a Judge at work except for comparatively a small part of the legal year. The proposal of the Bill was not merely that further provision should be made for those three centres; but that provision amounted to the necessity of a Judge sitting in each of them throughout the entire year. But this was more than was necessary for each of these places; and if it were sanctioned it would be to the public detriment, for Judges would have to be taken from places where they were wanted. There were, however, some extraordinary omissions from the Bill. By the Bill, Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham were to have Judges; but Yorkshire, for some inscrutable reason, was altogether left out in the cold. He should have thought Yorkshire at least should be included, as the business at Leeds, Sheffield, and York far exceeded that in the neighbourhood of Warwickshire. If the House agreed to this Bill, of course they must not stop at its proposals, and the whole country would have to be carved out into districts for the administration of justice, and that was one of his objections to the Bill. If the scheme was to be absolutely to localize the administration of justice, and to carve out the country, he would point out the difficulties that would arise. When they had all the parties to a cause, the witnesses and the solicitors residing in the same place, it would be convenient to try the cause there; but where they had some of the parties and some of the witnesses at Liverpool, and others at other places, it was not cheaper to try in Liverpool than in London; and if they had district centres, with Judges going there at a particular

time, where they had not sufficient business to occupy a Judge the whole time, then they would only come to a modification of the Circuit system. He would remind the hon. Gentleman of the subject of the expenses of litigation. Where they had to take counsel down from London to places where the Judge held continuous sitting, the expenses would be largely increased. Litigants might be wise, or they might be foolish; but they would take counsel down from London. It was thought when they localized the trial of Election Petitions they would make the expenses of the litigation much cheaper than when they were tried in London. Experience had proved that it was more expensive, for the simple reason that they would take special counsel down and give them a large fee, and also that, having the witnesses on the spot, they were not careful in their selection of evidence, but summoned all manner of people. They must look at both sides of the question. If they had these continuous sittings instead of sittings at particular times they would have local Bars and nothing but local Bars. There were, no doubt, men of ability and experience at those local Bars; but the advantage of the present system was that the learned gentlemen went Circuit, and the suitors got the very best advocacy a man could have for a moderate fee. That was one of the advantages of the Circuit system, not to the Bar, but to the suitor. It could not be of advantage that only the rich should get the most able counsel. The present was not a question for the Bar, but for the suitor. He approved of the principle that there should be greater facilities for the local administration of justice in these great centres. Having pointed out that the Bill went, as he considered, beyond what was necessary, he would call attention to what it was proposed to do. One great complaint undoubtedly was not only that the Judges did not come often enough, but that, when they did come, the time was so short that the causes were to some extent scamped; or that when it was felt that cases could not be properly tried on a Circuit, they were made remanets. Efforts had been made to remedy that complaint. The essential object was that where cases were set down to be tried at a particular place, they should be fully and fairly tried out

at those sittings; and when the difficulty arose, assistance should be sent in the shape of an additional Judge from London. Another part of the scheme was that a Judge should not be more than 35 days away from London on Circuit. Like other people the Judges liked their homes, and there had been a tendency to bring business to an end in order to shorten their stay at a particular place. Feeling that more than 35 days was too long to be on Circuit, and that cases set down for certain sittings should be finished at those sittings, another Judge was, if the Judge on Circuit desired it, to be sent down at the end of that time. Attention had been called to the particular days having been fixed. This was done subject to variation, according to the requirements of business, and not as setting a hard-and-fast line. The scheme would no doubt need considerable alteration, and they must see how it would work in judicial economy before fixing on a final scheme. The present system was tentative merely. With regard to the Assizes, Government had the desire to meet the difficulties which had been suggested; but there had been another concession to meet the view of gentlemen from Liverpool, who said it was not Common Law business, but the Chancery business that they were concerned with, where all the parties and the witnesses were brought up to London. He believed that to be a great and serious evil, and they had endeavoured and intended to meet it. Where the cause of action arose in Liverpool or in Manchester, and all the parties and witnesses were resident there, the case could now be heard there; but there were cases where all the parties did not live there, but where that was the most convenient place of trial, and for this purpose there were to be sittings at Manchester and Liverpool. That was doing something to meet some of the grievances. The only other matter was the trial of Admiralty cases. They could not have a sitting for a definite time for the Admiralty causes, because some of the witnesses would always be absent at different places, and if the cause were not heard immediately, there would be difficulty in collecting them at any one time. It was only when both vessels belonged to Liverpool that it would be necessary or desirable to try in Liverpool; but when one vessel be-

longed to London and the other to Liverpool, it would be of advantage to try in London. He thought it would be an immense advantage to the public to have the same Judge, in order that there might be a definite course of decision. If they used Judges who did not know much about the subject, there would be a danger of a difference of idea as to what ought to be done under different circumstances. The very best possible thing they could have was that those who were navigating vessels should know what was the mind of those who dealt with those cases. While sympathizing with the objects of the hon. Gentleman, he could not assent to the second reading of the Bill until the efforts of the Government in the same direction had received a fair trial, and had proved inadequate to meet the requirements of justice.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON said, he was sure that he was only repeating the sense of the legal mind of Liverpool and Manchester when he thanked the hon. and learned Gentleman (the Solicitor General) for the very courteous and considerate manner in which he had received the proposals of his hon. Friend. There was no doubt that, though he had been unable to accept the Bill or the principle it involved, at the same time, he had given them an assurance of the most important character—namely, that the proposals contained in the Judicature Bill were only tentative in character in regard to Manchester and Liverpool, and that the Government would be ready to entertain the consideration of further Amendments. After such an assurance, he thought it might be doubtful whether his hon. Friend would be wise in pressing on the second reading, as he thought that Her Majesty's Government had gone a long way in endeavouring to meet the objections which the people of Manchester and Liverpool obviously entertained as to the present system of administration of justice in those cities. Although his name was on the back of the Bill, he should advise his hon. Friend not to press it to the second reading, but rest content with the assurance of the Government. Should, however, his hon. Friend deem it right to go to a Division, he would, of course, support him; but he thought it might probably be better, under the circumstances, not to press for a Division.

MR. HORACE DAVEY said, he would venture to add his appeal to that of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Claud Hamilton). If they were recasting the whole judicial system of the country, he should not find much objection to take to the views of the hon. Member as embodied in the Bill before the House, nor was he prepared to say that they were not ideally and theoretically perfect. But to ask the House to reconstruct the whole administration of justice to meet the grievances of one or two places was rather a large proposal. If the Government had not shown a real desire to remedy the grievances which the Bill was designed to meet, he should vote for the second reading. As it was, however, he thought the hon. Member who had charge of the Bill would best serve the cause which he represented by refraining from dividing the House.

MR. WHITLEY said, he was sorry that he could not see his way to accede to the appeal of his noble Friend (Lord Claud Hamilton). He wanted to place on record that the present commercial centres were not satisfied with the present arrangements for conducting the legal business of those districts, and to strengthen the hands of the Government in dealing with the question. Whilst acknowledging to the full the courtesy with which the Bill had been received by the Government and by all quarters of the House, yet he was compelled to ask the House to affirm the principle of the Bill; and then he would leave it in the hands of the Government, for them to do what they liked with it.

MR. WARTON said, whilst the Government were spending money in all directions, they objected to spending a paltry £15,000 or £20,000 in improving the administration of justice. He could not trust the assurances of the Government, because they shut their eyes and ears to the real state of the case. No mere shuffling of the cards—no mere alteration of the Circuits—would do. What was wanted was more Judges.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 87; Noes 64: Majority 23.—(Div. List, No. 149.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed for Wednesday next*.

MOTION.

EAST INDIAN UNCLAIMED STOCKS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. KYNASTON CROSS, Bill for making provision for the transfer to the Secretary of State in Council of India of unclaimed Indian Stocks and Dividends, and for amending the East Indian Railway Company Purchase Act, 1879, and the East Indian Railway (Redemption of Annuities) Act, 1881; and for other purposes, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. KYNASTON CROSS and Mr. COURTNEY.*

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 269.]

House adjourned at ten minutes
before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 3rd July, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Naval Enlistment* (175); Women's Suffrage* (176).

Second Reading—Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.)* (155); Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment (152); Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment* (135).

Committee—Improvement of Lauds (Ecclesiastical Benefices)* (131).

Committee—Report—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3)* (151); Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings (Scotland) Provisional Order* (148); Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2)* (149).

Royal Assent—Customs and Inland Revenue [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 25]; National Debt (Conversion of Stock) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 23]; Settled Land [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 18]; Greek Marriages [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 20]; Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 19]; Fisheries (Ireland) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 21]; School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 22]; Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amendment [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 24]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxxiii]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 9) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxiv]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 10) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxv]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxvi]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxvii]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Waterworks) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxviii]; Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxix]; Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxx]; Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxxi]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 12) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxxii];

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 13) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxxiii]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxxiv]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. lxxxv].

EGYPT (TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE)—THE VOTE OF CENSURE.—EXPLANATION.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, your Lordships will recollect that the noble Marquess opposite told to your great amusement on Monday a sparkling little anecdote about the answer which the Government Whips had given in "another place" to the Question put to them by the Liberal Members as to how they were to vote. The anecdote was excellent; it had nearly all the merits of a good anecdote. It was very racy in its conception, and very pat in its application. But it had one very little defect, from which even the best of anecdotes are not always exempt. I am authorized by the Gentlemen who are supposed to have given the answer to state that there is absolutely no truth in it.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What Gentlemen?

EARL GRANVILLE: Lord Richard Grosvenor and Lord Kensington. The Italians say—"Se non è vero, è ben trovato," and I agree that, although this anecdote is not true, it was well invented by those who communicated it to the noble Marquess, and I can quite understand that the temptation to repeat it for the amusement of your Lordships' House must have been irresistible.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the contradiction of the noble Earl is very ingeniously framed; but I never accused Lord Kensington and Lord Richard Grosvenor of having said it, nor did I use the phrase "the two Government Whips;" the Gentlemen to whom I referred were Mr. Cotes and Mr. Duff. I quite accurately described their functions in saying that it was their duty to marshal the forces of the Government; at least, if that is not their duty, I do not know that they have any other. They are Junior Lords of the Treasury, and I am informed, on referring again to those from whom my information comes, that those Gentlemen did undoubtedly say to those who applied to them that it was not a Government question; that they had to go

into the Government Lobby; but they indicated the other Lobby as the one into which the applicants for information should go. Of course, if there was a mistake, I am very sorry for it. But the noble Earl has not contradicted the statement as it came to me, and I can only repeat that it came on good authority. And although the noble Earl's contradiction is, of course, made in perfect good faith, yet he has left the matter exactly where he found it.

EARL GRANVILLE: If my memory does not fail me, the noble Marquess did not use the euphemious phrase, "Lords of the Treasury."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I used the words "the two Gentlemen whose function it is to marshal the forces of the Government."

EARL GRANVILLE: I cannot now answer a new charge against two new persons, but I will inquire about it.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL.

NOTICE TO AMEND AMENDMENT.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: I wish to give an amended Notice to that which I gave the other day with regard to the Secretary for Scotland Bill. I wish to state that I shall move that the Bill be replaced, in regard to the Judges, in the form in which it was introduced by the Government, because I find on consideration that, in my opinion at least, it would be in the highest degree inexpedient to separate any of the judicial offices in Scotland from the patronage of the Home Secretary.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY asked whether, considering that the debate on the Franchise Bill would probably last over Tuesday, it would not be more convenient to postpone the consideration of the Secretary for Scotland Bill, which was put down for that day?

EARL GRANVILLE said, he was of opinion that, under the circumstances, it would not be convenient for their Lordships to take the Secretary for Scotland Bill on Tuesday.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 152.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second

time, said, that it contained some matters which had passed their Lordships' House some time ago, and which he need not now specially refer to. The 4th, 5th, and 6th clauses needed no particular observations from him. The most important clauses in the Bill which were new were the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th, which related to certain proposed limitations in the powers of appeal.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

LORD COLERIDGE said, he desired to call attention to the 7th, 8th, and 18th clauses of the Bill. He thought that one great defect, as he ventured to think, in the Judicature Act had been the immense multiplication of appeals in the Division over which he had the honour to preside—that part of the High Court which dealt with the Common Law of the country. In 1876 he took the trouble to obtain a Return of the total number of appeals from the Chancery Courts in five years, and also the number of appeals in the Common Law Courts during the same period. From 1871 to 1875 the total number of appeals from the Chancery Courts was 1,012; the total number of appeals from the Common Law Courts during the same period was 245. He thought that was a very striking difference. From 1877 to 1882 the appeals from the Chancery Division increased to 1,379; while those from the Common Law Courts rose to 1,296. Thus it appeared that, while the Chancery appeals had risen from 1,012 to 1,379, the Common Law appeals had risen from 245 to 1,296. Those were very striking figures. He, as Attorney General, was, it was true, in a great degree responsible for the Judicature Act; but the other two persons who were mainly responsible were his noble and learned Friend now on the Woolsack and the late Master of the Rolls, Sir George Jessel, who was at the time Solicitor General. The Lord Chancellor and the then Solicitor General were persons of enormous experience in the Chancery Courts; but they had not much experience of the practice at Common Law. He, on the other hand, knew very little of the Chancery Courts. He thought he was wrong in not foreseeing that what was good for the Chancery Division would not work as well for the Common Law Division, and that the general power of appeal which was given under

the Judicature Act would have most mischievous effects in the latter Courts. In the Court of Chancery the stakes were usually much larger, the facts were more complicated, and the whole matter generally gave far more occasion for an appeal than did the cases with which the Common Law Courts had to deal. Appeals in Common Law cases now often took place in cases where the amount at stake was exceedingly small; and it, therefore, frequently happened that the costs formed by far the larger part of that which the losing part had to pay. He was informed by some leading solicitors whom he had questioned that since the Judicature Act the costs in Common Law cases had, at least, doubled. They had, therefore, to deal with the fact that appeals had in these cases multiplied fourfold, and that there had been an enormous increase in the costs. The principle of limiting the right of appeal was one that was already in existence. It applied to County Court cases and Quarter Sessions cases, criminal cases, and cases from the Revising Barristers. The fact had been recognized that a multiplication of appeals often amounted to a practical defeat of justice. Practically, the limitation of appeal proposed by the Bill would apply almost entirely to Common Law cases. If it was not carried into effect, the present arrears would become greater than they were now, and more Judges would have to be created; the distinction of classes of Judges would be aggravated; and it would become more and more difficult to get the first men of the country to take the position of Judges of First Instance. The only other matter he had to deal with was that of patronage; and with reference to that he only desired to say that, although he knew patronage was very safe in the hands of his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, it was for their Lordships to consider whether it was a wise and desirable thing to take away the patronage from the Lord Chief Justice and the Master of the Rolls, and to place it in the hands of the Lord Chancellor. In referring to that subject, he wished it to be understood that he did not do so from any personal motive, as he himself would not be affected.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^d accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

Lord Coleridge

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE IRISH MILITIA.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF GRANARD said, he rose to call attention to the inadequacy of the lodging allowance paid to non-commissioned officers of the permanent staff of Irish Militia battalions not serving on Army engagements; and to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to increase the allowances, or to build, hire, or otherwise provide suitable quarters, as was done in England, for the permanent staff where no permanent accommodation could be given in barracks?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that the allowances to non-commissioned officers of the permanent staff of Militia battalions were precisely the same in all parts of the United Kingdom, and he feared that he could not hold out any hope that the allowances to the permanent staff sergeants would be increased. The noble Earl had some cause for complaint in connection with the head-quarters of his own regiment at Mullingar. It was sometimes difficult for the non-commissioned officers on the permanent staff to obtain good accommodation; but the Secretary of State for War had recently been in communication with the General Commanding in Ireland with the object of having further accommodation provided at Mullingar.

NAVAL ENLISTMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Naval Enlistment Act, 1853, and for other purposes connected therewith—Was *presented* by the Earl of Northbrook; read 1^a. (No. 175.)

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for extending the right of voting at parliamentary elections to women—Was *presented* by The Lord DENMAN; read 1^a. (No. 176.)

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 3rd July, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Philip Albert Muntz, esquire, for Warwick County (Northern Division).

PUBLIC BILLS—First Reading—Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) * [270]; Criminal Law Amendment * [271]; Benefices (Tiverton Portions) Consolidation Amendment * [272]; Public Libraries Acts Amendment * [273].

Second Reading—London Government [171] [First Night], *debate adjourned.*

Considered as amended—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) * [239]; Elections (Hours of Poll) [261]; Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment [231].

Third Reading—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * [227]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dundalk Waterworks) * [223]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) * [220]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (the Labourers' Act) (Carrick-on-Suir) * [219], and *passed.*

PARLIAMENT—STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW, AND COURTS OF JUSTICE, AND LEGAL PROCEDURE.

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the Criminal Lunatics Bill on Thursday next, at Twelve of the Clock.

NOTICE.

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS—CREATION OF PEERS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to give Notice that, on Monday, when the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) asks his Question of the Prime Minister with respect to the creation of Radical Peers for the purpose of making it more difficult for the Upper House to throw out Liberal measures, I will inquire of the right hon. Member, Whether, in view of the fact that the feeling of the country is strongly Conservative, and that the important and populous constituencies of Mid Surrey, South Hants, and North Warwickshire have lately returned Conservative Members to Parliament by majorities of 20 per cent, he will advise Her Majesty to dissolve Parliament and take the verdict of the nation upon the differences between the House of Lords and the subservient majority of the Lower House?

QUESTIONS.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNING BODIES (IRELAND)—PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ACTS.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Could he state or give as a Return the names of the cities,

boroughs, and towns in Ireland having municipal governing bodies, and the public or private Acts under which they are incorporated?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the information sought for would be found at page 18 of the Report of the Local Government Taxation Inquiry of 1878, with the exception of the names of some towns since constituted under the Towns Improvement Act.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—THE PAPER MANUFACTURES—POST CARDS.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the Postmaster General, If it is the case that the manufacture of paper used in the composition of post cards, which has till recently formed an important branch of industry in Devonshire, has now been transferred to Germany; and, if so, what are the reasons for this transfer?

MR. FAWCETT: The matter referred to is one that belongs to the Inland Revenue Department, and not to the Post Office; but I have ascertained that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue obtain the post-cards in a complete shape by contract at a certain price, and that it is open to the contractors to get their material where they please. It appears that complaints were made to the contractors as to the quality of the cards, and that in consequence of the inferiority of the article they discontinued getting paper for the thin cards from Devonshire, finding they could obtain more suitable paper from Germany, whence they have always drawn their supplies of thick paper.

THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC—WELSH COLONY AT CHUPAT.

MR. JONES-PARRY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government are in possession of intelligence as to the political disabilities imposed by the Argentine Government on the Welsh Colonists of Chupat, in Patagonia (a community of 1,200 British subjects), by evading conferring on the Settlement the legal municipal local administration to which it is entitled by the Agreement entered into in the year 1864; and, whether this is a case in which the good officers of Her Majesty's accredited representative at Buenos Ayres might be advantageously employed?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government are in daily expectation of receiving the Report called for in March last, which Her Majesty's Minister at Buenos Ayres has telegraphed that he has already forwarded. Mr. Monson has already called the attention of the Argentine Government to the matter; but until the Report is received it is not possible to say what steps Her Majesty's Government may be able to take.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—ROAD SESSIONS, BALLYCONNELL, CO. CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that at the road sessions held in Ballyconnell, county Cavan, on 19th June, the presiding magistrates being Captain Roe and Mr. David Finlay, a contract was agreed to at one shilling per perch for repairing a road in the neighbourhood of Blacklion, while another person tendered at ninepence per perch; and, have the ratepayers any remedy if dissatisfied with the contract entered into?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that the facts are as stated. The magistrates, on the recommendation of the County Surveyor, gave the contract to the former contractor, who had always kept the road well. They considered the lower tender, offered by a less experienced man, to be too low. The Presentment Sessions are not bound to accept the lowest tender; and I am advised that they could not be interfered with.

MR. HEALY: Is it not a fact that the principle of the Grand Jury is to accept the lowest tender?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am told there are cases in which they accept a higher tender.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELY DISPENSARY, CO. FERMANAGH—USE OF BUILDING FOR PARTY PURPOSES.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the answer to the Question respecting the meeting of the Orange Lodge in the Ely Dispensary, county Fermanagh, was made on information supplied by three Orangemen, viz. Dr. Parke, Mr. John Trotter, District Master, and Mr. Nixon; is it the fact that the ratepayers rent the entire premises,

and not merely a portion, as suggested, have the Orange flags, uniform regalia or band instruments been stored in the same room that the Dispensary Committee meet in, how many rooms or stories does the building contain, by whom was the "agreement" with the landlord made, why does the Local Government Board doubt their right to interfere if it be the fact that the Caretaker, elected three times by the Dispensary Committee, was objected to by the Local Government Board, and would the Board sanction the employment of the dispensaries throughout the three southern provinces as storerooms and meeting-places for the National party?

MR. TREVELYAN: The answer was made on information supplied, through the Local Government Board, by Dr. Parke, the Medical Officer, and by the Clerk of the Union. I am not aware whether Dr. Parke is an Orangeman. I also had information from the Police. As I stated before, the Guardians have been asked to report more in detail as to the terms of the agreement under which the building occupied as the Dispensary is held by them. They will have the matter before them at their meeting on the 8th of this month, and until they report after that meeting I can give no more particulars on the subject.

TRUST INVESTMENTS—COLONIAL GOVERNMENT STOCKS.

SIR WILLIAM M'ARTHUR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, considering the security now offered and the position held in the Money Market by Colonial Government Stocks, opportunity may be afforded to trustees by means of such legislative enactments, and under such restrictions, as may be necessary to make investments therein?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that this Question concerns the Lord Chancellor far more than myself, and that I propose to consult him on the subject during the Recess. Of course, in extending the powers of Trustees to invest in Stocks not named in the settlements under which they act, regard could only be had to the intentions of the settlor; and if the settlements are modern—that is to say, of later date than the Stocks themselves—it would not be proper to allow investments in them. Great care would

also have to be taken not to extend these powers of investment in Colonial Stocks in the interest of the Colonial Governments.

QUEENSLAND—ENGLISH IMMIGRANTS.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that, whereas great exertions are being made by emigration agents and others to stimulate the immigration into Queensland, there is a great want of employment there, and great distress among the newly imported immigrants; whether the position of young women who have been induced to emigrate there is one of hardship and danger; whether his attention has been called to the following statement, in a letter to Mr. T. Pierce, recently returned from Queensland:—

“It is very painful to see so many of the immigrants weeping like children, not knowing where to turn, thinking of the home in England, which they once had; they saw their mistake.”

and, whether he has any information showing that the statements of Mr. T. Pierce are well founded or not?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The only official information we have of the matters to which my hon. Friend's Question relates is contained in the Immigration Correspondence laid before the Parliament of Queensland. I find in those Papers that at the beginning of 1882 the Queensland Government decided to increase the moneys voted for promoting immigration, and in November of last year the Governor informs the Executive Council that there is a large demand for single women as domestic servants, and a considerable demand for single men, especially of the class of farm labourers. In January of this year I find the Agent General writing from London to the Colonial Secretary, and saying that on questioning the immigrants he ascertained that a great many were going to join friends already in the Colony, who, in all cases, had sent home encouraging accounts. Our official information does not, therefore, bear out the statements of the letter referred to, and which my hon. Friend has been good enough to let me read in full. I can, however, throw out a suggestion

which may, perhaps, reconcile those conflicting views. There has been recently, both in Queensland and New South Wales, a most severe drought, with the result of driving into the towns many labourers who were thrown out of work. But the drought, I am glad to say, is over, and the inconvenience and suffering only of a temporary character.

POST OFFICE—APPOINTMENT OF SURVEYORS' CLERKS.

MR. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, How many officers from English offices were, during the past ten years, appointed to the position of surveyor's clerk or acting surveyor's clerk in Ireland; how many officers from such offices are still in such capacities in Ireland; and, whether these promotions in the Post Office Service are reciprocal between England and Ireland; and, if so, how many Irish officers have been transferred to England as surveyor's clerks, or acting surveyor's clerks, during the same period, and how many Irish officers are at present in such positions in England?

MR. FAWCETT: If the hon. Member means to describe by the terms “English” and “Irish” the nationality of the officers referred to in his Question, I am unable to afford him any information, as it is not the practice of the Department, nor do I think that it should be, to make any appointments on the ground of nationality. The appointments to surveyors' clerkships are made by selection by the Postmaster General of the fittest person from among those who apply for the post in answer to notification of the vacancy addressed to the whole of the Service. If, however, the hon. Member regards as English and Irish the officers who received their first appointment to the Service in England and Ireland respectively, I may say that, in the past 10 years, six officers, originally appointed to English offices, have been transferred to Ireland, three of whom still remain there; and that one officer has been transferred from Ireland to England, where he continues to be employed.

MR. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman account for the fact that, while six gentlemen were promoted in England, only one was promoted in Ireland? Are there no suitable persons in Ireland to fill the offices there?

MR. FAWCETT: I cannot account for it. Some of the appointments were made by my Predecessors. I have no doubt they, like myself, always endeavoured to select the best men.

MR. HEALY: On the Estimates, Mr. Speaker, I will call attention to the fact that all the best men are Englishmen.

THE MAURITIUS — MR. NAPIER
BROOME, ACTING GOVERNOR.

MR. WHITLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the Correspondence relative to the illegal payment to Mr. Napier Broome while Acting Governor at Mauritius?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, it would be inconvenient to lay the Correspondence on the Table at the present time, because, as he told the hon. Member on the 16th of last month, the matter had been referred to the Government of the Mauritius for further consideration, and when the result of that reference was known the Secretary of State would consider whether he could give the Papers. Meanwhile, he would be happy to show the hon. Member the Correspondence at the Colonial Office.

NATIONAL EDUCATION—YETMINSTER
AND LLANSILIN SCHOOL BOARDS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the School Board of the parish of Yetminster have passed a resolution to the effect that there is no necessity for building a new school because the present school, conducted under voluntary management, is sufficient for the requirements of the parish, and have asked for a public inquiry; whether the Department has declined to grant an inquiry on the ground that the school, being a voluntary school, was proof of its insufficiency for the purposes of elementary education in a parish where there was a School Board; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will now grant an inquiry, and if the present accommodation is found to be "sufficient, efficient, and suitable," he will refrain from insisting that an additional school shall be built at the cost and against the wishes of the ratepayers and the local authority?

MR. MUNDELLA: A School Board was set up for the parish of Yetminster on the application of the Vicar and Managers of the Church of England School, who [declared their inability to carry it on owing to the lack of local support. They desired to transfer the school to the School Board, and steps were taken with this object. Before these were completed the Vicar died, and the new Vicar did not proceed with the transfer of the school, and wished to carry it on as a Voluntary School, and the School Board passed the resolution referred to. These are the facts of the case, and there is no question for public inquiry. The question is whether the duty of supplying the necessary School accommodation devolves upon the school Board which has been set up for the purpose, and this question has been referred to the Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether it is a fact that the School Board of the parish of Llansilin, in the county of Denbigh, demanded a public inquiry in a case where the parish was aggrieved by a decision of the Educational Department, and that the Department offered to institute an inquiry only on the condition that each member of the Llansilin School Board should sign a bond for £300 to cover the expenses of the inquiry; and, whether there is any section of any Statute which gives the Department authority to insist on such a condition from members of a School Board?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Department has followed the course described in the hon. Member's Question. They are advised that this course is in accordance with section 73 (4) of the Elementary Education Act of 1870, and is in conformity with the practice of the Department. I have already explained, in answer to a previous Question, that £300 is a mere nominal sum.

SIR MASSEY LOPES asked whether, in a similar case, the Department had not recently officially intimated that a bond for £50 would be sufficient?

MR. MUNDELLA said, the amount of the required indemnity would depend on the size of the parish and the nature of the inquiry. The cost in a town would differ from that in rural districts.

SIR MASSEY LOPES asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would make

£50 the sum for the future in rural parishes?

MR. MUNDELLA said, he would consider the matter.

LAW AND POLICE—STEAMBOAT ROBBERIES.

MR. MOORE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Frederick Dale, convicted at the Liverpool Police Court, on the 6th of June, of robbing a respectable servant girl on the Channel Steamer between Dublin and Liverpool; and, whether it is a fact that no separate accommodation is provided for women in the steerage of these steamers?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The case referred to by the hon. Member was dealt with by the Liverpool Police Court, and in the ordinary course would not come under the notice of the Board of Trade. I cannot state positively whether any separate accommodation is provided for women in the steerage of the steamers; but I think it unlikely, having regard to the size of the steamers and the length of the voyage. The Board of Trade have power to require separate accommodation for women only in emigrant ships.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—SOUTH KENSINGTON EXHIBITIONS (EXPENSES).

MR. BIGGAR asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, What is the total amount of money advanced by Parliament towards the expense of holding International Exhibitions at South Kensington; how much, if any part thereof, has been repaid; and, with regard to the balance, what are the trusts or conditions on which it is at present held by the Exhibition Commissioners, and what measures are adopted to insure the faithful carrying out of such trusts or conditions?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have made inquiries, and I cannot find that Parliament ever advanced any money towards the expense of holding International Exhibitions at South Kensington.

EGYPT—DR. CROOKSHANK'S REPORT.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Report of Dr. Crookshank, mentioned in Mr. Clifford Lloyd's letter

to *The Times* of the 30th of June, has been received by Her Majesty's Government, and will be produced?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Further Papers on Egyptian affairs will be presented to Parliament, and will include Dr. Crookshank's Report. I am not prepared to lay it as a separate Paper, as this course is inconvenient, and was objected to by right hon. Gentlemen opposite in the debate on the last Vote of Censure.

MOROCCO—PRISONS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to a letter, in *The Globe* of the 20th June, describing the manner in which money is wrung from the debtors of British subjects in Morocco, in which it is stated—

“The prisoners are chained together at night like wild beasts, each unhappy prisoner being provided with an iron collar round his neck, through which the chain passes, and at sunset they are crowded into dark dungeons, where they are devoured by vermin,” &c.;

and, whether he will cause an independent inquiry to be made into the charges?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The attention of Her Majesty's Government was called to the state of the prison at Tangier in the course of last year. Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco reported on the subject, and explained the steps which he had from time to time taken to improve its condition. The Report will be laid, and Sir John Hay will be instructed to report on the statement contained in the letter in *The Globe* of the 20th of June referred to by the hon. Member.

LAW AND JUSTICE — ASSIZES — PLYMOUTH AND EXETER.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked Mr. Attorney General, If the scheme for the assize circuits, recently laid upon the Table of the House, is to be deemed conclusive, or is still open to revision; and, whether he has considered if Plymouth, with law courts provided, and double the population of Exeter, might share with that city in the assize business of the county?

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, before the Question was answered, he wished to ask why Exeter, which was far more

central than Plymouth, should be abandoned?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, that, in the arrangement of Circuits, the Judges had given the most careful consideration to the claims of Plymouth; but, considering that the Assizes had been previously held at Exeter, and that that city was in the centre of the county, whereas Plymouth was at one extreme end, they had not been able to recommend a change of Assize towns which would deprive Exeter of its vested interests, and would necessitate witnesses and suitors being brought much longer distances to the Assizes.

EGYPT—ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS— MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, with reference to the Letter addressed to *The Times* by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, in regard to the present critical condition of internal affairs in Egypt, he can state to the House the grounds upon which Mr. Clifford Lloyd was suddenly withdrawn from his post, and from the further development of such administrative reforms as are requisite to the existence of social order and governmental stability in Egypt? In putting the Question, the hon. Member said, he had done so entirely on his own responsibility, and without consultation with anyone; he should like to know whether anyone else had been appointed to carry on the merciful work which Mr. Clifford Lloyd had commenced.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: May I interpret this Question by asking whether a combination of brutal ill-temper and small mental power rendered Mr. Clifford Lloyd utterly unfit for his position in Egypt; whether his action did not tend to retard rather than advance reforms in Egypt; and whether his leave of absence was not in reality a dismissal, rendered necessary by his utter incapacity?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Mr. Clifford Lloyd left Egypt owing to certain painful differences of opinion between him and various high officials, both English and Egyptian. I must demur, however, to the accuracy of the term employed in the later part of the Question of the hon. Member for Salis-

bury (Mr. C. Kennard). Her Majesty's Government have not assumed, and do not intend to assume, the entire internal administration of Egypt. They have claimed, and will continue to claim, the right to advise on all important subjects, and that that advice shall be attended to both as regards things and persons.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY: May I ask the noble Lord why Mr. Clifford Lloyd was quickly removed from his position in Egypt in deference to Egyptian opinion, and why he was retained so long in his position in Ireland in defiance to the public opinion of Ireland?

[No reply.]

ARMY—MILITARY EXAMINATIONS.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (for Sir JOHN LUBBOCK) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it was intended to make any, and, if so, what, changes in the proposed regulations for Military examinations, as recommended by the Royal Society and the British Association?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: My hon. Friend will, perhaps, permit me to give the Secretary of State's answer to this inquiry. The regulations for military examinations have been amended in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Society and the British Association. The regulations are now ready, and will be published shortly. The Secretary of State desires me to add that the new scheme will not be brought into operation before the winter examination of next year.

EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, At what date the Plenipotentiaries intend to resume the labours of the Conference?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to say that an inquiry into the details of Egyptian finance is now being actively proceeded with by the financial delegates attached to the Plenipotentiaries. The latter will not, I believe, meet until further progress has been made with this inquiry.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether the Plenipotentiaries were not

able to discuss questions other than financial in the same way as the House of Commons was in the habit of doing?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): The Conference was appointed in respect of the finance of Egypt only.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE "*NISERO*."

MR. STOREY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can explain how it is that no certain news of the crew of the *Nisero* was received between the 26th of April and the 27th of June, a period of two months; the news received in each of these instances being, moreover, nearly a month old; whether he will state in detail what means have been taken during the past two months, and are now being taken, to keep up communication with the crew; what are the actual steps which have been taken by the British Government during the past two months to secure the release of the captives, and what steps are now being taken; what steps have been taken by the Dutch Government since their expedition in January, and what steps are now being taken by it; and, whether a claim will be made against the Dutch Government on behalf of the impoverished families of the dead and living members of the crew; and, if so, why the British Government does not now make a contribution to these poor people at the time when they absolutely need it?

MR. BROGDEN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the demands of the Rajah of Tenom relating to the crew of the *Nisero* consists in part of matters of an International character which Her Majesty's Government could not entertain; whether, having regard to the active interchange of views now proceeding between Her Majesty's Government and the Netherlands Government, and the decisions to be taken thereon, Her Majesty's Government have obtained a distinct assurance that the Netherlands Government is already prepared to act at once and decisively; and, whether, if necessary, such action will be supported by Her Majesty's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: At page 8 of the Parliamentary Paper,

Netherlands, No. 2, of 1884, the hon. Member will find a telegram from Commander Bickford, of the *Pegasus*, dated May 20, which seems to have escaped his attention. It states that communications had been opened with the crew in the middle of May. The Report of Commander Bickford on the whole subject, including his attempts to secure the release of the captives and the unsuccessful transmission of provisions to them for three months, has been received and will be laid on the Table. It also contains an account of the action of the Dutch authorities. At page 79 the hon. Member will find an account of the general arrangements made by Mr. Maxwell at the close of his mission in March for keeping up communications with the crew. The *Pegasus* left for Tenom on May 1, and returned on May 20 after the communications above referred to. She again left for Tenom on June 26 with the same object. In regard to the present position of this question, as it is the subject of urgent and almost daily communications between Her Majesty's Government and the Netherlands Minister, it is not in my power to reply at present to the hon. Member, while, at the same time, I hope he will believe that I fully understand his anxiety for early information. The Rajah of Tenom has been informed that he will be held responsible for the lives of the crew. In regard to the fifth portion of the hon. Member's Question, the hon. Member can, I hardly think, expect Her Majesty's Government to give a reply to the first part of it during the discussions which are being carried on between the two Governments, while, in regard to the concluding portion of it, I think the hon. Member has forgotten the reply I gave to his Colleague on Friday last, and which his hon. Colleague has already acted on.

MR. BOURKE asked whether the Rajah of Tenom had been told that he would be held responsible to the Dutch Government or to the English Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The instructions were sent to the Governor of the Straits Settlements, and the communications were from Her Majesty's Government.

MR. STOREY asked whether it might be hoped that the Dutch and English Governments would come to a conclusion on this matter about the same time as

they received news of the death of the whole of these men?

[No reply.]

MR. BROGDEN said, that the noble Lord had not answered the first part of his Question.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There is no doubt that questions of a serious international character are involved in the Correspondence which is now going on.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any news has been heard of General Gordon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Nothing direct has been heard from General Gordon since the 10th of April. On June 28, Lord John Hay reported from Suakin that Mason Bey reported from Massowah that the last news of Gordon was on the 27th of April, in a letter to the Mudir of Kassala.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)
ACT—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether it is the case that a serious outbreak of foot and mouth disease has taken place in Yorkshire; if so, if he will state the circumstances; and, if ascertained, the origin of the outbreak; and, what measures the Privy Council and local authority have taken to prevent the spread of the disease?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, that he regretted to say that information had been received by the Department that foot-and-mouth disease had broken out on a farm in Yorkshire—five cattle out of a herd of 126 were reported infected; there were also 451 sheep on the farm. An Inspector of the Department had been sent down to the spot to give advice to the local bodies. A large area had been declared infected. The local authority had power to slaughter in case they should find it expedient. The origin of the outbreak could not at present be ascertained.

CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS
—SUSPENSION OF CORRUPT BO-
ROUGHS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he in-

tends to introduce in the present Session a Bill, similar to those passed in previous Sessions, providing for the suspension of the writs for boroughs in which corrupt practices have been declared by a Royal Commission to have prevailed extensively at the last Parliamentary election?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Yes, Sir.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND)
ACT, 1882—SEIZURE OF SEDITIOUS
DOCUMENTS—MR. J. F. O'REGAN.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of his statement that the documents recently seized from Mr. J. F. O'Regan, of Durrus Banty, were believed to be of a seditious character, he will cause Mr. O'Regan to be arrested; whilst, if the said documents have been found not to be seditious or illegal, if he will cause them to be immediately returned to Mr. O'Regan; and, whether it is a fact that, on the evening of the 15th June, Mr. Starkie, of the Criminal Investigation Department, called upon Mr. O'Regan, and warned him to leave Ireland; and, if this be so, to state by what right Mr. Starkie undertook such a course?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am advised that the documents seized were of a treasonable and rebellious character, and that they were properly seized. The question whether any proceedings should be taken against Mr. O'Regan is one for the Attorney General to settle, and he advises me that he is not at present in a position to decide. The visit of Mr. Starkie, who was accompanied by another Constabulary officer, to Mr. O'Regan's house, was in connection with the documents found there. He did not warn Mr. O'Regan to leave Ireland; but in the course of a conversation Mr. O'Regan told him that he intended soon to return to America.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the documents seized were documents connected with the Irish National League of the United States; whether it is the practice of the Irish Executive to leave at liberty a man on whom seditious documents were found; and whether the reason for these proceedings was simply because Mr. O'Regan is an Irish-American, a class of person

for whom the Irish Government has no affection?

MR. TREVELYAN asked for Notice of the Question.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (IRELAND)
—PARTY EMBLEMS AT ARMAGH—
CATHOLIC EMBLEMS.

MR. BERESFORD asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that at the intermediate examinations in Armagh, the boys were this year examined in a room in the Roman Catholic College, which was conspicuously ornamented by a large crucifix; and, whether the Commissioners had considered whether such a room in an entirely denominational building was unobjectionable in itself, and complied with the Schedule of the Act, which specifies the town hall or other public building suitable for the purpose, and was the figure given in freehand drawing to the junior class the emblem of Irish disaffection, a shield bearing a harp without a crown?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I would like to know whether the emblem here described as the emblem of Irish disaffection—a shield bearing a harp without the crown—is not largely used in the decoration of the House of Parliament; whether a shield bearing a harp without a crown is not opposite the Speaker's Chair, close to the Clock; whether a shield bearing a harp without a crown is not opposite the hon. Member himself on the Gallery over the middle Gangway on the Liberal side of the House; whether it is not to be found on the Gallery over the Gangway on the Conservative side of the House; whether 30 or 40 such emblems are not to be found on the ceiling of the House; and whether, under these circumstances, the Question of the hon. Member for Armagh is not a combination of bigotry and folly?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Assistant Commissioners inform me that the room in question has been used as a centre for examination for the last five years. Up to the present year there was also a centre at the Armagh Royal School; but as only a few students from the Royal School came forward this year, the hall at St. Patrick's College was sufficiently commodious for the examination of all the boys. It was, moreover, placed at

the disposal of the Board free of charge, and was the only available room which could be had without payment. No complaint has been made to the Commissioners with regard to the existence of religious emblems. Had such a representation been made, they would have taken steps to have them removed or covered in accordance with the usual practice. The figure given in one grade in freehand drawing was a harp and a shield; and it was selected by the Art Master of Hammersmith Training College. I have no doubt he meant the design as a compliment to Ireland. As far as I am able to use my eyes, the Question of the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) must be answered in the affirmative.

MR. HEALY: With regard to the crucifix, may I ask whether there were any Jews examined to whom the emblem might be objectionable?

[No reply.]

INTESTATE, &c. ESTATES (IRELAND)
—ESTATE OF THE LATE MRS. HELEN
BLAKE.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Freeman's Journal* of 26th May last, the Treasury had acceded, or intended to accede, to the intentions expressed by will or otherwise by the late Helen Blake; whether the Treasury is in possession of a card or memorandum upon which the late Helen Blake wrote instructions as to the inscription to be placed upon her tombstone, either in the above form or otherwise; and, whether the Treasury is in possession of any, and what, proof of the marriage of the parents of Helen Blake and of her birth; and, if so, whether they will allow same to be inspected?

MR. COURTNEY: Under the authority of the Chancery Division, and upon the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown, the Treasury have carried out the pecuniary intentions of the deceased in this case so far as they could with any probability be ascertained. It is the fact that a note as to an inscription on her husband's tombstone was found among her papers, with an incomplete addition relating to herself. It is precisely because, after much inquiry, no one has been able to produce any proof

of the marriage of the parents of Mrs. Blake, or of her birth, that the duty of dealing with her property has devolved upon the Treasury.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked if a gentleman named Sheridan had a *prima facie* case of his relation to this lady, would the Treasury allow him to inspect the documents in this case for the purpose of negating or affirming his statement?

MR. COURTNEY said, they had an enormous number of applications from Sheridans and Blakes who persuaded themselves that they were intimately connected with this lady. If this gentleman, whom he did not know, could identify himself as being connected with this lady, he would be entitled to all the assistance that they could give him.

COLONEL NOLAN: Would the hon. Gentleman say that some of the property in question will be spent for the purpose of discovering the relatives of this lady?

MR. COURTNEY said, that could not be done.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why, at a period so advanced in the Session, so much time has been allowed to lapse between the promise and the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the working of the Labourers' Act of last year?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Government have been very anxious to complete the arrangements for this Committee setting to work as soon as possible. The difficulties in the way of completion do not arise on this side of this House, and I hope they will be got over in a few days.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he interpreted the right hon. Gentleman's answer to mean that the difficulty arose on the Opposition side of the House; and, if that were correct, he wished to ask the senior Whip of the Conservative Party whether he objected to the nomination upon the Committee of Members belonging to the Irish Party?

MR. TREVELYAN replied, that his noble Friend (Lord Richard Grosvenor) and himself would use their best endeavours, and he hoped they should be able to arrange the matter within a very short time.

Mr. Courtney

EVICTIIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTIIONS AT GWEEDORE, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the fact that a number of families of tenant farmers, including a large proportion of old and infirm persons and infants, were, on the 1st instant, evicted from their homes at Gweedore, county Donegal, at the suit of Mr. Wybrant Olpherto, chairman of the Dunfanaghy Board of Guardians; whether it is the fact that notice of the intention to evict was not given to the local relieving officer, and that he was not present at the evictions to afford relief and shelter to the destitute; whether an application to the Board of Guardians by the Rev. James McFadden, P.P. Gweedore, as a warden of the Union, on behalf of the evicted families, was disregarded; and, what steps will be taken to assure due relief of the evicted, and to exact the appropriate penalty for a breach of the Law?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is a fact that a number of persons, most of them owing two years' rent, have been evicted in the district mentioned. It is not the case that notice was not given to the relieving officer. The requisite notice was given to him. The law does not require the relieving officer to be present at evictions. His duty in the circumstances is regulated by Section 4 of the Act 11 & 12 *Vict. c. 47*, which provides that applications may be made to him by persons who become destitute through being dispossessed. I am aware that the Rev. Mr. McFadden did make some application to the Guardians, but I have not had time to ascertain from that remote district any particulars with regard to it. I do not know whether it reached the relieving officer, or whether, if it did reach him, it was one he could comply with. If applied to, it would be his duty to afford relief until he should obtain the directions of the Guardians, and the Guardians have power, if they think fit, to give outdoor relief for one month. Until I receive a fuller report, I cannot say whether there was any neglect of duty on the part of the relieving officer. The Local Government Board have drawn the special attention of the Guardians and of the relieving officer to the case, and have also called upon their Inspectors to report.

MR. SEXTON asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether he was aware that these evicted families were now lying in the ditches, that the helplessness of their condition was intensified by the fact that not one of them could speak or understand a word of English, and accordingly could not make application to the relieving officer; whether the Government would themselves take immediate steps to ascertain the condition of these people, and afford them relief, or induce the Board of Guardians to give the relief allowed by law?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Government will take all such steps as they are allowed by law to take to induce the Guardians to give these people four weeks' relief. I do not wish to pronounce any opinion on the conduct of those concerned on either side; but, however painful the circumstances, it is obvious the Government cannot depart from their legal duties and powers in the matter.

SHERIFF COURT HOUSES (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. PRESTON BRUCE asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will postpone for a week the Consideration of the Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Amendment Bill, and in the meantime cause the Bill to be reprinted, so as to show the Amendments introduced in Committee; and, if he will promise to take the Report stage at such an hour as will admit of a full discussion?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes, Sir; I shall postpone consideration of this Bill for a week, and in the meantime see that the Amendments are put down so that they may be seen. I hope that before that time I shall be able to suggest some further Amendments which may go very far to meet certain objections which are taken to the Bill. I also hope to be able to take the Report stage at such an hour as to admit of discussion.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES — NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES — MR. CORRY CONNELLAN'S PENSION.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, In what portion of the Estimates for 1884-5 does the pension of £436 11s. 4d. to Corry Connellan, given on page 545 of last year's Votes,

appear; will he lay upon the Table a Copy of the Treasury Minute of 1st October, 1868, authorising the allowance; and, as the pension is said to have been granted on the ground of "age," can he give Connellan's present age, and state where he now is, or where he draws his pension?

MR. COURTNEY in reply, said, this pension was included in the Irish section of the Superannuation Vote, and the hon. Member would find it at page 472 of the Estimates. The Treasury Minute in question was purely formal, and there would be no use in laying it on the Table. The pensioner was now 77 and a-half years old, and his pension was drawn in Ireland.

MR. HEALY asked the Prime Minister if he was aware that the Corry Connellan mentioned was the person who was obliged to quit Dublin some 15 years ago, because a warrant was out against him for an unnatural offence; that he had been in receipt of a pension from the Treasury of £436; that his name appeared in the Estimates until last year; that this year it suddenly disappeared; that its disappearance synchronized with the exposures in Dublin last October, as, of course, those who had the preparation of the Estimates must have known the pension would be attacked in Parliament; and whether the Treasury meant to continue the payment of £436 per annum to a man who was beyond Her Majesty's Dominions, and who fled from justice because of an unnatural offence?

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Question had not in the first instance been addressed to him; but if the hon. Gentleman would give Notice, he would answer it.

EGYPT—THE CONFERENCE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, In the event of the Conference not arriving at a conclusion with regard to the financial proposals laid before it, will there be anything to submit to the judgment of Parliament?

MR. GLADSTONE: If I look at the literal sense of the terms of this Question, I shall have some difficulty in replying to it, because I think it would be hardly decorous for me at the time when the Powers of Europe have met together, deliberately and advisedly, for

the purpose of performing certain work, and arriving at certain conclusions, to presume, even hypothetically, that they will leave that work undone; but I think I can perhaps meet the substance of the Question by saying that when the financial matters in regard to Egypt have been disposed of, and when, therefore, the whole subject will become ripe for discussion, Her Majesty's Government will think it their duty to forward by any means in their power any desire which the right hon. Gentleman may then think fit to entertain for discussion and a vote on the subject.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Then, in that case, there will be nothing proposed by the Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot look so far into the future. I do not think it would be quite consistent with the respect I owe to the Powers assembled in Conference.

MR. PULESTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can conveniently state that the special attention of the Conference will be directed to Article 3 of the Decree of November 1876, confirmed by the Law of Liquidation, which sets forth that the annuity necessary for the service (interest and sinking fund) of the Preference Debt will form the first charge on the Revenues of the Railways and of the Port of Alexandria, and "will remain, in every eventuality, the first liability of the Commission of the Public Debt;" whether his attention has been called to the following remarks of the Right honourable gentleman the Member for Ripon, in the Preface to the English edition of the said Decree, viz.:—

"I am perfectly aware that all these regulations may be broken through by an arbitrary act, but that arbitrary act will have to be performed as an overt act, in defiance of public opinion and of the Powers whom the Viceroy has summoned to assist him in carrying out these reforms;"

and, whether he had considered them in the proposals he has made?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the two passages quoted by the hon. Member have certainly been under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. They are important passages, and they have, with many other important pieces of evidence, received the fullest consideration of the Government before the Government determined what financial

plans they would propose to the Conference.

MR. PULESTON: What will be the position of these questions if the Conference does not conclude its labours before the Prorogation of Parliament?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid I cannot add anything to what I have said; but it must be clearly understood that if, when the matter is completed, which must be by the adjournment of the Conference, it be desired to have a discussion or vote on this subject, it will be the duty of the Government to forward that desire.

MR. PULESTON: The right hon. Gentleman misunderstood me. I meant, in the event of the Conference being still in session when the House adjourns.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not prepared to say that the Session will not outlive the Conference. My impression is that it will.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether all these arrangements with reference to the Preference and other debts made in 1876, chiefly under the guidance of the right hon. Member for Ripon, were not founded on an estimate of the Revenue of Egypt, which afterwards proved to be largely in excess of the probabilities of the case?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think there would be any advantage in entering retrospectively on a discussion of that kind at the present moment. The whole of these matters are before a higher tribunal, and I would rather avoid any discussion of them now.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will undertake that the Universities (Scotland) Bill shall not be brought on for Second Reading except at such a reasonable hour as will secure for it the opportunity of a full discussion?

MR. GLADSTONE: I can answer the Question of the hon. Member, I think, in the affirmative, by saying that proper Notice will be given, and I may, therefore, say at the same time what we propose at present in regard to the procedure. The operation of the vote by which the House of Commons gave Morning Sittings during May and June for the promotion of Government Busi-

ness, has, as the House knows, terminated, and we do not propose to renew the application to the House for Morning Sittings, at any rate, at present. But we propose, viewing the period of the year, to ask the House—and I will give Notice for to-morrow—to give precedence to Government Orders on Tuesdays. In case the House accedes to that request, and in case the debate upon the London Government Bill terminates, as I hope it may, to-morrow—[*Laughter and cheers*—well, I hope I may be allowed to give my imagination so much licence as to suppose that possibility—in that case, we shall take the Scotch Universities Bill as the first Order on Tuesday, and the Coinage Bill as the second Order.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Upon what day the Second Reading of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill will be taken?

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked whether, having regard to the limited time devoted this Session to the Civil Service Estimates and to the fact that two Votes of Credit had already been taken, the Prime Minister would name an early day for resuming the consideration of those Estimates?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will do so. We propose to devote Monday to the Army Estimates, and Thursday to the Civil Service Estimates, and we shall do the best we can to get forward with them. With respect to the Irish Bill, I am not able to make any arrangement during the coming week, and the present situation of public affairs generally makes me rather unwilling to enter upon any description of arrangements beyond the present week. But at the same time I may, I hope, in the course of next week, be able to give a more positive answer to the hon. Gentleman.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER SURGEONS.

DR. FARQUHARSON asked the Secretary of State for War, If Volunteer surgeons can go through a course of training in ambulance drill at the Army Hospital Corps Depôt at Aldershot; and, if they will receive an allowance while attending?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: In reply to my hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire, I have to say that the Secretary of State for War has already

under his consideration various schemes which have been proposed for the improvement of the Volunteer Medical Service, and for the better instruction of Volunteer medical officers in field work. The Secretary of State hopes to deal with these schemes in the autumn, and, among them, he will consider whether effect could be given to the suggestions contained in my hon. Friend's Question.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts, pages 7, 8, and 9, in which the methods of transacting business by the Education Department is condemned, especially in the following particulars, viz.:—That the Department maintains that the Education Code is superior to Statute Law (p. 7, s. 45); that money once paid to a school, either illegally or in excess of proper payment, ought not to be recovered (p. 8, s. 48); that the action of the Department has given occasion for a transaction which is, to say the least of it, most unusual (p. 8, s. 50); that a Memorandum prepared by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1881 is neglected (pp. 8 and 9, ss. 54-7); and, whether, in consequence of such Report, he will take steps to prevent the continuance of a system which, according to the opinion of the Committee, is incompatible with the theory and the practice of modern finance?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. It will be seen, by reference to the proceedings from year to year of the Public Accounts Committee, that the practice of the Treasury is, after receiving the Report of the Committee, to frame a Minute directing the communications which the Treasury thinks necessary to be made to the various spending Departments, and expressing generally the views of the Department on such of the points raised by the Report of the Committee as call for notice. Thus, in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee in 1882 appears the Treasury Minute on the Committee's Report of the previous year. In accordance with this practice, it will be the

duty of the Treasury to take into their serious consideration the extracts from the Report of this Session to which the hon. Gentleman calls attention, and to make such communications as they think necessary thereon to the Education Department. The preparation of this Minute is one of the most serious duties of the Treasury as the Department of Control, and it is not often possible to complete it until towards the end of the year. The Treasury Minute of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee, which has just been presented to Parliament, will be in the hands of the Comptroller and Auditor General before the end of the year, and will be before the Public Accounts Committee on their assembling in the Session of 1885. In the meantime, it would be premature to express an opinion upon portions only of the Committee's last Report, especially as the evidence is not yet printed, and no sufficient opinion can be formed until it has been carefully perused.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked whether these irregularities had been going on during nearly the whole time the present Government had been in Office?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): I cannot express an opinion upon the subject until I have read the evidence.

SCOTLAND — CROFTERS AND COT- TARS IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. BARCLAY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government intend taking any step towards carrying out the recommendation of the Crofter's Commission in favour of increased telegraphic facilities; and, in particular, whether the Treasury will reduce, and, in the more pressing cases, dispense with the guarantee now required before providing telegraphic communications in the western islands, Orkney and Shetland?

MR. COURTNEY: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. I am glad to be able to inform my hon. Friend that the substantial recommendations of Lord Napier's Commission upon this point were anticipated. Under arrangements with the Fishery Board, a large proportion of the extensions recommended by that Commission

are being carried out, and, in particular, that to Barra, upon which they laid most stress. Looking to the unremunerative character of the Telegraph Service, as a whole, it is scarcely possible to dispense with the guarantee protecting the public from loss; but the amount is reduced to the smallest sum; and if the experience of the present extensions justifies the hopes held out, the traffic over them should go far to relieve the guarantors from liability.

EGYPT (REORGANIZATION)—CRUEL- TIES AND ABUSES IN GAOLS.

MR. GORST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government will use their influence with the Egyptian Government to procure an inquiry into the conduct of the Mudir of Tintah, in reference to the alleged cruelties in the gaol at Tintah; and, whether they will, if the justice of the case requires it, take steps to insure his being dismissed from the service of the Egyptian Government and adequately punished?

MR. GLADSTONE: I thank the hon. and learned Gentleman for calling my attention to this case, because I am glad to say that this Question has been anticipated. There were cruelties and abuses in the gaol at Tintah; but it was not quite certain whether the Mudir was personally implicated. He was certainly responsible, and he was accordingly dismissed some time ago. He was not absolutely dismissed at the moment from the Egyptian service, but was removed to Suakin, where, for a short time, he was Governor. Very shortly after, however, he was removed also from Suakin, and he is not now in the employment of the Egyptian Government.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART— THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

MR. J. R. YORKE (for Sir ROBERT PEELE) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in pursuance of the assurance that—

“The Royal Academy will frame documents, to be laid before the House, giving all the information, on every head, that has been given, whether in the form of a Parliamentary Return or in the forms given by the Royal Commission,”

the Motions for Returns relating to the Royal Academy can now be moved for

unopposed, which, at the request of the First Lord of the Treasury, had been so frequently postponed?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; I am afraid I did not convey clearly enough to the right hon. Baronet that the authorities of the Royal Academy were perfectly willing that all the information which has, on more than one former occasion, been given to the House, should again be given, and they accordingly propose to do that by a spontaneous communication of their own to the Government. That being so, and it being remembered that the Royal Academy has a good deal of independence in its position, I do not think it would be desirable that it should be brought as a subordinate Department of the State under the direct control of this House. Still, the Royal Academy is prepared to show every consideration and courtesy to the House, and I hope the House will not think it necessary to pass orders to the Royal Academy for information which will be submitted to it in a manner more conformable to usage.

MR. J. R. YORKE gave Notice that the right hon. Baronet would call attention to the subject on an early occasion.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will now fix a day for the resumption of the Debate on the Merchant Shipping Bill?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I may remind the hon. Gentleman opposite that in moving the second reading of the Bill, I stated that in view of the circumstances, and especially having regard to the pressure on the time of the House and on the Government, it would be impossible for me to make any progress with this measure unless I have the hearty and general assent, not only of all Parties in the House, but also of persons interested in the matters dealt with in the Bill. Since then I have been in communication with a good many representative people, both in the House and out of it, and I am informed that some of the representative organizations which were most strongly hostile to the Bill when it was introduced are now desirous that it should be proceeded with in order that the Amendments which have been suggested should be introduced; and in that form, with such further slight

modifications as might be carried in Committee, they would be glad to see it passed. Notably I have had communications from Liverpool, and from some of the largest shipowners engaged in trade in London and other ports. Unfortunately, on the other hand, I have received intimation that shipowners, especially in the North-Eastern ports, and on the Clyde, maintain their opposition to the Bill, even in its amended form. I am afraid, therefore, that I could not hope to proceed with the matter unless I were able to give a considerable time to its further discussion. There are two stages which the Bill would have to undergo. First, there is the second reading, and then the Motion for reference to a Grand Committee. I cannot, therefore, anticipate in the circumstances, that it would be possible for the Government to give the time which would be necessary to promote these two stages. Even if we did get so far, the Bill would go to the Grand Committee so late that I am afraid, considering the complexity of the measure, and the time that must be given to the consideration of its details, it would be impossible to return it to the House by the 1st of August, when the Reports from Grand Committees must be before the House. In these circumstances I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that the Bill must be withdrawn, and when on Monday it comes on I shall move that the Order be discharged.

MR. GORST asked whether the right hon. Gentleman and the Government were still of opinion that the present state of the law occasioned an amount of preventible loss of human life at sea?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly; that is my opinion.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would have any proposals to make to the House in regard to the appointment of a Royal Commission on the subject?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: That is a matter which will have the immediate attention of the Government, and at a later stage I hope to be able to state the intentions of the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the Home Secretary, whether he was of opinion that any Bill which had considerable opposition out-of-doors, and also in that House, and which was, moreover, of a

very complex character, was one which it was possible to pass this Session?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to reserve my answer for a few moments.

PARLIAMENT—NEW RULES OF PRO-
CEDURE—ADJOURNMENT OF THE
HOUSE (RULE 2).

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—THE RAJAH
OF TENOM—THE CREW OF THE
"NISERO."

MR. STOREY: On several occasions, in fact on many of the early days of the Session, I painfully attempted to obtain from the Foreign Office some information regarding the captive crew of the *Nisero*; and I have not been able to satisfy myself, on behalf of those for whom I now speak, that the Foreign Office has exhibited that energy and determination which it ought to have done. On Monday I gave Notice of a series of Questions, expecting that the noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) would be able this afternoon to give such an answer as would relieve the intense anxiety which prevails; but I find that the answer which he gave was misleading.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not in Order in making a statement. [*Cries of "Move, move!"*]

MR. STOREY: I will put myself in Order, Sir, by moving the Adjournment of this House in order to discuss a subject of urgent public importance.

MR. SPEAKER: An hon. Member proposes to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, that the condition of a British crew now captive and in imminent danger of death in Sumatra, and the dilatoriness of the Foreign Office in taking effectual steps for their release.

But the pleasure of the House not having been signified, MR. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than Forty Members having accordingly risen in their places,

MR. STOREY said: I should not have taken this course this evening were it not for the extreme anxiety with which the friends of the imprisoned men are filled. Let anyone who think I act improperly listen to the following extract from a letter received from the father of a young boy now in prison in

Sumatra, and when he has heard that, I venture to think he will not blame me for the step I have deemed it my duty to take. That gentleman says—

"The authorities of the Foreign Office seem to delight in mystification and delay. One feels almost heart-broken to think of the waste of precious time, and that while the officials are complimenting each other the captives are perishing."

If I thought that any action of mine would operate against the captives I would be very glad to preserve silence, as I have done on many occasions. But what are the facts? It is now 232 days since those men were first brought into captivity. For two months they were on the coast, and since then they have never been for more than a night or two above 12 miles distant from the shore. That shore is within three days' sail of a British establishment with a naval and military force, and notwithstanding that we have been without information respecting those men for months together. Once during that long period they have been in absolute want of food. The only news we have been able to obtain is that first one and then three of them are dead. Then, curiously enough, the moment news of this serious importance comes to the House and the country, we have increased action on the part of the Foreign Office; but whilst no news came there was no action. I freely admit that this is a difficult and delicate question, and I would not simply stand here to find fault with the Government if I thought that our officials had committed no more than an error of judgment. But I find, after a laborious examination of the Papers, that our officials in England have ignored the opinions and well-considered views of the officials on the spot, and neglected to take any action as advised by them. In making these observations I hope it will be understood that I make no accusations against our officials in the East. On the contrary, I am bound to admit that whether they be civil, military, or naval authorities, every one of them has exhibited enterprize and energy which I should wish to see imitated in this country. At the very earliest stage of all, the naval officer there, with a courage which one cannot sufficiently admire, proposed to cut the Gordian knot by landing his sailors and marines to rescue the men. One of our civil officers admits that if that had been done at the

time it was proposed, the result would probably have been much more satisfactory than have been the attempts since made by the Government of England on behalf of the crew. But methods familiar to Blake and Nelson are out of fashion in these mild and philanthropic days. We can apparently afford expeditions to deliver ruffians and convicts on the Coast of the Red Sea; but when men of our own kin are kept in captivity until they die off one by one like flies, then we realize the impropriety of using force to rescue those of our own blood. The Foreign Office made a mistake in the latter days of last year. I am not going to press the error of judgment strongly against them, because everyone may err. But what they do is this—instead of believing this was an English matter to be dealt with by the English Government, they leave the matter to be dealt with by the Dutch Government. Now, if they had done that under the advice of the officials on the spot I would not consider them to blame; as a matter of fact they were warned, not by one, but by every official on the spot, that that precise method would result in failure. On November 24, Consul Kennedy wrote that there would be a chance of the surrender of the crew to the British, but not to the Dutch Government. On December 26, Lloyd's agent said, "Dutch powerless." On December 13, Governor Weld said, "The Dutch cannot get the men," and therefore he recommended that the Government should try direct negotiations. The Government, instead of accepting that advice of the officials, withdrew the *Pegasus* from the station, and left to the Dutch the release of those English captives. This was a great mistake. Now, what did the Dutch do? Count Bylandt, the Dutch Ambassador in this country, wrote on December 29th to the Foreign Office that the officials at Acheen only intended to employ force in case the shipwrecked prisoners were maltreated or assassinated. An admirable method, truly, of delivering them! But what happened? Within nine days of that declaration of the Dutch Government, whilst our men were not being ill-treated, the Dutch suddenly landed troops and burnt down the Rajah's town. They made no attempt to deliver the captives. They did not land any troops to surround the small town; they simply shelled it

from the sea, and while it was burning, and when the Rajah had retired into the country, they landed, and there was a skirmish which was dignified in the despatch as a serious engagement. It is not my opinion alone that the Dutch did not care to deliver the captives. Here is the deliberate statement of Governor Weld written on February 2nd, and received at home on March 6th. He says that "the expedition as carried out was ill-advised in the interests of the crew." The conclusion is obvious. The Dutch simply cared to keep open the dispute with the Rajah, whom they had failed to conquer, and it was a matter of indifference to them what became of the crew. If it were a matter of indifference to them, how much the more reason why the British Government should keep in view mainly the safety of these men. I admit that the mistakes of the Foreign Office, and the slowness of the action of the Government, might find excuse in the fact that so far the whole bearing of the case could not be known to Ministers at home. But without labouring the point of their conduct between November when the news came, and January when the Dutch expedition failed, I must ask the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whose reticence I confess I admire, to explain to me two or three later matters which have most painfully impressed, not only myself, but a very large number of persons throughout the country. Will the noble Lord explain how it was that in February, three months after the men had gone into captivity, the responsible Adviser of the Crown (the Earl of Derby), who was at the head of the Colonial Office, had not taken the trouble to read the Papers, or to understand, in the slightest degree, the circumstances of the case? I charge upon that noble Lord an indolence which I hope is not characteristic of all his dealings with public affairs. He did not, on February 11, three months after the wreck, understand the simple A B C of a question which, the Government assures us, is intricate and difficult. I will give chapter and verse in proof of my assertion, and if I do, I shall ask the House to agree with me that the Ministers of the Crown have not exhibited that anxiety in this important matter which they might have done. On the 11th of February, the Dutch expedition having

failed a month before, the Earl of Derby sent the following despatch to Governor Weld—

"Cannot undertake to name any sum now, or alter settled Acheen policy. Maxwell should first ascertain what ransom sufficient: but if Tempoh repays pepper debt, why crew detained?"

Now listen to two short telegrams which the Earl of Derby had received prior to that date. First of all Governor Weld telegraphs on February 2, as follows:—

"Situation difficult since Dutch abortive attack. It is becoming evident money secondary; Rajah wants English protection; at least belligerent rights and free trade with English for Achineese. Crew, some ill, more delirious. No news since attack."

That contains a distinct statement of what the Rajah really wanted, and the measure of the difficulty. At page 28, Governor Weld again telegraphs under date February 9—

"All concur prisoners readily given up if ports opened free trade English guarantee Sultan Acheen. Arbitrator can go to him only by means of refugee Achineese hostile to Dutch. Tempoh willing go with Maxwell. Rajah Tenom pay pepper debt. Rajah bears high character. No news of crew."—[*Netherlands*, No. 1 (1884), No. 64, p. 28.]

The Governor of our settlement there deliberately sets out the bearings and magnitude of the difficulty the Government had to encounter; and yet on the 11th of February the Earl of Derby replies—"If Tempoh pays the pepper debt, why are the crew detained?" Why indeed? Had not Governor Weld told him? I can only come to the conclusion that he had not taken the trouble to read the Papers. While the Earl of Derby was in this state of ignorance, attempts were being made to obtain the release of the crew by direct negotiations through Mr. Maxwell. On March 22nd, Maxwell failed in his negotiations, and reported the fact by telegram to the Foreign Office. What did Lord Granville do? Observe, the case was this. The Dutch expedition had failed, and the English negotiations direct had also failed; and Lord Granville, receiving that intimation on the 22nd of March, communicated the fact to the Representative of the Dutch Government, and asked if his Government had got "any further news." Then, until the 26th of April, not one single thing more did the Foreign Minister for England do that I can find in these Papers to secure the

release of these poor men. By this time, he not merely knew the danger in which the men were placed, but also the only way of escape. On January 25th, as hon. Members will see by the Papers, page 40, Governor Weld communicated to the Foreign Office very distinctly his views, and this was received by the Foreign Office on the 6th of March, 16 days before they were aware of the failure of Mr. Maxwell's negotiations. Says Governor Weld—

"I venture to recommend that diplomatic negotiations be set on foot with a view to some arrangement to secure freedom of trade and the avoidance of future difficulties like the *Nisero* case. In this case it should be distinctly understood that in my opinion no payment, even if it be considered right in policy to make a payment as a ransom, will avail without a promise, with our guarantee, to ameliorate the political condition of the Rajah and his people, and afford them some protection. If this is not done, the crew will probably die in captivity."—[*Ibid.* No. 78, p. 40.]

Again, at page 57, the same Governor writes to the Earl of Derby, under date of February 9, and this was received by the Foreign Office on March 13—still before they learned the failure of Mr. Maxwell's negotiations—and in that despatch he says—

"No one person from whom I have sought information, whatever be his sympathies, doubts but that an English guarantee of open ports and free traffic with Penang, such as was undoubtedly contemplated by our Treaty with the Netherlands of 1871, would immediately effect the release of the detained crew."—[*Ibid.* No. 82, p. 57.]

Yet again, at page 60, on the 17th of March, Governor Weld telegraphs home—

"Maxwell received well by Rajah. Conditions written. Free trade essential."—[*Ibid.* No. 86, p. 60.]

Again, at page 76 of the Papers, Mr. Maxwell communicates to the Foreign Office his opinion, under date of March 22nd. He says—

"The only means by which they can be released, and the question settled, is by requesting the Dutch to carry out the spirit of their Treaty with us regarding freedom of trade, and at the same time offering mediation with the Sultan of Acheen, a course which would relieve them as well as the Achineese from many difficulties. At present the Sultan and the Rajah of Tenom are masters of the position, and we may expect repetitions of the *Nisero* case whenever occasions present themselves."—[*Ibid.* No. 97, p. 76.]

Whilst at page 86 Captain Bickford says—

"At the conclusion of this stage of the *Nisero* affair, I would venture to remark that, in my opinion, the chances of release of crew are very small indeed, unless this free trade is granted. . . . The Dutch are now apparently going to make use of native (Acheenese) allies to act against the Rajah. This may possibly succeed, but of course the risk to the imprisoned crew would be great."—[*Ibid.* No. 97, p. 86.]

And finally, at page 87, Mr. Maxwell reiterates—

"I have now no hope that the crew of the *Nisero* will be peaceably surrendered to the Dutch, or to the English, unless free trade on the West Coast of Acheen is re-established as fully as it existed before the war."—[*Ibid.* No. 97, p. 87.]

I think I have established conclusively that, from the 6th of March forward, the Government knew and understood the only conditions under which negotiations with the Dutch could be successful. Yet it was not till April 29th that Lord Granville spoke plainly to the Dutch Government. I should like, too, to direct the attention of the noble Lord to another point which has caused much feeling in the North Country, and some explanation of which, I think, he is bound to make to this House. It was on the 26th of April that the sad additional news came to England of the condition of these men. It was contained in a telegram found at page 94, and which reads as follows :—

"Latest news of *Nisero* 31st March. One, Italian, dead; three ill; in great straits from want of food. After consulting with Senior Naval Officer, suggest that ship of war use utmost endeavours to convey stores; but at the same time will be difficult to communicate."—[*Ibid.* No. 98, p. 94.]

That telegram was supplemented by a letter from the Governor, saying that it would be easy to communicate by boats. The point I want to put to the noble Lord is this, and it is one which, I think, is very discreditable to the officials of the Foreign Office. That telegram is of a very simple nature. It is in effect— "Here are British subjects dying of starvation; give me instructions to send out ship with provisions to them." That telegram was sent to the Colonial Office, and thence to the Foreign Office on the same day. Therefore, on the 26th of April, Lord Granville and his subordinates were in possession of the fact that these men were dying from want of food. Saturday passed, Sunday passed, Monday passed, and nothing was done. No order was sent from the Foreign Office till the 29th of April. [Lord EDMOND

FITZMAURICE dissented.] The noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) shakes his head. I can only follow the Papers, and if the Papers are wrong I am not to blame. According to the Papers, it is clear that no order was sent from the Foreign Office with regard to the ship until the 29th of April. I do not know whether the noble Lord will contradict that fact. I understood when he shook his head that he would. If he does he will have to correct his Papers, not me. So far as the Papers are concerned, it is quite clear that it was the 29th of April. Then the Earl of Derby telegraphed to Governor Weld—

"Make every effort to convey provisions to *Nisero* crew from either coast. Consult Maxwell and Senior Naval Officer. Supply requisite stores. Report fully by telegraph."—[*Ibid.* No. 105, p. 97.]

That was certainly not received till the 30th of April. I ask whether the noble Lord does not think that very grave neglect was displayed by the officials of the Foreign Office in not sending that telegram before the 29th? I can assure him that in my own town, inhabited by sailors, the fact that for three whole days Lord Granville and his subordinates should have had in their possession knowledge of the fact that these men were without food, and that there were individuals itching with anxiety to send out a ship—that Saturday, Sunday, Monday, even till Tuesday—all that time should be allowed to pass before a single executive order was sent from the Foreign or Colonial Office, has caused very much dissatisfaction. I have left for a time the thread of my argument. I had arrived at the point when the Foreign Office learnt the only chance there was of obtaining the release of these men through the Dutch. When did Lord Granville act? I told the House that he had received information of the real facts on the 3rd, 6th, and 17th March. He never acted at all until the 26th April, when the sad news came of the death of this man, and the serious state of jeopardy of the others. In fact, as far as the Papers make it apparent, it would seem that all that time, from March 22 until April 26, when new circumstances had arisen to jog the memory of the Foreign Office, they sat quiescent, and allowed this state of things to go on. At last, on April 29, three days after the news came, and on the day the message I read went out, Lord Granville did write

a despatch, which I must do the noble Lord the credit of saying was a firm despatch, to the Dutch Government, pointing out the circumstances, which he might just as well have pointed out at a time when there was some chance of doing good—namely, at the beginning of March. He wrote a despatch, I say, pointing out to the Dutch Government the serious consequences which might ensue if this case was allowed to create the feeling which it was calculated to create in England, and offering the mediation of the British Government between the Dutch and the Rajah of Tenom. Did the Dutch Government show such anxiety for the safety of these men as should induce the House to leave it in their hands? The despatch went out on the 29th April, and on the 8th May Lord Granville had again to write to the Dutch Minister begging him to send a reply. It came next day, and it was one which indicated very clearly that the Dutch Government did not consider so much the interests of our British subjects as its own interests in connection with the Rajah of Tenom. It absolutely declined the mediation of England. And why? Because the presence of the British as mediator might have a prejudicial effect upon the *prestige* of the Dutch authorities. On May 9th the reply came, and once again Lord Granville exhibits his "masterly inactivity." He has nothing more to say to the Dutch Government until the 31st May. Then he makes a further demand upon it. What had happened in the meantime? We left the men on the 31st March, one dead, the others ill, probably dying; and on May 27 Lord Granville received a despatch from our Acting Administrator there which seems once again to have stirred him up, for on 27th May the despatch dated the 20th April was received at the Foreign Office. Our Administrator says—

"Seeing that the Dutch authorities are apparently perfectly hopeless in the matter, and are doing nothing likely to have a practical effect; and whilst, further, it is abundantly clear that the members of the crew will drop off one by one unless suitable provisions and medicines are supplied to them. I have to-day telegraphed to your Lordship as follows:—'Latest news of *Nisero*, 31st March. One, Italian, dead, three ill. In great straits from want of food. After consulting with Senior Naval Officer, suggest that ship of war use utmost endeavours to convey stores; but at the same time will be difficult to communicate.'"

Mr. Storey

And yet, with a knowledge of that despatch, the noble Lord tells me curtly to-day, when I put a specific inquiry to him as to what the Dutch Government had done, and were going to do, that I must wait owing to the fact that active negotiations are going on. In my judgment there have never been any active negotiations yet. At one time after another the Foreign Office has been galvanized into activity by the serious news which has arrived, and as soon as they possibly could they have dropped a matter which was naturally unpleasant, and which might by-and-bye settle itself. I freely admit to the noble Lord and everyone that hears me that it cannot be a thing to contemplate with a light heart that there should be any difficulty between us and a friendly Power like the Dutch. I should be the last to say one unnecessary word in this House or in the country to cause unpleasantness between us and the Dutch Government; but, after all, if circumstances have caused unpleasantness, the actions of the Dutch Government have assisted in this; and I do not think we are quite called upon quietly to leave our men to die, or be content with the reiterated assertion of the noble Lord that negotiations are again being carried on. I have told the painful story, and I have risen for the specific purpose of trying to obtain from the noble Lord a statement of what is being done. For I tell him frankly that there is nothing in the past history of the case, nothing in the circumstances I have detailed to the House, that makes me trust for a moment to the Foreign Office in this matter. I remember the early delay; I remember the inability on the part of Lord Derby to ascertain the facts. I cannot explain, or justify, or excuse the delay in May in sending relief to the captives. I cannot tell why, time after time, we are to be put off, waiting whilst nothing effectual is being done. And when I remember that we know of the death of three of these men; that others are ill; that the climatic conditions are such that we may naturally expect, unless something be done, all, or most of them, may perish, and that no amount of silence on my part will help the men, whilst, perhaps, utterances in this House may do something to expedite matters. I think I have established sufficient justification for the unusual course I

took in this matter in bringing this question before it.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—
(*Mr. Storey*.)

MR. BROGDEN said, he did not rise for the purpose of justifying any part of the action of the Foreign Office or of the Colonial Office in this matter. He left the noble Lord the task of defending or replying to the charges that had been made of delay and negligence. He was concerned rather with the freedom of the crew of the *Nisero*, with the unfortunate position in which they were placed, and with that view of the case which had regard to the Rajah of Tenom being so influenced that the captives might be released. The position which the Rajah of Tenom had taken up on this question was not unparalleled amongst the barbarous tribes of that region, though it certainly was not often witnessed. Usually, shipwrecked men received kindness at the hands of such people; but this case was certainly an exception. It was a well-known fact that the Rajah had friends at Penang and Kassala, and had the means of communicating with the adjoining civilized districts, and he must have known what had taken place in this House and elsewhere. Instead of helping the shipwrecked crew forward to their destination he had taken them into the interior of the country, though not, perhaps, very far, and when he had them there he had refused to set them free. He pretended to be very friendly with and submissive to England; he said that he would kiss the feet of the English; and if spurned from one foot would cling to the other; but, in spite of all this, he had exercised a considerable amount of brutality upon these unfortunate men, and it was certainly impossible to call him a friend to the English people. But the House must take into consideration the fact that this was a subject of great delicacy. The Rajah had made use of these circumstances in order to make demands upon the Dutch Government, which no Government could concede. He wished, however, to impress upon the House the necessity of dealing with this question in regard to its internal and international relations, rather than as a mere question of deep sympathy with these unfortunate men. He asked the House

to consider what the case would have been, and how it would have been regarded in England, if the subjects of a friendly Power, not, perhaps, equal to their own, but still a considerable Power, had been captured in a remote part of the British Dominions, and the Power in question had claimed the right itself to obtain the freedom of the captives? In his own opinion, the difficulty in this case had arisen, not from neglect, but from over anxiety. Instead of leaving the responsibility on the Dutch Government from the beginning, we had allowed our own people to treat with this Rajah as if he were an equal or a tributary of our own; and we had, in consequence, realized the old saying that "too many cooks spoil the broth;" whereas, if the responsibility had been left solely on the Dutch Government, they would have been obliged to take some steps that would have before now produced good results. Anyone who knew that country would know that an expedition would be utterly unavailing. There were means, however, by which these savage tribes could affect each other; and it was by such means that the Dutch Government would endeavour to establish relations with this Rajah. While everything should be done that could be done, either by money or other means, to secure the freedom of the captives, it should be remembered that there were circumstances affecting the relations between two friendly Powers which demanded a proper exchange of courtesies. While, then, he hoped the House would consider the desirability of enforcing on the Dutch Government that they should do all they could to procure the liberation of these men, he also hoped that we should impress upon them the responsibility they were under, and leave them to discharge their duties as they thought best.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR, as one who had had in former years considerable intercourse with Singapore, Malacca, and Penang, and had thereby acquired some knowledge of Sumatra, wished to deny the assumption of the hon. Member who spoke last, that the Malay people in that part of the world were barbarous and uncivilized. They were nothing of the kind, for they had the advantages of the Mahomedan civilization; and it was in evidence that the son of the Rajah of Tenom, who had

the crew of *Nisero*, was being educated at Penang. With regard to the trade in that locality, no sea was better adapted for navigation than the Straits of Malacca, and consequently the business done by the petty Chiefs was extensive. The hon. Member said we ought to look to the Dutch to free the prisoners; but he (General Sir George Balfour) considered that the handing over of Acheen and of the whole of the Island of Sumatra to the Dutch in 1871 was one of the most cruel and unjust acts ever committed by a British Government. In 1824 engagements were entered into with the Dutch which, taken in connection with previous engagements, limited their power and protected the Malay States from aggression; and we had allowed the Dutch, by our 1871 Treaty, far greater claims than they could ever carry out. In his opinion, the present difficulties were caused by that monopolizing spirit which pervaded the Dutch character. The Rajah, in a wrong way, was putting a pressure on us to keep that Free Trade with Penang which he had so long enjoyed. From 1871 till now it was notorious that the Dutch had never been able to go beyond the sea-shore of Acheen. He was persuaded that the Dutch were exercising rights over Malay States which our Treaty did not justify them in exercising.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that there was one thing, and only one thing, in the speech of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) with which he could agree, and that was when he had said that this question was one of great difficulty and delicacy. He thought that they must all agree in that. The hon. Member for Wednesbury (Mr. Brogden) had brought forward the international side of the question in a manner which, he thought, must have convinced the House of the importance of that view. At the same time, while he was prepared to ask the House to consider how difficult and delicate a question this was, he, nevertheless, felt how abundantly justified was the anxiety of the House and of the country upon this subject. Although, as a Member of the Government, he regretted the course which the hon. Member for Sunderland had adopted, because, in his opinion, it was unnecessary, nevertheless he was aware that the hon. Member stood in a

peculiar position with regard to this question, because it so happened that in his constituency there were a considerable number of relatives and friends of the unfortunate people who were now in captivity. At the same time, listening to the speech of the hon. Member, he could not help being reminded of how often the same set of facts struck different minds in a different way. What was the hon. Member's charge against the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office? It was the charge of delay and indifference; but when the Papers bearing on the case were laid before Parliament an article had appeared in *The Times* which said that, whatever difference of opinion there might be on this question, whatever charge might or might not be made, one thing at least was certain—that no charge of delay or indifference could be made against the Colonial Office or the Foreign Office, and that the conduct of the Foreign Office in this matter might be taken as a bright example to be followed upon all occasions. The writer of this article said he could only express his regret that all Departments did not found their conduct on these lines. But he was not going to shelter the action of the Foreign Office or the Colonial Office behind any article in any newspaper. He proposed to meet the only two specific charges contained in the long series of observations made by the hon. Member for Sunderland by examining the facts which he had alleged. The principal charge which the hon. Member had made was with reference to the telegram of the 29th of April. The hon. Member argued that because a telegram was received on the 26th of April, and no action was taken until April 29, that culpable indifference must be imputed to the Department. The hon. Member some time ago placed a Question on the Paper relating to this subject; but, for some reason best known to himself, the hon. Member refrained from asking that Question. He regretted that Question had never been put, as it would have afforded an opportunity of explaining the whole of the circumstances of the case. Technically speaking, no doubt the telegram was received by the Foreign Office from the Colonial Office on the 26th of April, which was a Saturday; but so late on that day was it that it was almost Sunday morn-

ing. There were, as the hon. Member knew, certain difficulties in the way of transacting business on Sunday; but attention was paid to the telegram notwithstanding. Great efforts were made to reply to it at once; but it was absolutely necessary that whatever measures were taken should be taken in consultation with the Admiralty, because they must be done through one of Her Majesty's ships, and on Sunday it was found to be practically impossible to take the steps they desired. Communications were opened on Monday morning, the position of the *Pegasus* was ascertained, and also what communication it was desirable to send, because a great deal depended upon the local facilities the commander of the *Pegasus* could obtain in collecting provisions for the captives. The communications with the Admiralty took place on Monday; on Monday evening the Colonial Office was also communicated with, and on Tuesday morning the telegram was sent. The *Pegasus* left her station on the 1st of May, and, owing to the care with which the measures had been taken, the mission of Captain Bickford in the *Pegasus* was completely successful; and on May 3 three months' provisions and medicine was sent to the captives, sufficient, indeed, with care, to hold out for a much longer time. That was a plain, unvarnished tale, and he left it to the fairness and justice of the House to say whether, after what he had stated, there had been any delay, or whether the measures taken by the Foreign or Colonial Offices or the Admiralty were or were not well chosen. The second charge the hon. Member made was that between May 9 and May 31 Lord Granville appeared to have entirely neglected the matter, and his reason for that assertion seemed to be that he found two despatches bearing those dates in the Book, and assumed that nothing occurred between them. But the hon. Member did not appear even to have read the Blue Books, of which there were two, because, had he done so, he could hardly have failed to see that the long despatches of those dates could not have been written without personal communication between the Secretary of State, the Netherlands Minister, and the Representatives of both Governments at the Hague. Between those dates constant communications were taking place. He saw the Nether-

lands Minister himself on this question. When the hon. Member declared that a painful feeling existed in the North of England, if it existed at all—which he did not believe—it was due to what he must term the inaccurate statements which the hon. Member himself had published in newspapers having a large circulation in the North. To show that this feeling did not exist to the extent that was represented, he might say that he had had constant communications from the unfortunate relatives and friends of the imprisoned crew, and he had received over and over again the thanks of those people for the attention given in the Foreign Office to their case. He had both private and semi-official letters acknowledging this fact. Then, what happened on the last occasion on which this matter was before the House? Why, the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg), who had been more frequently at the Foreign Office in connection with this matter than the hon. Member for Sunderland himself, immediately rose in his place and at once contradicted the charges brought by the hon. Member against the Foreign Office and himself, stating them to be most unfair, and declaring he had always found the Department fully cognizant of the gravity of this question. The hon. Member was always claiming, practically, to be the only Member in the House who had taken up this subject; but the hon. Member was in Egypt until a recent date.

MR. STOREY: The noble Lord has just repeated statements which he made on a former occasion, though I did not take the trouble then to contradict him. I never blamed the noble Lord. The moment the Session opened I put a Question in this House, and from Egypt I sent Questions to my hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr. C. M. Palmer), who kindly put them for me. From the first I have followed the case with interest; but I never stated I was the only person who had done so.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he believed the action of other Members was perfectly independent, and did not require to be prompted by the hon. Member. The assistance and advice given by those other Members had been most valuable, because they fully understood and appreciated the difficulty of this painful question; and while they naturally exercised all the influence in

their power to show the Foreign Office the great interest that existed on the subject, they abstained from those constant attacks, which had in no way assisted the Foreign Office, but had, on the contrary, been a difficulty in their path in the course of the negotiations they had been carrying on. The hon. Member had made two main charges; but there were other vague charges which he could hardly have intended to be taken seriously. He said that, as far back as February, they should have acted in the spirit of Blake and Nelson. [Mr. WARTON: Hear, hear!] The hon. and learned Member for Bridport cheered that statement; but that they should at the very commencement of these proceedings have adopted a violent and high-handed course of action was a proposition that he did not think Her Majesty's Opposition, any more than hon. Members on his own side of the House, would advance. The sovereignty of the Dutch in Sumatra was not disputed; and the original arrangement, which was the father of all the successive arrangements relating to the Island of Sumatra, was made not by a Liberal Government at all, but by a Conservative Government, and by one whose name, he believed, was still honoured by his Party, for it was made as far back as the time of Lord Castle-reagh. With regard to the charges made against Lord Derby, he must say a few words. The charge was this—that at an earlier period of these proceedings Lord Derby had sent a telegram showing he had not read the Papers relating to the question of how far the debt of the Chinese merchant was the original cause of these troubles. Lord Derby was perfectly acquainted with the Papers, but they were not at that particular moment as yet quite explicit on this point, and his telegram to the Governor of the Straits Settlements was for the purpose of having the matter fully elucidated. The statements of the hon. Member showed that he had read the Papers very carelessly; for example, by far the most part of these transactions were in connection with Mr. Maxwell's mission; but the hon. Member had not condescended to notice it. Mr. Maxwell's mission took place in March; but the full account only reached the Foreign Office in April. While they were waiting for Mr. Maxwell's Report, it was perfectly impos-

sible for the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office to judge what further measures would be necessary. That was an answer to the charge of delay brought by the hon. Member against the Foreign Office upon this point. Moreover, they were awaiting the arrival of Governor Weld, from whom they expected to receive valuable advice and assistance. Governor Weld had since arrived, and the Foreign Office had received such advice and assistance from him. This would show that many of the charges against the Foreign Office were utterly without foundation. When the hon. Member came to the present aspect of the negotiations, and complained that his Question regarding them was not answered, the reply was plain and simple—these negotiations were not only going on actively, but were going on from day to day; and while they were pending the Foreign Office could not report from day to day what was said by the Netherlands Government to Her Majesty's Government, and by Her Majesty's Government to the Netherlands Government. They had such a sense of the gravity and importance of this question, that they could not make any partial or incomplete statement. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite whether the Public Business could be carried on if the adjournment of the House was to be moved every time an Under Secretary, with the full approval and authority of his Chiefs, said it was not in his power to make a statement which naturally he would be the first to desire to make as soon as possible? He hoped before long to be able to lay further despatches on the Table, and also to state the views the Government took when they had received the final answer of the Netherlands Government. He regretted to have stood so long between the House and its Business, which it was anxious to enter upon; but he felt that the charges which were made against the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office were most unjust, and, under the circumstances, almost cruel. They had laboured to do everything they could in this matter, and if they had not done so, they would have been lacking not only in official duty, but in the commonest feelings of humanity. He hoped the time was far distant when, whatever differences there might be, one Party would make such a charge against another. He left the

melancholy distinction of having done so to the hon. Member for Sunderland, and concluded by repeating, that whatever was the duty of the Government would be done, and he hoped with satisfactory results, though he was fully aware of the great difficulties and risks that had to be encountered.

MR. GORST said, that, notwithstanding the long speech of the noble Lord, he failed to see that he had made the case much better than it was before. The noble Lord had attempted to shelter himself behind *The Times* leading articles. It was not the first time the noble Lord had quoted articles in the public Press; and, knowing his literary tendencies, he thought that probably he contributed the article to *The Times* himself. When, however, the noble Lord came to specific answers to specific statements, he was singularly unfortunate. The tone of the noble Lord's speech alone was enough to induce them to think that there was a screw loose somewhere. With regard to the charge of delay from April 26th to the 29th, he (Mr. Gorst) found that instead of the telegram of the 26th being only technically received on that day, and practically on the Sunday morning, as represented by the noble Lord, it was received on the Saturday in sufficient time for the Colonial Office to receive a despatch about it; for, according to the Blue Book, the following letter was re-written on the 29th by the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office:—

"Tuesday. Sir,—I am directed by Earl Granville to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th instant, forwarding copy of a telegram from the acting Governor of the Straits Settlements, stating that, according to latest accounts received, one of the crew of the *Nisero* was dead."

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the hon. and learned Member, I am sure quite unintentionally, has misquoted. The telegram is not dated the 26th, it is dated 29th April.

MR. GORST: Nothing of the kind. Unfortunately, the noble Lord did not appreciate his (Mr. Gorst's) position. It was that the Colonial Office received a telegram announcing the death of one of the *Nisero's* crew in time to write a despatch about it, and in the letter which he had read the Foreign Office acknowledged the receipt of that despatch and the telegram. The hon. Member asked what the Foreign Office really did on

the Sunday; but upon Monday they opened communication with the Admiralty. He was bound to say that the Admiralty was the only Department that exhibited anything like proper activity. On that day the Admiralty wrote to the Foreign Office stating that they had received a copy of the telegram of the 26th of April from the Colonial Office, and seeking to move Earl Granville whether a ship of war with provisions should be sent. Therefore, on the Monday the Admiralty were trying to move Earl Granville to express his opinion, and that opinion was not expressed until the Tuesday morning, when letters were written to the Colonial Office and the Admiralty. If the crew of the *Nisero* were left in starvation three days longer than necessary, the blame was on the Foreign Office, and not with the Colonial Office, or the Admiralty, or the people of Singapore. The noble Lord said that he had answered the two allegations which had been made against the Foreign Office; but he had omitted altogether the third and most important one—namely, that from March 13 to April 29 the Foreign Office did not make a single movement in a diplomatic direction to obtain the release of these men. The noble Lord said that Mr. Maxwell had been sent out, and that until the Foreign Office had received his Report they could not take any further steps in the matter; but the *gravamen* of the charge that had been made against the Government by the hon. Member for Sunderland was that they were aware, from the information which they had received from responsible officers on the spot, that Mr. Maxwell's mission could not succeed, and that unless they took diplomatic steps these men could not be released; and yet, possessing that knowledge, they were content to lie by and to do nothing. The Government ought not to allow themselves to remain under a delusion on this question. The country laid the blame for the captivity of these men upon the British Government, who had allowed them to remain in duress for seven or eight months without making a move to secure their release. And yet, in the face of these facts, the noble Lord had been good enough to insinuate that the hon. Member for Sunderland was guilty of obstruction, because, by bringing this question under the notice of the House, he was preventing the

Government from proceeding with Business which must be abortive. In his opinion, the hon. Member deserved the thanks of the House for bringing this question forward; and he was sure he would receive the thanks of the country for calling attention to this shameful business. As the Business of that House was now conducted, it was exceedingly difficult to criticize the conduct of any public Department; and he was afraid that the result would be that in the future we should have more of these scandals than in the past. The facts of this case having now been fully stated in the hearing of the House, he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would use his influence, so that the proceedings of the dilatory Foreign Office would be quickened in this matter.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE asked the leave of the House to make an explanation. He wished to explain this matter in regard to the telegram of the 26th, because the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, no doubt unintentionally, had misled the House. He had spoken of this telegram as a Foreign Office telegram. The Blue Book showed that the telegram was a Colonial Office telegram. It could not possibly have been anything else, owing to the position of those by whom, and to whom, it was sent. The information in this telegram was not known to the responsible officials at the Foreign Office till after Office hours on Saturday, the 26th, and he had explained the difficulties of taking action upon it during Sunday, because communications with other Offices were necessary. The House would see the difficulty he was in in replying to these minute and carefully-prepared charges as to dates and days, the hon. Member having brought forward this charge without having given him the smallest Notice of his intention to do so. He had consequently none of the necessary documents with him at the moment; but he had no doubt that the facts would be found to be as he had stated.

MR. WARTON observed that the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) had brought forward this question, not only as an Englishman, but as the Representative of a sailor's constituency; and it had been altogether unworthy of the noble Lord to make the fact that he had called the attention of the House to the matter the ground of a personal

attack upon him. It was clear that the hon. Member for Sunderland, in the course he had adopted, had been influenced by the most upright and conscientious motives. What had led to this unfortunate business was the knowledge that every small State possessed, of the invertebrate character of Her Majesty's Government. The action of this country was paralyzed all the world over, because Foreign Powers had lost their respect for England, on account of the timidity and vacillation of Her Majesty's present Government. He only wished they could have one hour of Lord Palmerston's or Lord Beaconsfield's Government, for then all these matters would be set straight.

MR. GLADSTONE remarked that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had worked himself into a fine frenzy on this subject; but that fine frenzy would not advance the House one iota towards the end of this complicated matter, which it was quite clear that the hon. and learned Gentleman had never examined into. The hon. and learned Gentleman, led away by his general prejudices against the Government, and by his disposition to condemn them on every occasion for having degraded their country in the eyes of the world, had brought charges against them which common humanity should have prevented him from doing. He did not intend to enter into the controversial part of this subject, neither did he presume to censure the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) for having brought forward this most difficult and complicated matter. It had been his duty to associate himself with Lord Granville in every matter of this kind; and, therefore, he admitted that he should have been prepared to have met, step by step, any attack that had been made upon the Government in respect of this question. The hon. Member for Sunderland, however, had never conveyed to him that he intended to deliver this carefully-prepared attack upon the Government in reference to these unhappy men, and that he intended to search the Blue Books, and to quote page after page of them in support of that attack, and to give his own version of the facts. In saying this, he was by no means questioning the excellence of the hon. Member's motives in bringing this matter forward; but if the hon. Member had in view the very proper

and natural object of obtaining the liberation of these unhappy men, he did not think that he had adopted the course best calculated to attain that object. With regard to the charge which the hon. Member had brought against the Foreign Office, he must reserve his defence for the time; because he could not undertake, without due Notice, to enter into that defence. But he did say this—that he wished to express his own share in Lord Granville's responsibility, and that he was perfectly confident that when the proper time came for the examination of the Papers it would be found that the charge of neglect and indifference which had been so freely made against the two Secretaries of State, and particularly Lord Granville, had no foundation whatever. He wished it to be understood that Her Majesty's Government admitted no part of the charge which had been made by the hon. Member. He admitted that it was important that the conduct of the Department should be brought to notice; but it was still more important that these people should be released. He was not going to make it a matter of blame that the hon. Member had brought this subject forward; but he had hoped that when the hon. Gentleman adopted so high a tone he saw his way to some method by which the release of the men might be brought about, and would have offered to them some useful and valuable suggestions. It might be that the speech of the hon. Gentleman contained such suggestions, though he confessed he had been unable to perceive them. This was no reason for blaming the hon. Gentleman, because the difficulties of the case were such that they would have defied either official or private ingenuity. But it was rather material that the House should understand that in the face of the heavy accusations which the hon. Member had so freely and so abundantly launched, he did not lay down a policy by which he thought he could point out that the release of those men could be effected. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) kept himself within the lines of prudence; the hon. and learned Gentleman did not, he thought, profess to have in his hands a solution of the difficulty. His hon. Friend the Member for Wednesbury (Mr. Brogden) gave them his view of the course which ought to have been pursued. His hon.

Friend's opinion was that the British Government ought entirely to have avoided operating upon the subordinate authorities in this case, and to have confined themselves to holding the Dutch Government responsible, and requiring it to perform the duties of a Sovereign Power. He could not find any fault with his hon. Friend for making that suggestion; but he thought even his hon. Friend himself would admit that, in this peculiar case, the suggestion, if acted upon, would have been very uncertain in its issue. There were no means which Her Majesty's Government possessed of operating immediately upon the particular Chief under whose authority these unfortunate persons were held in detention. The Dutch Government itself did not appear to possess the means of operating at a given moment. It was, indeed, perfectly true, as his hon. Friend had said, that the Dutch Government was fully responsible; but the mode of enforcing that responsibility was a question of considerable difficulty. There were two things in view. One was the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government for the past, in regard to which he, at least, personally—although his noble Friend near him had made an able statement of the subject—must reserve what he had to say. The other was as to the means of procuring the release, and extreme difficulty attending a case of this kind, where there was, on the one hand, a Sovereign Power placed at an enormous distance, and, on the other hand, subordinate Powers combined and grouped together without a clear and highly-civilized organization. He thought his hon. and gallant Friend behind him (General Sir George Balfour) would admit that this was not an exaggerated statement with regard to the abuses arising in this particular case under one of the local authorities. It would be idle for him to attempt to state what the Foreign Office were at this moment about. It was their daily care to prosecute this subject, and he was not prepared to say how far they ought to express hope with regard to its issue. The Dutch Government was certainly not in an attitude of indifference. The Dutch Government had proposed a measure which it, no doubt, thought to be the best; but there were great difficulties attending the adoption of that measure. For

the moment, he could only say he thought Her Majesty's Government were entitled, not to an acquittal, but to a suspense of verdict upon the main question; and he could give the House an assurance that, as regards the present proceedings not less than in the past, they were using every effort in their power. One word he would venture to say on what the hon. and learned Member for Chatham thought to be a salient point—namely, as to the delays which had occurred. He denied that the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman was a fair one. The telegram arrived at the Foreign Office on Saturday after business hours. Was it right that there should be business hours in a Public Office? He was afraid it was a necessity. He ought to have stated that this telegram arrived after business hours on Saturday at the Foreign Office, and not at the Colonial Office; and the Foreign Office could not act on the telegram until it had communicated with the Admiralty. Now, not only had the Admiralty business hours, but on Sundays the establishment of the Admiralty was not on the spot; and accordingly, on Sunday morning last, when the authorities of the Foreign Office went to communicate with the Admiralty, they found that they could not get the Admiralty put into motion for the purpose of doing what was effectual on that day. He could not go into the details of the matter; but that was the fact as far as the Foreign Office was concerned. Even had the officials of the Admiralty been present, the matter was not one as to which they could lay their finger on the telegraph and say—"Do this." The Admiralty had to make considerable inquiries before it could give its orders. For example, it had to ascertain the precise spot where the vessel was to be found, which had been, he believed, in motion, and on the action of which it was to depend. The ascertainment of that spot was not a thing which could be done in a moment. Perhaps it might be said that all this was circumlocution; but still there were the necessities of a great and complex organization. Instructions to Foreign Agents could not be sent by the Colonial Office, nor could orders to the Queen's ships be sent by the Foreign Office. It appeared that this telegram went off on Tuesday morning, and he could conceive the possible

allegation that it might have gone off on Monday night; but he did not think that in that margin there was to be found anything that would justify the grave charges which the hon. Member for Sunderland had thought proper to make. He trusted that when they again approached this subject they would do so in such a manner as to enable the House to put itself in possession of the facts, and, in addition, to pass a fair and equitable judgment on the entire case, which was one of the greatest difficulty, and which had the most direct and immediate claims both on the official duties and even on the common humanity of the Government of the country.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE remarked that when the right hon. Gentleman called for a full consideration of the course taken by the Government, and asked the House to suspend their judgment, one must feel that he was perfectly justified in making that appeal, especially under the circumstances in which they stood at the present moment. But, on the other hand, he thought the hon. Member for Sunderland had taken a most proper step in calling attention to the subject, because undoubtedly the case, while it was one of great delicacy and difficulty, was still one of great importance, and it was of very great importance that those who were interested in this matter, and also those who were interested in maintaining the honour of England, should be aware that a question like this was attracting the attention of the House of Commons; and he thought this conversation would have done good in this way. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken very truly of the great difficulties inseparable from a large and complex organization such as that of the British Government, in cases especially where several Departments had to act; but it was a great point that it should be pressed on the Executive Government from time to time that the greatness and complexity of its organization was no excuse whatever for any deficiency in its action. The late Government, he maintained, would have found no difficulty in acting on the shortest notice. It was essential that the main point should be kept in view, and that they should not lose themselves in the mere details of organization. The reflections which had been cast on the Admiralty were most

unfair. It would also from time to time happen that one Department should be dependent on another, and it was unpardonable if the Department so called upon could not at once respond to the requirements of the other Department. He had not read the Papers in the case for a long time; but, if he remembered rightly, the Admiralty had acted with great promptitude. He thought the thanks of the House were due to the hon. Member for Sunderland for having brought this exceedingly difficult and delicate matter under the notice of the House; and he trusted, after what had transpired, that the Government would prosecute the matter with greater expedition.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he did not think there could be any excuse for delay on the part of the Admiralty, since the House provided the First Lord with an official residence, and either he or one of the Lords of the Admiralty was always present to carry out necessary orders. He did not, however, believe that any delay rested with the Admiralty; indeed, the Papers showed that the whole responsibility rested with the Foreign Office. It was, therefore, quite unfair to charge the delay upon the Admiralty. He did not see that there needed to have been any delay. If a telegram had been sent to Singapore a ship could have been put in motion almost as soon as the telegram arrived. Acheen was as near Sumatra as the Isle of Wight was to England, so that effectual naval assistance might be sent there if the Government so wished it. He viewed these proceedings with the greatest distress and dismay, all the more that these 18 seamen were prisoners within five miles of the sea. He knew the coast perfectly well, and he knew the difficulty connected with the bar of the river; and he confessed that it was, in his opinion, a great weakness to request the Dutch Government, who were hated all over that district, to endeavour to obtain the release of those men. The result had been considerable bloodshed without any chance of doing good. He was quite sure, if the matter had been put into the hands of Sir William Hewett, or some other naval officer of that Station, that these men would have been released by this time. The difficulties which had arisen in connection with British shipping had been

due to the handing over of those territories to the Dutch. He had always regarded that as an unfortunate arrangement, and had protested against it at the time. It had caused incessant bloodshed during the last 14 years between the Dutch and the Natives. If we were to take the matter into our own hands, he would undertake to say we would succeed in releasing these 18 men; but if they were not released in the course of the summer, we would have to thank the Rajah only for a grave. He wished he could hear from the right hon. Gentleman that they were going to put the matter into the hands of the Admiralty. The hon. Member had done well to bring this question before the House.

MR. SLAGG said, he felt quite as keenly for those unfortunate men as the hon. Member for Sunderland himself; but he could not agree in the accusations of lukewarmness, which the hon. Member had brought against the Government. In all his communications with the Foreign Office he had found the utmost anxiety to obtain the release of those men, and the utmost energy in taking measures to that end. The hon. Member would have done more good if he had suggested some practical means of effecting the release of the prisoners. It would have been absurd to wage war either against the Dutch Government or the Rajah of Tenom. He had had very long interviews with the captain of the *Nisero*, who described to him the condition of the country. Anyone who heard that description must have been convinced that a warlike proceeding against the Rajah either by the Dutch Government or by the forces of this country must have ended in complete failure, and possibly in the death of the captives to effect the object desired. It often happened that subjects of this country were placed in positions of great danger and hardship under conditions with which we were unable easily to cope. This appeared to be one of those cases. The Rajah, when attacked by the Dutch Government, had only to remove the captives further into the interior; and even if our Government had sent an armed force to rescue them the Rajah would simply retire into the country, where our force could not possibly follow him. He agreed with the hon. Member that

the Dutch Government were not free from blame. They had assumed the sovereignty over the country without discharging the responsibilities of that position. He hoped, however, the result of this debate would be to bring pressure upon the Dutch Government to do a good deal more than they had yet done for the release of these unfortunate captives. But beyond the diplomatic pressure which the Foreign Office had brought strongly to bear on the Dutch, he did not think the Government could have done anything, or that they had been in any way negligent.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he hoped that the House would take note of the statement of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) on behalf of the Government. It could only be inferred that the Government would do nothing for these men. The only crumb of comfort which seemed to be afforded by that discussion was that the Dutch Government would be impressed by the tone which it had taken. Speaking entirely from an unofficial point of view, he felt bound to express his own regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Premier had succeeded once more on that occasion in speaking eloquently and well and saying very little after all. He hoped the relatives of those men would find some encouragement in the right hon. Gentleman's speech. For himself, he must confess he was less acquainted with the policy of the Government in the matter after the right hon. Gentleman had spoken than before he had addressed any observations to the House. If those men had been bondholders they would not have been allowed to perish within five miles of gunshot of the British Navy. All the great Departments had been whitewashed, but it would probably turn out that the number of those prisoners would successively be reduced from 24 to 18, and then to a dozen or to six; and before the right hon. Gentleman, in a set debate, made another eloquent and unmeaning speech on the subject, it might be that there would not be a single British sailor to rescue. An unfortunate fatality appeared to hang over the expeditions of rescue of Her Majesty's Government.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON suggested whether the Government might not take the same steps which were adopted some years ago for the release

of an Englishman who was captured by brigands in Greece. On that occasion Her Majesty's Navy had been employed in negotiating for his relief, and he believed they offered a sum of money. The negotiations were conducted with great ability and success; and he asked whether the same means might not be adopted to rescue the survivors of the crew of the *Nisero*?

MR. STOREY: I think I should best consult the interests of those on whose behalf I speak by asking the permission of the House to withdraw my Motion. No good object will be served by continuing the discussion. But perhaps the House will allow me, for one moment, to refer to the speech of the noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), and to make a reference to a personal subject. A personal objection has been raised against my bringing this matter forward without Notice, and I think I am entitled to show that the censure of the Prime Minister—

MR. GLADSTONE: I distinctly refused to pronounce any censure whatever, and expressly guarded myself against making any personal reflection. I protest against the hon. Member's assuming that there is any such implication on my part. Is the hon. Member in Order?

MR. STOREY, who, on rising again, was met with cries of "Order!" said: I believe, Sir, I am not entitled to reply.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sunderland has made a substantive Motion, and is, therefore, entitled to a reply.

MR. STOREY: I am thankful to you, Sir, for instructing me in the presence of older Members of the House who would have deprived me of a right of which I was not conscious when I rose. But I will not take full advantage of my right. I wish, however, to point out to the House that the noble Lord did not do me the honour to state my complaints correctly, much less to reply to them. What I stated, and now re-state, was that I could not understand why, from March 22nd, when the Government knew that their policy of negotiation had failed, until April 26th, they absolutely did nothing at all. What does the noble Lord tell me is the reason? He says that, although they had a telegraphic reply from Captain Maxwell, they could not do anything until they had detailed

information by letter. Well, Sir, is not that admitting my contention—that while they were getting detailed information, they left these men to the mercy of their captors; and when they admit my contentions—[*Interruptions from the back Liberal Benches.*—] I am really sorry to annoy those hon. Gentlemen behind me—after they admit this contention of mine, the Prime Minister thinks he settles the point by saying that I should tell the Government how I would settle this matter. Sir, “There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;” and there was a tide in the affairs of the Government when, if they had acted, they would have settled this question. But it was because they neglected the opportunity that they failed to rescue these men. At the risk of offending hon. Gentlemen, I will refer to another point. The Prime Minister seems to think that he answers my other contention by pointing out that, having received a telegram on April 26th, and that being a Saturday, nothing could be done until Tuesday, because it was necessary for the different Departments to communicate. I do not believe the common people of this country will accept that as an excuse. I will venture to tell the Prime Minister what I think should have been done. Bear in mind that when the Government received that telegram they knew that the men were perishing for want of food. All they had to do was to telegraph to the authorities on Saturday; but they did not do so until Tuesday. When the loss of the *Nisero* originally came to Singapore, the authorities there telegraphed for leave to send a ship; and the Departments, having laid their heads together, at last sent out orders. But while the Departments were deliberating the authorities at Singapore had already sent the ship. That contrasted curiously with the circumlocution and red-tape of the Foreign Office at a later time. In conclusion, I can assure the Prime Minister I have brought the case forward with a simple desire to let all parties in the House know what neglect there has been, and with the hope that there may be no neglect in the future, and that whatever it is possible to do may be done for the safety of these men.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND) — THE NATIONALIST MEETING AT DROMORE.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to ask your permission, Sir, and the permission of the House, for five or six minutes, while I make a personal explanation on a matter which I am compelled to bring before the attention of the House. Last Monday the hon. Gentleman the Member for Devides (Sir Thomas Bateson) put a Question to the Chief Secretary for Ireland in reference to the action of the Executive with regard to the extra police in Belfast on the occasion of the recent visit of the Lord Lieutenant to that City. When the Question was put, I ventured to interpolate a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and I quoted from the Chief Secretary some remarks he had made in the course of a debate in the present year with regard to counter-demonstrations in the North of Ireland, and especially with regard to a counter-demonstration at Dromore. The words of the Chief Secretary were to the effect that there were bodies of armed men who came to those meetings prepared to use their arms, and to make a murderous attack, if necessary, upon the Nationalists. The Chief Secretary, in reply to my Question, admitted the correctness of the Question, and reiterated his statement that there were bodies of armed men at the Dromore meeting, and at other meetings in the North. After that answer I put another Question, and the right hon. Gentleman re-asserted his statement that there were armed men at the Dromore and other meetings. Immediately afterwards there was a Question by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) in regard to a case in which Mr. Murray Ker was engaged. The hon. Member for Monaghan asked whether Mr. Murray Ker was the same gentleman who had used the expression—“Never to fire their revolvers unless they were aiming at somebody.” The right hon. Gentleman replied, stating that Mr. Murray Ker had used those words, and that an explanation had been given, that he had accepted it, believing the words to have been used for an innocent and not a guilty purpose. I therefore asked again the right hon. Gentleman whether he had not employed these very words of

Mr. Murray Ker as an example of the incitements to violence which were employed by the Orange leaders during the campaign in Ulster, and the right hon. Gentleman again re-asserted his statement that the explanation of Mr. Ker as to the innocence of these words had satisfied his mind. But the right hon. Gentleman made no other correction in his previous statement. He adhered to every other statement he had made as to the character of these counter-demonstrations—that they appeared at the meetings with arms ready to use them.

MR. SPEAKER: Did I understand the hon. Gentleman to say he desired to make a personal explanation? He appears to me to be debating a matter which was the subject of a Question a few days ago. If the hon. Member desires to offer a personal explanation the House will, no doubt, hear him.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I will wind up by asking the Chief Secretary a Question. I am showing I have a personal interest in the matter.

MR. MACARTNEY: I rise to Order. The hon. Gentleman says he is going to conclude with a Question. Is that a personal explanation?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member desires to ask a Question to clear up some matter which he thinks is necessary for some personal explanation affecting himself, he is at liberty to do so; but he is not at liberty to debate the matter in the manner he has been doing for some time past.

MR. MACARTNEY: I think, Sir, that the hon. Member—[*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary whether he has seen the following words attributed to him as his answer to my Question:—

“Mr. Trevelyan—I admit that at the time I had used strong language as to the Orangemen, but subsequent inquiry convinced me that the facts had quite a different interpretation.”

These words appear in *The Daily Express* of Dublin, and I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that report, by the omission of some words and the insertion of others, does not amount to a misrepresentation so gross as to be an invention; and whether the right hon. Gentleman will take means to inform the public in Ireland that this report of his answer to my Question is a gross

misrepresentation and invention of words which he never used?

MR. GIBSON: Has the hon. Member for Galway given Notice to the hon. Member for Devizes that it was his intention to bring up this subject?

MR. MACARTNEY: I also should like to ask whether the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken rightly described the Dromore meeting as an Orange meeting?

MR. TREVELYAN: My answer will be very short. I noticed the report in *The Daily Express* to which the hon. Member refers. It was a report which by omission entirely and absolutely misstated what I had said. My attention was called to it by the very unusual honour paid me of having two laudatory articles in *The Express*. I thought the matter of sufficient importance to warrant my writing to *The Express* newspaper a letter correcting the report, which, I cannot doubt, will be inserted in to-morrow's issue.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

(Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. George Russell.)

[BILL 171.] SECOND READING.

[FIRST NIGHT.]

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: It is owing to circumstances over which I have had no control that I have been unable to keep the pledge I gave earlier in the evening to the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) that I would reply to his Question in two minutes. Instead of two minutes, a couple of hours have elapsed since then; but, Sir, the arrangements of this House for the transaction of Public Business are so admirable, so well contrived, and I think, before long, will be so well understood by the country, that it will appear, at first sight, a perfectly natural thing that the first Order of the Day upon the Order Book of the House of Commons should come on at such a time, say half-past 8 o'clock. That is the convenient manner in which public affairs are transacted, and those are the arrangements which

compel me to make a few observations to the House at an hour when it cannot be expected that the Lord Mayor of London should be present. That, again, is a circumstance, no doubt, that I greatly regret; but Bills are introduced, and, whether passed or not passed, mortals; and above all even Lord Mayors, must dine. Now, Sir, I have had occasion to trespass so much on the indulgence of the House on a former occasion in introducing this Bill, that I shall desire to confine the observations that I have now to make within a very moderate compass; and, for my own part, I always prefer the calm repose of the dinner hour to say what one has to say, and one loses nothing by the tranquillity and peace and coolness of this hour. I do not propose to go over the ground I have already endeavoured to cover in describing the general feature and scope of this measure when I introduced it; that would be abusing the indulgence of the House; my remarks will be confined especially to certain circumstances which have occurred since the introduction of the Bill. Now the hon. Member for Hertford asked me, if I considered that the Bill ought to be withdrawn, because it was opposed. I do not hold that view; if I did, and acted upon it, or if anyone else did so, very few Bills would be introduced in this House. There is opposition and opposition; there are opponents and opponents. I have, since the introduction of this Bill, examined, with a good deal of interest, the manner in which this Bill has been received, and the character of the opposition to which it is now exposed. Well, a man who does not expect too much is not often disappointed. I never expected the support of the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of London to this Bill. I have nothing to complain of, however, as to the manner in which the Lord Mayor and the Corporation have met me on this subject. They have met me with their direct opposition, which I always expected. Their opposition has not been in an uncourteous and unkindly spirit personal to myself; and I hope I have endeavoured to avoid anything of the kind towards them. I do not know that anything harsher has been said of me, even in the Court of Common Council, than to compare me with Claude Duval, a gentleman who followed his profession with very good manners and

in a generous and amiable spirit. He generally honoured the subject of his attentions, whoever they might be, with a dance; and I do not feel called upon very much to object to, or to resent that comparison. Of course, the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London have done all they could in the Guildhall, and out of the Guildhall, to carry on the war very much as Mr. Pitt carried on war. Mr. Pitt carried on war, not only with his own forces, but with forces which received such other assistance from the British Treasury as might be necessary to support his warlike efforts. But when I come to another body, represented by the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), I really do not know whether the Metropolitan Board of Works are opponents of this Bill or not. I have watched their action with regard to it with a considerable amount of interest and a good deal of perplexity, and I find that the Metropolitan Board are not averse to a single Government of London, because they have always affirmed the proposition that there ought to be a single Government for London. They are, in a certain sense, themselves a single Government for London; and when I come to refer to the Amendments on the Paper, I shall have something to say on the subject of the Amendment put down with reference to the Metropolitan Board. I cannot help coming to the conclusion that, from what I have heard of the Metropolitan Board, their objection is not so much to a single Government for London, but that it is rather to the body from which that single Government is to be selected. That is a matter of detail, however, which I may yet further discuss with the hon. Baronet. Then I come to the Vestries. Now, it is not to be expected, in human nature, that any body should reform itself, or be very willing to be reformed, simply for the sole reason that it needs reforming; indeed, I know of no body which is disposed to reform itself for such a reason, except it be the House of Commons; and I am not at all surprised that any of those Vestries are not impressed with the modifications of the system which might reform their constitution. No doubt, this scheme is to establish a central control over the Vestries, or the bodies analogous to the Vestries, as to which nobody likes to be controlled—every-

body would rather be entirely independent of control of every description; but whether or not the proposals of this Bill for the central control over the different local bodies are the best that could be conceived is a question which I am not prepared or disposed to argue on the second reading of this Bill. I am perfectly willing to discuss and consider any other method that may be stated to be better than that which is propounded in this Bill. But the real and principal question is—ought there, or ought there not, to be some control of some kind or other? It will surely never be contended that Vestries are to remain as they are. I will not go in any great detail into that matter, for other Gentlemen will speak upon it, and especially the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). The central principle of the Bill is this—that there should be some common control over the Vestries which shall give them a uniform action for the benefit of the whole community, instead of leaving them, as they are now, independent of any such control. It is quite true that a good many gentlemen on these Vestries are opposed to the Bill, and that resolutions against it have been passed at Vestry meetings, naturally for the reasons I have stated; but I have received a letter from a gentleman which describes the manner in which such meetings have in some cases been held, and I think the amount of Vestry opposition has been exaggerated, and that a great many of the members of the existing Vestries are not adverse to it. Then I come to another body who have opposed this Bill—I mean the Middlesex magistrates. They have pronounced against the Bill in a series of resolutions so eulogistic of themselves that I am not surprised that even Lord Salisbury has stated that he thought them a little too strong, and that, consequently, some of them were withdrawn. They appear to think it is a fatal objection to the Bill that it interferes with their administrative functions, and that, therefore, it would be hurtful to the interests of the community. But that is an opinion which is confined to the Middlesex magistrates, and I do not think that the circumstance that the Bill does interfere with the Middlesex magistrates is one which will determine its fate. The Surrey magistrates met to consider

the Bill in a somewhat more modest spirit. They merely adopted a resolution in favour of certain modifications which they said were required in the Bill. Passing from the bodies more or less affected by the Bill, and who are, therefore, not likely to regard it with very favourable eyes, I may say that a large number of public meetings have been held in favour of this measure; and, in answer to the hon. Member for Hertford, I can state that during the three months that this Bill has been under consideration out-of-doors it has received more support and far less opposition than I anticipated, for I never could have promised myself that it would have ever obtained, as it has done, the support of one of the Sheriffs of the City of London and one or two Aldermen. I come now to the downright opposition to the measure in this House. Looking at the Notice Paper, I find there is, first of all, the Notice of opposition by the usual “three months’ hence” Motion which stands in the name of my right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor. And I also find that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) has a similar Notice. After the Lord Mayor, who is naturally at the head of the opposition to the Bill, I do not know anyone more likely to come forward with such a Notice. He is against all Reform on all occasions—against Parliamentary Reform and against the Reform of the City Livery Companies. But if this Bill is to be rejected point blank upon its principles by a Member sitting on the Front Opposition Bench, I should have rather expected that the lead in the matter would have been taken by another Member of the Opposition—by one who is also a distinguished Member for a Metropolitan constituency—namely, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). Probably, however, the memories of days not long gone by prevented him; for he, some years ago, when this question was first debated, at that time came forward, and asserted that there was only one plan of reforming the Municipal Government of London, and that plan happens to be just the plan which is included in this Bill—namely, the plan of a single Government for London, by which the Corporation should be so extended as to take in the whole of the Metropolis.

Sir William Harcourt

That, no doubt, is a little obstacle to the right hon. Gentleman moving the rejection of the Bill. There is, on the Paper, a third direct Notice of opposition, which stands in the name of the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), so that the three heroes defending London are my right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire, and the hon. Member for Cavan. I observe with surprise the absence of a blocking Notice in the name of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). I have lost that advantage, at any rate; but I see that his faithful supporter the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) has, on the Paper, a Motion that is, to me, rather consolatory, because, three months after the introduction of the Bill, the hon. Gentleman wishes for more time to enable the ratepayers and inhabitants of the Metropolis to consider it, and asks that it should not be further proceeded with during the present Session. It cannot, therefore, be such a very bad Bill after all. There is another Notice of Amendment by the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon), as to which my difficulty is to understand it. In common parlance, "it seems a little mixed."

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON: I will explain it afterwards to the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: As far as I can understand the first part of it, it asks for what the Bill exactly provides. I next come to a far more important person—the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works. What is his Amendment? It confirms me in the opinion I have formed, that he is not hostile to the Bill; and if I had ever thought of shrinking from going on with the Bill, I could not have done so after this Amendment, which assumes that the Bill will be read a second time. The Amendment is, that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. Such an Amendment is tantamount to an admission that there is no opposition to the principle of the Bill on the part of the Metropolitan Board. It proves, in my opinion, that the Metropolitan Board of Works is not hostile to a single Government of London; and that if they had desired to resist the principle of the Bill, the hon. Baronet would not have proposed to refer it to a Select Com-

mittee. But there are some Amendments which are as conspicuous by their absence, as those on the Paper are remarkable by their presence. We have heard a good deal of late about separate Municipalities for this Metropolis. That scheme has been propounded in this House; but it perished 10 years ago. It has been dragged as a red herring across the tail of the Bill; it has been spoken of by Lord Salisbury; it has been supported with great ability by my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens) and others; but what a remarkable thing it is that there is not a single Amendment on the Paper which recommends, as a solution of this question, the constitution of separate Municipalities. There is an Association for promoting this object. I have heard that it is supported by the Licensed Victuallers' Association, and a more influential body, or one more likely to promote a great idea, I cannot conceive; and this thing has been tried on in every possible way, and what has been the result? They got up a meeting at Greenwich, at which my right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor was present; and I think the hon. Member for that borough (Mr. Boord) will bear me out when I say that, during the last week, the inhabitants of Greenwich have declared unanimously against that proposal; and the Board of Works for that district unanimously determined to vote against a Petition to the Privy Council in favour of a separate charter for Greenwich.

MR. BOORD said, he would quite admit the correctness of what the right hon. Gentleman had said; but, at the same time, he wished to point out that there was more than one District Board in Greenwich.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That may be so; but what the other Boards in Greenwich are I am not able accurately to remember at this moment. I referred to Greenwich itself—to the hon. Member's capital—as he will acknowledge. There has been another attempt made in this direction, and that was in the City of Westminster; and I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Westminster had some part in that; but it signally failed. I wonder who the persons are who desire a separate Municipality for Westminster? Is it a mistake to suppose that Westminster was ever a municipal borough?

It got the name of a city simply because, for a very few years, it had a Bishop; and such institutions as it possesses are the remains of the great ancient Manor of Westminster, of which the records still prevail, although it was greatly broken up in former times. Nobody believes that it would be an advantage to Greenwich, or take Westminster, and cut them out of London, bearing, as they do, an equal share of all the burdens now borne by other parts of the Metropolis. As regards Greenwich and Deptford, I must confess the great blot on the map of London seems to me to be that Greenwich and Deptford are included in it. It is said they have a desire for a separate Municipality; but I would warn them to take care lest their desire be granted, for it reminds me of the lines of Juvenal as translated by Johnson—

“When vestries fall by darling schemes oppressed,

“Then vengeance listens to the fool confessed.”

At all events, it is quite plain that this shadowy red herring of separate Municipalities will not solve the question; and of the 35 districts now composing the Metropolis, not one has ever showed the slightest desire to have a separate Municipality, and no one has had the courage to place it upon the Notice Paper of this House. If you take from them the main drainage, the main roads, the fire brigade, the supervision of buildings, what have you got but a Vestry with a changed name? If this system were adopted, it would perpetuate the evils of which everybody complains. What is the great evil? It is that the Metropolis is broken up into fragments, each of these fragments acting on a different principle, some doing ill, and those who do well suffering in consequence of the ill-doings of their neighbours. If that be true of Vestries, it would be equally true of the separate Municipalities. Well, then, the opponents of this measure, after having tried the separate Municipality manœuvre, have adopted an old resource of the Corporation of London, and have gone round, cap in hand, begging all the boroughs in England to petition against this Bill. I read in the papers this morning that the Canterbury Corporation had before them, yesterday, a letter from the Lord Mayor, asking them to present a Petition against

the London Government Bill; but the Council, by a very large majority, refused to take any steps in the matter, which must be very mortifying to my right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor; and I am afraid the Corporation of Leeds was so unkind as to present a Petition in favour of the Bill. In former years, no doubt, this old resource answered; but the world is moving; and I am afraid the Corporation of London has met with an almost universal rebuff from their ancient fellow-Corporations in the country. Manchester has not only refused to petition against the Bill, but has even been so kind as to petition in its favour. But there is balm in Gilead, and it is refreshing to hear that a Petition against the Bill has been presented by the solitary Corporation of Bury St. Edmunds. That is the result of this great canvassing operation. But they have got another great resource which they bring forward. It has been agreed that we might adopt a system of breaking up, rather than that of a central authority. I believe that system has been tried in the Provinces, and they have always reverted to a system of one Government. [Mr. TOMLINSON: Salford.] The Government have considered the question of the separation of Salford from Manchester, and we do not believe it is satisfactory to all parties. The opponents of the Bill have produced a real live Mayor from the other side of the Atlantic, who says that nothing could be more monstrous than the institution of one Government for all London. This gentleman says further that a single Government for a large city has been tried in America, but that it has been found a great mistake; and that they have had to have recourse to a totally different system, the result being that they had a dozen Municipalities in Boston and several Municipalities in New York, and he advises us to follow the example there set. But I am not inclined to lay any great stress upon this recommendation; because it has turned out that this gentleman's facts are not quite accurate. The information I have received is certainly not in favour of a number of separate Municipalities being established there. There are not a dozen such Municipalities in Boston, nor many Municipalities in New York. Then, again, I do not think that New York is exactly the place that I should

go to for a model and an example of separate Municipalities. When I am told that the Corporation of London have been obliged to get a Mayor from New York to tell us how London ought to be governed, I decline to accept the authority; for I think we are more capable ourselves of judging of the circumstances of our own case. What is the great outcry that has been raised against this Bill? It is said, first of all, that it will destroy the principle of local self-government. [Mr. W. M. TORRENS: That is one of the objections.] Well, I will deal with one at a time. What do you mean by local self-government? Do you mean that every street is to govern itself? [Mr. W. M. TORRENS: Every borough.] I will go step by step. The hon. Member for Finsbury says, "Every borough." Well, the boroughs in London have not, at present, got local self-government; and, therefore, this Bill cannot destroy it as far as they are concerned. The bodies that have got local self-government are parishes and district boards. Does the hon. Member for Finsbury contend that every parish ought to have local self-government? Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, and Leeds did not possess local self-government of that character, and every one of them is bigger than three or four of the existing parishes or district boards in London. I venture to say there is no parish in London numbering a population of 500,000.

An hon. MEMBER: Lambeth.

MR. W. M. TORRENS: The parish of Islington contains nearly 300,000 inhabitants, and a rateable property of £1,485,000, while its rates amount to £320,000 a-year. There are only four cities outside London with a greater population than that of Finsbury.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is exactly what I have said, and I cannot understand why I am interrupted. Is local self-government destroyed in the large towns which I have mentioned by their being governed by a Central Body? Manchester has tried the system of breaking up the town into fragments, supposing that the municipal affairs would be managed with greater convenience by being managed in two parts; but the system was soon found faulty, and the one-government scheme was reverted to. Glasgow, too, has something to say about minor Municipalities in the neighbourhood of large towns.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR): There is Salford, which is separated from Manchester.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: My right hon. Friend must not suppose that the separation there is entirely satisfactory to the inhabitants. Then, again, is not the existence of the Metropolitan Board itself a violation of this principle of local self-government? What is that Board? It is a central Board which, in all the more important matters, exercises authority over the whole of London in every one of its separate parishes. Is not that a violation of local self-government, and do you preserve this sacred principle of local self-government by leaving to these districts the power of separate action only in the minor matters of paving, cleansing the streets, and lighting? For certain purposes, the Metropolitan Board governs all London. Its representation, however, is imperfect. [Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: No.] Well, the fact is that the Lord Mayor thinks the Corporation of London perfect, the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board thinks his Board perfect, and the Middlesex magistrates think that they are unequalled. Just so, every Vestry thinks itself perfect; and, if that is so, what is to become of municipal reform? There would be none; for if they are right, why should we have reform at all? Then, why refer this Bill, as is proposed, to a Select Committee, after being read a second time, if there is to be no reform? Why have not hon. Gentlemen opposite put forward a Motion for the rejection of the measure? Because they know very well that the views of the Gentlemen to whom I have referred are not the views of the majority in this House, or of the majority outside this House, and that is why they have not met the proposal with a direct negative. The fact is, that, though it is known that there must be reform, nobody wants his own Body to be reformed. It is only in minor matters that the Vestries have any authority. For instance, the Metropolitan Board of Works controls all the house building from Camberwell to Hampstead, and elsewhere in the Metropolis. Is that not a violation of local self-government? Why should Wandsworth not control its own building operations?

[First Night.]

It is because there should be uniformity. Only in minor matters, with one exception, do the Vestries have any authority at all. All the larger duties of local self-government are given to a central Body, the representation of which is very imperfect, because that representation is not in proportion to the wealth of the districts, or the population. Wandsworth sends the same representation to the Metropolitan Board of Works that is sent by Holborn or the Strand. That is not what I call a perfect representative system. The Vestries have authority as regards street paving, cleansing, and lighting. I will not say much about those matters; but we all know that everyone is inconvenienced by going into districts where streets are badly lighted or paved. Then there is the question of local sewerage, which is under the control of the Vestries. If that is done badly in one district, the whole of London will suffer; and it is to very little purpose that the Metropolitan Board should construct main sewers, if the local sewerage is imperfectly carried out by the Vestries. Then there is the great question of sanitary inspection, which is of cardinal importance in the government of London. What is the position of London in this respect? for nothing can be more important than that the local sewerage should be properly dealt with, and that there should be a proper system of sanitary inspection. I do not wish to be an alarmist; but everybody knows that, at this moment, we are threatened with a very formidable disease, which has already attacked a neighbouring country, and that the safety of the population depends upon preventive measures. Those who understand the matter are aware that this country has entirely rejected the system of quarantine as being a preventive, and everybody agrees that the great danger of cholera arises from the imperfect sanitary condition of the place attacked. Therefore, when a danger of this kind threatens a great Metropolis like London all must desire and want a central authority, which should advise, which should assist, which should compel every part of the community to take those measures of precaution which are necessary for the safety of the whole. That is true at all times; but it is more particularly true now, and I warn this

House and the people of this Metropolis that no such authority exists at this time. How are you going to face this danger? Are you going to face it in the name of self-government, while it rests with each individual district entirely whether such a work shall be well or ill-done; and, in fact, whether it shall be done at all. My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board can tell us something of his conflict with certain Boards, and of one district, which absolutely refused to do anything at all. If a Vestry refuses to make sanitary bye-laws, or to carry out a proper system of sanitary inspection, you are absolutely powerless to compel them to do so. A single parish may become a plague-spot in London, the focus and source from which disease may be spread all around, and the Metropolitan Board have no authority to make the parish do as it ought to do. If a parish has not a proper sanitary inspector, if it does not choose to have a proper system of sewerage, there is no authority to see that it is done. The Metropolitan Board and the Local Government Board have no power whatever to make a parish do what it ought to do in this respect. That is the condition of things. Is this the system which, in the name of local self-government, you would keep up; and are you going to say that London should not be armed with an authority which I tell you is absolutely necessary for the safety of the whole? That is the cardinal principle of the Bill. I venture to say that you cannot afford, with a population of nearly 4,000,000, to have 38 separate Bodies, any one of which neglecting its duty may imperil the whole of London. To put an end to such a state of things is what I propose. That is the cardinal principle which lies at the bottom of this Bill, and it is against that proposition that the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) is directed. I say that is the vital principle of the Bill, and it is a question which affects the vital interests of London. There is another question in which great interest is taken, and that is the housing of the poor. That, again, rests with these Bodies under the name of local self-government. And what has happened? A short time ago there came to the Local Government Board a deputation, received by my right hon. Friend (Sir

Charles W. Dilke) and myself, with the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens) at its head; and what did he ask? He said—"For Heaven's sake give us some help, some power that will make these local bodies do their duty. Let the Government come in and compel the Vestries and parishes to do their duty, else we shall get nothing done." Well, I declined on the part of the Government, and in the name and on the principle of local self-government, to undertake any such duty. No; it is not the Executive Government which is to aid my hon. Friend to extricate his admirable waggon, which has now got stuck fast in the mud of local self-government. We have offered him a Body to control these subordinate Vestries, which Body is to be elected by the same constituencies from which the Vestries are drawn. That is a control which is consistent with the principle of local self-government, for to call on the Executive to work the principle of local self-government in the Metropolis is one of the most miserable resorts which can be imagined. What is the plan that we propose in this Bill? We do not propose to take away the work of these local bodies. Under the Bill they will do very much the same work as before; but they will do it subject to a supervision and control which will see that it is done in a manner consistent in itself and necessary for the good of the whole. We leave, it is true, the attribution and distribution of those powers to a Central Body. You say that it is overbearing the local bodies to bring in a Central Body. Nothing of the kind; for what is the Central Body but a collection of members of those local bodies themselves? Every one of the members of the Central Body is a member of a local body, and is elected by the same constituency and at the same time. Further than that, the authority which is to distribute and attribute the powers of the local bodies is derived from the same source as the local bodies themselves; and it is from it, not from the Executive Government, that the control is to come. A proposal more consonant with the principle of local self-government it is impossible to propound. There can be no tyranny about it; for it is a different thing even to being controlled by Parliament, or the Executive Government. It is also said—"Oh, the Central Body will take

away too much power from the district council." Why should it? It consists of members of the district councils. Whatever the district councils wish, the members of the Central Council are likely to wish, because they are members of the district councils themselves, and elected by the same constituents; and if you wish the district councils to have more power, the Central Body can give it to them. There must be a control over the local councils, and how are you to get it? Suggest to me a better plan, and I will adopt it. The hon. Member for Finsbury, when he came to ask the Government to work his Act, admitted that, in the carrying of it out, it had broken down. Then it is said that this proposal will detract from the dignity of the Vestries. I do not see why. Why should it detract from the dignity of a local body that its duties should be prescribed by a body constituted of its own members? I should have thought that the local body would rather have taken its power from such a source than from the Executive Government; that it would rather have had its duties prescribed to it by its own members than by an external body. How do you detract from that dignity by placing persons on these Vestries who are members of the great Corporation of London? It was said, under the First Napoleon, that every French soldier had before him the baton of a French Marshal, and so every vestryman will have before him the badge of a Lord Mayor. And now as to the outcry respecting expenditure, which it is said will be greatly increased. Will anyone explain to me why there should be a great increase of expenditure? There is one species of expenditure at present I should rather like to get the figures of from my right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that is the cost of the battle they are waging about the sewage of London. I am told each of them has spent £20,000 in having got through only half of the inquiry. That shows that dual government is not always an economical affair. What are the items of expenditure? Take the Staff of the Corporation. There are the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, solicitor, engineer, architect, and so on. Why should you spend more than on the combined Staff of the Guildhall and Spring

Gardens? Without imputing extravagance to the Corporation of London, its Staff is very generously paid. The Staff of the Metropolitan Board is also well paid, and I venture to say that the expenditure on the two combined cannot be exceeded by that on the Staff of the Central Body. Then, as to the next head, why should the Central Body spend more money than the present Metropolitan Board of Works? Of course, if they undertake greater works, the expenditure may be greater; but there is nothing in this proposal of a Central Body which means greater expenditure. And as to the local expenditure of the parishes, why should that be greater? By the Bill each of these parishes forms its own budget. It is not the Central Body which says—"You will expend such and such a sum of money." There is no power to force on the Vestries an expenditure they do not desire to make, except in two cases, which, I venture to say, are necessary—namely, matters affecting the sanitary condition of the whole population and the housing of the poor. In all the rest the district authority is absolute master of its own expenditure. I see nothing in the Bill to justify the suggestion that it will lead to a larger expenditure, for that is the extent of the delegation of the powers; and the position of the Vestries, in respect of their administration and expenditure, will be exactly as it was before. Something has been said about the proposed number of the Corporation. Some people say the number is too great, and others say it is too small. My right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor will not say that the number is too great, for it is about the same number as the Common Council. I should have thought that 206 was too great a number for the Common Council, which administers the affairs of one square mile. However, I will say nothing against the existing system; but, on the other hand, it is an extraordinary thing that the whole of London is administered, in all its details, by a body numbering 46. I say it is marvellous. I should have said that the number was too small for such a great work. But the work we are going to throw upon this Central Body is not going to be very much different. That Central Body will have more authority than the Metropolitan Board, but its work will be

exactly of the same character. The object of our arrangements is not to take away from the work of the Vestries. What the Bill does is to give to the Central Body a controlling power which will bring these local bodies into harmony in the duties they have to discharge. That is the central idea of the measure. A Corporation of 240 men can never be congested by work. I want it to be clearly understood what is the vital principle of the Bill. The measure will not for the first time establish a single body for the government of London; that was done 30 years ago. There is a single body which, for all improvement purposes, does govern the whole of London, and for a great many purposes the area of the City. It exists now, and that is the Metropolitan Board of Works, and all the powder spent by the opponents of the Bill in the argument that this is the introduction of one body for the government of London is thrown away on the air. The principle of a Central Body has grown with the strength of London, and each succeeding want has been met by giving further power to the single body—the Metropolitan Board of Works—and not to the Local Authorities. The Bill, therefore, establishes nothing new; but it makes a representative body more representative than it was before by bringing within it members elected more directly by the ratepayers, and giving the ratepayers more representation in proportion to the wealth and population of each district than they possess on the Metropolitan Board. Now, as to the local bodies, the Bill does not destroy their power, nor does it dispense with their aid. On the contrary, it places them in a much more powerful position than they have ever been in before, because it affiliates them to the Central Body; and for the first time the Bill really does—what it is intended to do, and what I claim to be its vital principle—to establish a definite community of action among the different Governing Bodies of London. There are 38 of these bodies in London, each of which does exactly what it pleases. The principle of the Bill is to bring harmony of action in the central authority to bear upon the different districts of the Metropolis, and the question arises as to how that control is to be exercised? It is to be exercised by the persons most obviously competent—

the persons who are now members of the local bodies and who are elected by the ratepayers. That is a far better control than Parliament can contrive, or Government can exercise. I have pointed out that, with cholera in a neighbouring country, the existing practice is an immense danger. ["Oh, oh!"] I repeat that warning in the most solemn way. You may have one pestilential parish in London, which refuses to have sanitary inspection, and if the House refuses to establish some system which shall exercise control over the Governing Body of such a parish, then the consequences will rest with the House, and not with the Government. I will now refer to the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). The hon. Gentleman does not propose the rejection of the Bill; but he raises the most extraordinary minute points, which are not in issue in the Bill at all. If you come to read the Amendment it is quite consistent with the Bill. It does not traverse any principle of the Bill. It is to the following effect:—

"That while ready to consider the question of a reform in the Government of London, this House declines to assent to a proposal by which the control over the levying and expenditure of rates would be vested in one Central Body to the practical extinction of the local self-government of the various cities and boroughs of the Metropolis."

But there is no local self-government at all, except in the City of London. It is an assertion of a fact which has no existence; and, therefore, the Amendment shows a want of acquaintance with the local self-government of London on the part of the hon. Member which I did not expect to find. The Amendment says that the levying and expenditure of rates will be vested in one Central Body. What rates does he mean? He cannot mean the poor rate, the education rate, the police rate, or the Metropolitan Board rate, which are vested already in a Central Body; and we leave other expenditure in the hands of different bodies. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members may cry "Oh!" but that shows they do not understand the Bill on the very point on which they attack it. The expenditure would be left there absolutely, when you once define the duty—["Oh, oh!"]—that shows still more that you do not understand the Bill. The ques-

tion only is—Who shall define the duty? When you have once defined the duty, either by Parliament or by the Central Body of each separate body, neither of them has control of the expenditure; it is a defining of the causes from which expenditure arises. But you then say that Local Government is destroyed. No; for you determine that the Vestry shall cleanse, light, and pave its streets, and have them in its own control. If my right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire had had stomach for the fight upon the proposal of that day three months, no doubt the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets would have made way for them; but they have apparently thought it much more convenient that they should not pledge themselves to a proceeding of this kind. Therefore, the Bill is met by an Amendment which does not challenge any vital principle whatever of the Bill. It is put in simply as an Amendment to be voted upon, without committing anybody to anything. The Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for the County of Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) is framed in the same judicious spirit; it does not attack the principle of the Bill in any respect, and it is founded on a total misconception of the provisions of the Bill. I am afraid that I have detained the House much longer than I had intended; but I only wish to refer to the action of the Bill from a sanitary point of view. Now, the medical officers of the medical districts have a society of their own. That society met as soon as this Bill was introduced, and the council reported, without expressing any opinion upon the political aspect of the Bill—

"That they noted with satisfaction that its provisions appeared well calculated to promote the much-needed unity of sanitary administration."

That is the opinion of the men who are responsible for the health and sanitary condition of London. If there were nothing else in the Bill but the security to be given to the health of the Metropolis, that the neglect of a single fragment of this great framework should not imperil the safety of the whole, it would be enough, in my opinion, to command the support of the House. But there are many other objects which, I believe,

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are necessary for the welfare of the community of the 4,000,000 of people; and I trust that, reserving to themselves every possible freedom in dealing with the details of this Bill in Committee, the House will affirm its principle by passing the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

MR. RITCHIE, in rising to move the following Amendment:—

"That, while ready to consider the question of a reform in the Government of London, this House declines to assent to a proposal by which the control over the levying and expenditure of rates would be vested in one central body to the practical extinction of the local self-government of the various cities and boroughs of the Metropolis,"

said, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) had begun his speech by congratulating himself upon the quietness which reigned in the House. He (Mr. Ritchie) thought it was an astounding thing that when the right hon. Gentleman was moving the second reading of a Reform Bill, and a Reform Bill which affected a population larger than that of Scotland, and an enormous amount of rateable property, the number of the right hon. Gentleman's listeners was 15, and at no time had it exceeded 50. He thought that that was an illustration of the quietness which reigned in the country with reference to this Bill. No doubt, there had been a great amount of effort on the part of the supporters of the Bill to create a public feeling in its favour; but, notwithstanding these efforts, he was satisfied that there was hardly an hon. Member in that House who really and honestly believed that there was any real demand for it in the Metropolis. He thought that, at the outset, he might fairly complain of the time at which this measure was brought forward. They were now in July, and this measure was one which the right hon. Gentleman himself acknowledged to be one of a most complex character. They were, therefore, asked seriously to consider a Bill of this great magnitude, abounding in detail, at a time when the Business of the House of Commons was considerably in arrear, and when it was notorious that the Government required

almost the whole of the time to get through the ordinary Business of the Session. As far as he had understood, the right hon. Gentleman had asked them to consider this Bill as a matter of urgency. For what reason? Because the right hon. Gentleman said that he would not be responsible for what would occur if they did not, seeing that cholera had invaded a neighbouring country. But had it not been for the painful misunderstanding between the Prime Minister and his followers, in all probability they would never have heard of this Bill at all this Session. It was rather strange, he thought, that the right hon. Gentleman should come down there and tell them, in stentorian tones, that he would not be responsible for the consequences if this Bill were not passed, when it was not to come into operation until next May. Would the cholera wait in a neighbouring country till then? He did not wish to be in any way disrespectful to the right hon. Gentleman; but it was really absurd to come before the House of Commons, and thus to make use of the dread arising from an outbreak of cholera as a means to urge a Bill on them, of which they would have heard nothing but for the misunderstanding to which he had alluded. He confessed that, in his opinion, to introduce a Bill of that nature and magnitude at such a time was very much like Obstruction. It was perfectly certain that the right hon. Gentleman could not hope to deal in Committee with this great and complex measure, and to pass it in the time which remained to them of the Session. That was the first objection which he had to the Bill; but there was another, the consideration of which he would leave to those who were more familiar with the matter than himself; and that objection was, that this was a Bill which ought to have complied with the Standing Orders of the House which were applicable to Private Bills, as it came under both categories of Bills to which they applied. As regarded the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, it was like the speech which he had made in introducing the measure, an exceedingly able one, as might have been expected from the right hon. Gentleman; but it was, in addition, what they could hardly have expected from him, of a moderate and conciliatory character. Both on that night and on

the previous occasion he had spoken of both the Corporation and the Metropolitan Board of Works in terms, at any rate, of qualified praise, and he had even admitted that the Vestries had done some good work. He (Mr. Ritchie) was afraid that, even with all this praise, there was the cloven hoof of the destruction of the ancient Corporation of London; and, notwithstanding all that the right hon. Gentleman had said that night, practically the destruction of local self-government in the Metropolis, and the inauguration of a vast system of centralization, which he would venture to say would not tend to the good government of the Metropolis in any way. They were told that the Corporation of London was not to be destroyed, but that it was to have a number of partners in its property. He doubted whether a desire to be partners in it was not one great cause for urging on the Bill, and probably was at the bottom of it. He did not propose to undertake the defence of the Corporation—there were many much more able champions than he; but he would not be doing justice to his own feelings and to those of his constituents in the East of London, if he did not bear his testimony to the vast amount of good the City of London had done in the administration of its funds. The population of the East End had many reasons to speak well of their public spirit; and when he remembered the way they had exerted themselves for the purpose of maintaining and securing Epping Forest from the grasp of the destroyer, and the many other charitable undertakings in which the Corporation had assisted, he was glad to bear his testimony to the fact that, on the part of the people of the Metropolis outside the City, there was no desire to see this ancient Corporation destroyed. It might be said that they would have a share in the funds. That he greatly doubted, for when they came to be filtered through so many hands the result would be that what there was to divide would be comparatively little and valueless. He wished to revert for a moment to what the right hon. Gentleman opposite said about the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Vestries—namely, that they deserved a tribute of public approbation for the work they had done, though that was not to save them from the ruthless

hand of the destroyer. It was true that the right hon. Gentleman declared that some were good, some were bad, and some were indifferent; but of what public bodies, or of what public men, could not the same be said? Even the Members of Her Majesty's Government were open to the same criticism—some of them were good, some indifferent, and some bad. [*Laughter, and cries of "Names!"*] No; when the right hon. Gentleman himself made the assertion, he had not condescended to give any name; and, therefore, he (Mr. Ritchie) must decline to undertake such an invidious task as that of distinguishing between the Members of Her Majesty's Government; they might settle that among themselves. It was very much the custom to speak ill of the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Vestries and the government of London generally; but this fact could not be gainsaid, notwithstanding the complaint of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and those who supported him, that, under this administration, which the right hon. Gentleman was going to abolish, London had been converted from a badly-paved, badly-lighted, and badly-drained City to the healthiest City in the world. He would not weary the House with statistics; but the death-rate was an unerring proof of the sanitary condition of towns. In the years preceding 1860, the death-rate in London was 22·7; last year it was 20·4; showing a reduction of 2·3, or a decrease of 10 per cent. Comparing this rate with that of other large towns, what did they find? Between the years 1873 and 1882, the death-rate in Birmingham was 23·4; in Leeds, 24·8; in Liverpool, 27·6; and in Manchester, 28·8, yet all these towns enjoyed the blessings of centralized government, which the right hon. Gentleman wanted to bestow upon London. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Take Derby.] He understood the death-rate there was less. [Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sixteen per 1,000.] That was lower, no doubt; probably due to the purity of the liquor, the size of the town, or the right hon. Gentleman's able representation of the constituency; but to cite a town like Derby as an instance was a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole Bill. Taking the death-rate of towns outside England, they found, in Glasgow, it was 28·2; in Dublin, 29·2; in Paris, 25·2;

in Berlin, 29; and in New York, 27·4. He had been told it was hardly fair to strike a comparative rate without taking into account inherent differences, and doing that they obtained this result—In 1883, the death-rate was in Birmingham 22·75; in Leeds, 24·85; in Liverpool, 29·28; in Manchester, 30·8, or 50 per cent higher in Liverpool than in London. Whitechapel had been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh University (Sir Lyon Playfair) as having a high death-rate—24·0; but, considering the class of people living there, it was wonderfully low. It should be remembered that the inhabitants of that district were people who suffered from privation and distress, and whom no amount of centralized government could keep alive. Then, as regarded the efficiency of the Local Boards, if the elections were not so satisfactory as could be wished—though he did not say so—he did not mean to convey the impression that he was entirely satisfied with things as they were, and with the little interest taken in the elections; but that they had not good representatives on those bodies was the fault of the electors, and not of the system, and it was not by taking away duties and responsibilities from the Vestries that they could hope to remedy that defect. The question, after all, to be considered was, not whether reforms were necessary, but whether the proposals contained in the Bill were of so sound a principle that they would accomplish the objects in view, and whether the measure was likely to work? When the right hon. Gentleman said that the amount of centralization he proposed already existed in the Metropolitan Board of Works, he entirely forgot the difference between the constitution of that Body and the constitution of the central authority under this Bill. Its proposals were distinctly of a centralizing character, the Central Council having to consider and determine upon the proposals of the District Councils. He had heard that there were rumours in the air that the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to make considerable concessions; and he had waited, with some anxiety, to hear whether the right hon. Gentleman would cut the ground from under his feet by making those concessions. The right hon. Gentleman, however, had sat down without

suggesting the possibility of his conceding anything; and, therefore, he must treat the Bill as he found it. He maintained that the measure was one of a centralizing nature, and that it was directly aimed against local self-control. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the government of London was to be transferred from the various bodies that now governed it to one central body. This was not the first time that this proposal had been under consideration. The right hon. Gentleman, in introducing the Bill, had referred to the Commission of 1854. That Commission was composed of three eminent men—Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Justice Patterson, and Sir George Cornwall Lewis—and it was appointed to inquire into the state of the Corporation of the City of London. And what was the conclusion that those Gentlemen arrived at after full inquiry? It was that the very proposal which the right hon. Gentleman now made should not be adopted. They said, in their Report, that the advance of the boundaries of the City of London would create a Municipal Body of unmanageable dimensions, and that, therefore, the proposal should not be adopted. The fundamental error into which the Government had fallen in framing this Bill was that of supposing that London was one harmonious whole. The right hon. Gentleman had presumed that London was like other cities, in which all interests were in common; whereas, in truth, London was composed, not of one city and one borough, but of several cities and several boroughs which had nothing in common with each other. What, for instance, was there in common between Kensington and Poplar? Could interests be more widely different than those of those places? That fact had been fully recognized by the Commission, who had stated that London was not a City, but a Province, covered with houses, whose diameter was so great that those who lived at one end of it were altogether unacquainted with the wants and requirements of those who lived at the opposite end of it; and they had said that the duties of the administration of such a vast community were so great as to lead them to decide against recommending that the whole of the Metropolis should be placed under one Corporation. At the time when the Commission arrived at that conclusion, London

contained a population of 2,000,000—now it contained 4,000,000 of people; then its rateable value was £10,000,000 sterling—now it was nearly £30,000,000 sterling. If, therefore, the decision arrived at in this respect by the Commission was right in 1854, it would be 10 times more right in the present day. And yet Her Majesty's Government had thought fit to bring forward that proposal, which was expressly and in terms condemned by the Commission. In his opinion, the administrative machinery proposed to be set up by this Bill would be altogether unworkable. Look at the vast amount of work to be done. It might be that, at the first election, they might get a Council composed of the best men to be found in the Metropolis; but, as the real nature of the work to be done came to be fully appreciated, the administration would fall entirely into the hands of a few who would probably form a set of wirepullers, who would manipulate the affairs of the Corporation with motives and ideas very far removed from those now held by the Government. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech that night, had said that this Bill would not interfere with local self-government; but he (Mr. Ritchie), on the contrary, maintained that it was one of the most centralizing measures that had ever been introduced into that House. At present, every part of the Metropolis was self-governed by its different local bodies; but what was to be the position of those different parts of the Metropolis under this Bill? Take the Tower Hamlets, for instance, with its population of 500,000. Under the Bill, it would be represented on the Central Council by 20 Members out of a total of 240. He was convinced that, in such circumstances, the Tower Hamlets would stand very little chance of having its wants considered, or of the recommendations of its District Councils being approved of by the Central Body. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to consider that the District Councils would perform the functions which were now performed by the local bodies; but, in his (Mr. Ritchie's) opinion, the position of a district councillor would be such as not to present any attraction to men of self-respect.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that they might look to attain the office of Lord Mayor.

MR. RITCHIE said, that, looking to the fact that the Central Council would be able to select for that office any person outside their body, he was afraid that no Tower Hamlets district councillor would find that he carried the Lord Mayor's baton in his knapsack. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Central Councillors would also be District Councillors; and that, therefore, the different districts would be well represented on the Central Council. But each locality would be so sparsely represented that it would be unable to enforce attention to its wants. Then, moreover, what was the position which the District Councils were to occupy? They were not to appoint their own officers, and their expenditure was to be controlled and subject to the veto of the Central Council. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head. Let that point be cleared up then. As he (Mr. Ritchie) understood the Bill, when any money was required for any local purposes, the District Council was to make a representation on the subject to the Central Council, with an estimate of the cost of the improvement, and the Central Council were to have a power to veto the proposal of the District Council. The right hon. Gentleman did not shake his head to that view of the operation of the Bill. Then, in future, he (Mr. Ritchie) hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would nod his head instead of shaking it when he stated his view of the operation of the Bill. The fact was that the Bill would furnish a gross parody on local self-government, and was one of mere centralization, which he had heard the Prime Minister himself say would be the greatest curse to the country. If this Bill were proceeded with on the lines indicated by the right hon. Gentleman, instead of inducing the best men, who had hitherto taken part in the administration of local self-government, to come forward and assist in the working of the measure now proposed, would, on the contrary, deter them from doing so when they found that the deliberate decisions of the District Councils were to be overruled by the veto of the Common Council; the Bill was, therefore, a measure to ignore local self-government, or to establish a system of centralization. Hence it was that, in spite of the solitary vestrymen, to whom reference had

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been made, it could not be denied that the enormous majority of the members of the Local Bodies in the Metropolis were opposed to the present Bill. As a compensation for all these advantages, they were not even to have the benefit of one uniform rating, as had been expected would have been established by the Bill, dealing, as it did, with the whole Metropolis. On the contrary, he found that the people in the East End of London would still have to pay 5s. or 6s. in the pound; while their neighbours in the West End paid only 3s. or 4s. in the pound. The former were to give up their right of local self-government; but they were to be taxed all the same at the dictation of a Central Board. It was, in point of fact, impossible that they could treat London as a whole, and the Government themselves acknowledged the difficulties existing in the case by not conferring on the Board many of the powers which it was hoped by those who were mainly instrumental in raising the question would be vested in a new Municipality. As an instance, he might mention the case of the police, although he was not contending that the police of the whole of the Metropolis ought to be handed over to local authorities. The Government had more than once expressed a desire to exercise their power over the licensing; but the right hon. Gentleman had very prudently abstained from conferring such a power on the new Municipality.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had stated a reason why that power and other powers had not been introduced into the present Bill. To introduce them would necessitate the insertion of numerous clauses; but it was the intention of the Government subsequently to give the powers.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: By separate Bills?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes.

MR. RITCHIE said, he supposed, then, they were to understand that this was not a complete measure, and that it was, indeed, only the first of a series of proposals which would be laid before the House. Well, a few more clauses introduced into the Bill would not much matter. The Government would have cut out work for a good many Sessions if they were going to deal with all these matters in separate measures. Then there was the question of cholera and

small-pox. A writer in *The Times* in November, 1882, pointed out that if a really satisfactory Government existed for London there could be no reason for the separate existence of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Was there to be another Bill introduced afterwards to transfer the powers of that Board to the new Municipality for London? Yet, in respect to sanitary matters, the Asylum Board took cognizance of them in a way to afford general satisfaction. It appeared to him that if this new Council were to be intrusted with anything at all, it might fairly be intrusted with the powers now possessed by the Metropolitan Asylums Board.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT explained that the Bill did not deal with the Poor Law jurisdiction.

MR. RITCHIE said, he was aware there were many things which the right hon. Gentleman did not deal with. That was exactly the point, and that was the difficulty experienced in dealing with so large a place as London. If a Central Council were established, ought not London to have the control of the River Thames and the River Lea? He did not assert that the Government had done wrong in not conferring all these various powers on the Central Body; but he merely gave these as illustrations of the difficulties which the Government themselves saw in the way of carrying out their magnificent scheme. Large bodies in the Metropolis had proved to be very costly, as was seen in the case of the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the London School Board. Possibly, under the new scheme, the cost of the Lord Mayor might not be so great as at present; but the Administration would feel the want of that hospitality which was now extremely beneficial, and which conferred a considerable amount of good, not only on the locality itself, but also on the nation at large. He found that London was governed at an expense of £1 10s. per head, as compared with £4 11s. 2d. in Paris, and £6 per head in New York. He also found that while the cost of the London rates was 4s. 5½d. per head, per pound, that of Bristol was 5s. 8d.; of Birmingham, 6s. 7d.; of Leeds, 6s. 8d.; and of Dublin, 9s. 3d.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That includes other things. It includes water and gas.

MR. RITCHIE said, he presumed that the right hon. Gentleman was speaking from actual knowledge when he stated that the rate in all those towns included water and gas.

SR CHARLES W. DILKE: At Birmingham.

MR. RITCHIE said, that Birmingham presented a flagrant instance of extravagance. He was told, however, that the rate there did not include the cost of gas. This Bill would not only be destructive to local self-government, but it would be cumbersome and unworkable, inefficient, and extravagant, while it was distasteful to those who were most deeply interested in the welfare of London. The right hon. Gentleman had asserted that public opinion inside and outside the House was in favour of the Bill. The fact was, that out of 38 Vestries and Boards of Works, 33 had passed votes against it, while only two had passed resolutions in its favour. Did the right hon. Gentleman consider that the public Press was evidence of public opinion? Out of 85 organs of public opinion in the Metropolis, 71 were against the Bill and only 14 in favour of it. Speaking of his own locality, the four or five Liberal organs were unanimous in condemning the Bill. [MR. BRYCE: No!] The hon. Member would have an opportunity of telling the House what newspapers were in favour of the Bill. The paper which was loudest in praise of the hon. Member was also strongest in its opposition to the Bill. The evidence of public meetings was to the same effect. Means, no doubt, had been found to get up a bogus agitation in favour of the Bill; but it was through the instrumentality of packed meetings, where wilful and misleading statements were made, and freedom of discussion suppressed. In one meeting in the Tower Hamlets, a well-known Liberal—Colonel Munro—moved a resolution against the Bill. At that meeting, the supporters of the Bill were drawn from every quarter of London, and one gentleman came from Cookham. Then, the Kensington meeting was, to a great extent, a packed meeting. One-third of the Hall was filled before the meeting began; and hired bullies ejected with shameful violence all those who ventured to express dissent. Then, there were meetings at the East End and at Peckham Rye. The House might judge

of the character of the latter meeting by the fact that it was held on Whit Sunday. At these meetings the most false and misleading statements were made. At the Kensington meeting, the junior Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) wished to make the audience believe that the Metropolitan Board was grossly extravagant and spent £4,000,000.

MR. FIRTH said, he told the meeting that the budget of the Metropolitan Board was over £4,000,000.

MR. RITCHIE asked whether the hon. and learned Member explained that that was not the expenditure of the Metropolitan Board?

MR. FIRTH said, anyone who knew what the budget of the Metropolitan Board was, knew that it included loans to the School Board and other matters of that kind.

MR. RITCHIE said, the audience would not understand the distinction; and that the hon. and learned Member had not explained the difference between the budget of the Board and its own proper expenditure, until he was challenged to do so. The hon. and learned Member intended to mislead the meeting. Then, at Peckham Rye, the inducement was held out, that the Bill would bring about an equalization of poor rates throughout the Metropolis. But the Bill contained no provision to that effect. Then, where were the Petitions in favour of the Bill? Comparatively speaking, there were none. There had been, in fact, eight Petitions, signed by nine people, in favour of the Bill; whereas there had been 173 presented against it, signed by 16,000; and even that did not represent the full extent of the feeling against the measure, as, in many cases, a Petition from a meeting was signed by the chairman only. He maintained, therefore, that the people of the Metropolis were not in favour of, but were opposed to, that expensive, delusive, and inefficient Bill. He was not opposed to reform; his Amendment did not say that he was; reform might be necessary, and he thought it was. It was a great misfortune, he thought, that so little interest was taken in the election of members of Vestries and District Boards; but it was quite a different question whether this was to be remedied in the way proposed by the Bill. The reform which he should like to see carried out was one which would increase the vigour and

effect of local government, instead of extinguishing it. If they wanted more interest taken in the matter, and better men to take it, they must increase the responsibilities rather than decrease them. How was that to be done? The right hon. Gentleman had denounced the principle of separate Municipalities as absurd, and said the reason he did not propose it was because the people did not want it. Was it absurd? He (Mr. Ritchie) was not prepared to say that it was absolutely the best way of doing what was desired; but this he did maintain—that, call the Body what they liked, whether a Municipality or not, it would probably be a great improvement if, instead of having half-a-dozen Vestries or Boards of Works in a district, like, for instance, the Tower Hamlets, having jurisdiction within the area of one Parliamentary borough, there should be within the borough only one Vestry or Local Sanitary Authority, whatever it were called. If a rearrangement of this kind were carried out, and some of the Vestries governed larger areas, it would be expedient to transfer to them many of the matters which were now attended to by the Metropolitan Board. By thus increasing the responsibility of the Local Bodies they would attract to them better men, and they would induce the ratepayers to take more interest in the elections and in the proceedings of the Local Bodies. However that might be, the Royal Commission of 1854 did not think this idea of separate Municipalities absurd. It was in this direction of consolidation, so as to get larger areas, governable with economy and efficiency by better men sensible of larger responsibilities and directly responsible to their local constituents, that they ought to look for improvements and greater public interest in local government, rather than in the creation of a great Central Municipality empowered to weaken the local feelings that now existed by supervising and controlling the action of the Local Authority. If the Government would come forward with some such scheme of consolidating the numerous Local Bodies now existing, he was satisfied that the proposal would not be so distasteful to the majority of the people of London as the present scheme was. The more people considered the great complexity of the measure, and the numerous details with which it dealt, the less they liked it.

Mr. Ritchie

The Secretary of State for the Home Department had said that the Metropolitan Board of Works were in favour of the Bill, whilst the Amendment of his right hon. Friend the Chairman of that Board practically assented to the scheme; but he (Mr. Ritchie) had read a speech of Mr. Selway, at a meeting of the Board, in which he denounced the proposal in no unmeasured terms, as a great scheme of centralization, and his remarks were received with assent by that Body. How, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman could contend that the Metropolitan Board were in favour of the Bill, he could not conceive. As to the Amendment of the Chairman, it did not strike him in the same light as the right hon. Gentleman would have them believe it struck him; because, at that period of the Session, to refer such a Bill to a Select Committee was practically to shelve it altogether. The right hon. Gentleman had said that his (Mr. Ritchie's) Amendment was in accord, practically, with the principles of the Bill. What he (Mr. Ritchie) then would recommend him to do, if he believed what he said, was to gracefully withdraw the Bill, and accept the Amendment, and bring in a well-considered measure based on the principle laid down. If the right hon. Gentleman did that, he would assure him that it would receive the approval of the great majority of the House of Commons and the people of London. With regard to what had been said as to the position of his Amendment, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that, since he placed it on the Paper of Business, it had undergone many changes in that particular, and the prominence it now occupied was due rather to accident than from any compunction on the part of his right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor to move his Amendment for rejecting the Bill altogether. The Bill, undoubtedly, so far from having the support of the people, was diametrically opposed to their wishes; and he desired to move the Amendment standing in his name.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY, in seconding the Amendment, said, he hoped that, notwithstanding the solemn warning of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) as to the cholera, the House would not assent to the second reading of the Bill. Under the plea of strengthening local self-

government, it would practically extinguish such government by vesting a Central Authority with unlimited power. The right hon. Gentleman had said something about the exertions put forward by the Corporation of the City of London against the Bill; but he apparently forgot to mention that efforts had been made to obtain Petitions from the Corporations of Provincial towns in support of the Bill; and he (Lord Algernon Percy) believed that two such Petitions had been presented, which came respectively from Leeds and Congleton, two towns, no doubt, admirably capable, in their own estimation, of judging and deciding as to the wishes of the people of London. The right hon. Gentleman opposite argued as if the whole question was a question between separate Municipalities and one Central Authority; but it seemed to him (Lord Algernon Percy) that the real question was whether the Central Authority contemplated by that Bill was combined with a due provision for the preservation of local self-government. There were some rather curious circumstances connected with the introduction of the measure. On that occasion, the right hon. Gentleman had carefully praised the existing Bodies, and had alleged no maladministration; or that great evil existed in their administration; the only reason seemed to be that there was a want of symmetry in the present system, and a lack of power on the part of the Local Authorities to deal with certain matters intrusted to them. It might, therefore, have been thought that the right course would be to strengthen the powers of the Local Authorities; but that was not what the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do. On the contrary, he sought to sweep away the whole of the existing Local Authorities, and to substitute an entirely new creation for them. Again, although Returns had been asked from the Local Authorities, and cheerfully furnished, not one of those Authorities had ever been consulted in regard to that Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the supporters and the opponents of the Bill outside of the House, and had referred to the former as belonging to some thinly-attended Vestries; but he had not mentioned the fact that the meetings in its favour had been held in small school-rooms, where the majority of the

audiences were old women. The fact was, that the agitation in favour of the Bill did not arise amongst those remarkable either for their knowledge of local matters, or with individuals who had spent much time in the management of local affairs; whereas almost every Vestry or other Local Authority in London had passed resolutions in opposition to the measure. It was said that the Vestries were interested; but "the people" who figured so prominently in the placards connected with the small meetings to which he had referred were equally interested parties. Moreover, the right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the Local Authorities had performed their duties well, and with a considerable knowledge of the local affairs of London. It was rather curious, too, that since the first reading of that Bill the elections for the different Vestries had taken place; and in almost every instance the men who were opposed to the measure had been returned. It was alleged, from the fact that in one parish a Vestryman had been returned by only 19 votes, that comparatively very few of the ratepayers took part in the choice of those who managed the local affairs of London; but the Bill made no new departure in that respect. Under it the ratepayers within the limits of the Metropolis Management Act were to become burgesses, with the power of electing 240 members to the Central Council and also of electing District Councils. But, under the present system, all ratepayers were entitled to vote for their representatives; and, if they did not chose to do so, it was their own fault—not the fault of the system. They could elect men in their several districts who were acquainted with all its requirements, and those representatives again elected members of the Metropolitan Board of Works; and no difficulty was experienced in finding men of ability and intelligence, who devoted their time and energies to the service of the ratepayers, and who performed their duties very satisfactorily. The incident to which he had referred, therefore, exemplified a fault in the ratepayers and not a fault in the system. The right hon. Gentleman asserted that the Vestries did not want reform; but he (Lord Algernon Percy) was not aware that one of the resolutions passed in a Metropolitan Vestry expressed any op-

position to reform. He believed they were prepared to accept reform; but, naturally, they did not wish the power taken out of the hands of the Local Authorities. At the present time, the London Vestries were composed of men of all classes, who were thoroughly acquainted with the requirements of the neighbourhood. They did their work in the evening after their own business was over; but, under the Bill, those men would no longer be able to perform their duties, owing to the enormous area of the Metropolis, and the time which a consideration of its numerous details would involve; nor could they afford the expense which would be necessary in order to enable them to become candidates for such constituencies as they would have to represent. On the other hand, only rich men who could spare the time, or persons who would make municipal government pay, would find their way into the proposed Common Council, and, thereby, one very important element in good local self-government—the element of the participation of all classes of the community—would be destroyed, while the door would be opened to an enormous amount of jobbery. With regard to the proposed District Councils, their constitution appeared to him one of the most objectionable features of the Bill. The District Council was to be elected by the ratepayers, and, therefore, it might be supposed that the members of that Body would be directly responsible to the electors. But that was not really secured by the Bill. Any person, however, in reading through the Bill would find it difficult to discover what those powers were. They would, under its provisions, be incapable of performing the most ordinary duties without consulting the Central Body. They would not even be able to alter or improve a street.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If the noble Lord looks at the Bill, he will see that if the District Council has assigned to it the care of a street, that Council can do anything in such street without consulting the Corporation at all.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, that was so, if, in the first place, the Common Council delegated the authority to the District Councils. The question of the expense of repairs had to be brought before the Common Council before the repairs to a street could be carried out.

Lord Algernon Percy

Then, the District Councils had no power of rating—they could not spend a single *ld.* on their own account, and to the expenses they wished to incur the Common Council might refuse to give consent. The carrying out of works would have to be decided by a Central Authority sitting a considerable distance away, connected with which there would only be a very small number of gentlemen representing the locality where the improvements were to be effected. Westminster, for instance, would only be represented by 23 members, and, therefore, would be in a small minority in the Common Council. The result might be the causing of a great deal of friction, loss of time, and damage to the interests of the public; and there would exist this extraordinary anomaly—that while the members of the District Council would be directly responsible to the electors, they would only be able to exercise derivative authority. He should hardly think that any independent and able man would be likely to put himself into such a position. By this Bill the public would lose three securities which they at present possessed—in the first place, security as to numbers, which they had in the existing government of London; secondly, they would lose the security of the local opinion brought to bear on the 3,000 representatives who were living in the localities they served; and, thirdly, the rating authority not being the same as the spending authority, they would lose the security resulting from the operation of public opinion locally generated and expressed in regard to expenditure. The argument, that the Metropolitan Board of Works had performed those duties, was no argument whatever, because that Board had never attempted to deal with all the minute matters which would come under the attention of the Common Council under this Bill; and it stood to reason that if they spread the principle contained in the measure over too great an area, individual authority would be swamped and lost. If the whole of London, with its varying interests and enormous population, was to be governed by one Body, and that Body was to be elected, they would to a certain extent get self-government in the same way as the people got self-government through Parliament; but it could not be said that they were developing the principle of local self-government.

To call it that was to give it a false name. He hoped the Bill would meet with a treatment which was somewhat unusual with Bills brought forward by the Government—that was to say, that it would be dealt with on its own merits; because there were many both inside and outside the House, of all shades of political opinion, who looked on it as inconsistent with the principle and incompatible with the practice of local self-government.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word “That” to the end of the Question, in order to add the words “while ready to consider the question of a reform in the Government of London, this House declines to assent to a proposal by which the control over the levying and expenditure of rates would be vested in one central body to the practical extinction of the local self-government of the various cities and boroughs of the Metropolis,”—(*Mr. Ritchie*),
—instead thereof.

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

MR. FIRTH said, he was quite sure his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets was sincere in the opinion he had expressed, that the people of London were to an appreciable extent against this measure, and that no important meetings had been held in support of it. He (Mr. Firth) would deal with the hon. Gentleman's observations, which, whilst sincere, had struck him, as one having as wide an experience as any living man of the opinions of the people of London on this subject, as perfectly astounding. He had just received a telegram—he would not at present read it—relating to a meeting held that night at Kensington. The Kensington Vestry had called a meeting, and had placed a rate collector at the door, so that no one could enter who was not a ratepayer. A resolution was moved against the Bill; but an amendment in its favour had been carried by 10 to 1; and he believed that in no single quarter of London, where the Bill was fairly explained, would there be a smaller majority in its favour. [*Laughter.*] He expected that statement to be received with astonishment by some hon. Members. [An hon. MEMBER: No; with laughter.] He had been down to every quarter of London, and knew the feeling of the ratepayers. Did hon. Gentle-

men pretend to suggest that he had ever misrepresented the case? If they did, they were wrong—he had never misrepresented the case of the opponents at any meeting held in support of the Bill. But he would have a word or two to say with regard to meetings later on. The way in which the hon. Member had commenced the debate that night had struck him as rather peculiar. He had commented upon a Bill of this magnitude being brought on for discussion on second reading at so late a period as July, and had declared the Government to be obstructing useful legislation; but how was it that the measure was only in its present stage in the month of July? Had the hon. Gentleman forgotten the constantly recurring Votes of Censure, for which the Government had been obliged to find time? It was only owing to an accident that the intention of bringing forward another Vote of Censure had been frustrated, and that the House had the privilege of going on with this Bill now. If it were Obstruction to bring forward a Bill of this kind, the system of Parliamentary Government would resolve itself into this—that a number of Gentlemen who were opposed to certain legislation would be able, by one proceeding after another, to bring about a process of exhaustion, and, at the end of the year, would go down to their constituencies and say of their opponents—“See, they have passed no legislation at all.” Beyond doubt, the measure was one of magnitude as far as its physical side were concerned; but it contained only two important principles, and those, as some hon. Members might recollect, he had ventured to state some time ago. The Bill consolidated Central Authorities, and gave a proper control over the Local Authorities. Those two principles established, the rest of the Bill was almost entirely consequential—that was to say, every clause in the Bill could be shown to be a necessary consequence of those principles. The hon. Gentleman had complained that the Bill did not go far enough. Before criticizing details, he had complained that the Bill did not hand over the control of the Police to the new Authority. Well, he (Mr. Firth) would be glad to see such control in the hands of the Municipality; but they must move in this matter by steps. The hon. Gentleman also com-

[*First Night.*]

plained that the Bill would not give the Municipality control over licences. That, again, he should be glad to see conferred on the Local Authority; but here, once more, he must remark on the necessity of their moving by steps. It was further complained that the Bill did not deal with the Metropolitan Asylums Board. That Board was a part of the Poor Law system; and he must say that he should like to see the Poor Law system of the House of Commons in the hands of the Municipality. But for that which was contained in the Bill they had waited long enough; and that of London was the only unreformed Corporation remaining. The management of the affairs of all large towns, save those of London, had been, by the Corporations Act of 1835, put under vigilant popular control. London alone remained unreformed, and, to his mind, had remained so long enough. Every local interest in this country, and every local interest in the Sister Island, had been considered again and again by one Administration after another. The present Administration had brought in a dozen Bills with respect to the agricultural interest of the United Kingdom and Ireland; but London remained without that simple elementary control over its own municipal affairs that the smallest town in the Provinces possessed. He admitted the problem was a difficult one to solve. If he might say so, it required a far deeper knowledge of the things dealt with than was ordinarily necessary to understand the measure properly. Many hon. Gentlemen were aware of the circumstances of the Corporation of London and of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the circumstances attending the Vestries; but it was necessary to know the circumstances attending them all before they could form an opinion as to the best method of weaving them together, and in which Municipal unity could be produced. It was true that some of the Royal Commissions which had alluded to the question had come, in a certain sense, to a different conclusion; but the Royal Commission of 1835, which was appointed in 1833, was the only one which really sat on the question, and that had proposed a solution exactly on the same lines as the present Bill. Its solution of a similar question in other towns was exactly on the same

lines as the proposals of the Bill, so far as their central principle was concerned. The Royal Commission of 1854, to which reference had been made, had not been appointed for the purpose of inquiring into that question at all; and all that was contained in the Report was not within the scope of its inquiry. That part of the Report to which he had alluded was not to be regarded as in any sense binding. As an illustration of what he meant, he might say that Sir George Grey had proceeded in the matter on very different lines from those recommended in that particular part of the Report. This Bill was really very little more in its essence than a Bill making the Metropolitan Board of Works a Representative Authority. The Earl of Camperdown, as they knew, brought in a Bill for the purpose of doing that a few years ago, and the present measure did little more than carry out the provisions of that Bill. As he had said, it would bring about the union of Central Authorities and the control of Local Authorities. Was that union desirable? Would it not produce economy, and give them that control over their affairs that they now wanted? First, as to the constitution of London, the hon. Gentleman had been mistaken in supposing that the Bill sought to produce a revolution in the City of London. It touched the City, but only incidentally. It was said that the Bill had designs on the revenues; but the City had none worth appropriating. The accounts did not balance; for years they had been thousands of pounds on the wrong side; and when, in 1889, the Coal Dues came to an end, there would be a deficiency of at least £1,000,000 sterling still remaining on the Holborn Valley Improvement, and necessitating an increased payment out of City rates of at least £35,000 a year. It was impossible to carry out any reform of this kind which did not involve dealing with the City of London. The Metropolis had grown around the City. Did they not remember reading how Queen Elizabeth had stopped the building of houses when there were 150,000 people in London, because, as she said, "a larger accumulation of people would be too many to serve God and honour the Queen?" Since then, however, London had enormously increased, and whilst the population of London had increased,

that of the City had diminished. In the time of Queen Elizabeth there were 150,000 within the walls of the City; but now there were only 50,000. The City was merely a shell, and in any London Government Reform Bill they were bound to deal with it. They were bound to deal with the whole locality; and it was just that they should do so, because the Corporation of the City of London not only assumed to speak in the name of the people of the Metropolis, and not only spent money levied from them, but it controlled their market arrangements, and in many other respects ruled them, without their having direct representation on it. As to its market jurisdiction, the House was aware how strenuously it adhered to the powers given to it originally by the Charter of King Edward III., confirmed by that of Charles I.—powers which enabled it to prevent the establishment of any market within seven miles of the City walls. The House had not forgotten the fight they had some years ago to get for the Metropolitan Board of Works power to inquire into the market question. Was it not right that powers of this kind exercised by an Authority, on which the inhabitants of the Metropolis had no representation, should be handed over to an Authority on which they had full representation? Undoubtedly, and such transfer of power would be effected by the Bill. With regard to the Metropolitan Board of Works the same arguments applied, and the same change would be effected by the Bill. At present, the people of the Metropolis had not the power of controlling the budget of the Metropolitan Board. That budget was rather over £4,000,000, and the people had no power of control over that part which the Board itself actually spent; and with respect to the rest—loans to the Asylums Board and other Public Bodies—they had no opportunity of deciding whether or not they should be advanced.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: The hon. and learned Member, I am sure, would wish to be correct. Does he wish to put it to the House that the budget of the Metropolitan Board of Works is over £4,000,000 exclusive of the loans? He must know the loans are included in the £4,000,000.

MR. FIRTH said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman had misunderstood him.

What he had said was, that the budget of the Metropolitan Board of Works was rather over £4,000,000, part of which was spent by the Board, and the rest advanced in loans.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: I did not understand you to say that.

MR. FIRTH: But I did say so. The argument he had put to the people of Mile End was, that when an immense sum of this kind was raised either by loan or rate from the inhabitants of any place, those inhabitants ought, through their directly elected representatives, to have full control over the expenditure. That was exactly what they did not possess in London at the present time, and that was exactly what this Bill would give them. The main work, almost the only work, the new Corporation would have to undertake, would be the work now undertaken by the Metropolitan Board, and the only difference would be that the work would be performed by a Body directly responsible to the ratepayers, and not by a Body which was unknown in its form of action, and over which the ratepayers had no control. The problem was an extremely difficult one to solve; and he was sure hon. Gentlemen would believe him when he said that those of them who had carefully considered it, had been driven to the solution contained in the Bill by the circumstances of the case rather than by any preference for it over other possible solutions. The various powers of the Metropolitan Board could not well be divided among a series of Corporations. He would illustrate what he meant by that statement, and would do so by alluding to the lesson they had learnt in London since 1855. In that year there was given to the Metropolitan Board the control of the main drainage. That was the main object for which the Board was established; in fact, it was supposed at the time that the Board would only be of a temporary character. Well, did anyone suppose that it would be possible to divide the carrying out of a main drainage scheme amongst a series of Corporations in London—did anyone suppose it practicable to give each portion of London a separate cesspool? Parliament had decided that as to drainage there should be but one system; therefore, it was necessary that there should be union. In the same way as to buildings, in 1856 control over them was given to

the Board by a deliberate decision of Parliament. It was absolutely necessary that there should be but one Authority in this matter. His hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) had alluded to the question of the River. Surely he would admit that there must be but one Authority to control it. At the present time the Metropolitan Board dealt with the question of floods and embankments; and surely these were matters affecting the South as well as the North side of the River, and as to which there should not be a division of authority. The conservancy and purification of the River ought to be all in the same hands. There was another thing in respect of which there should be absolute control vested in one authority in the Metropolis—namely, the management of parks and recreation grounds. The Metropolitan Board of Works had had authority over parks and recreation grounds given to them, and they had obtained something like 1,700 acres of land. That authority should be continued in the same hands, otherwise there would be no uniformity in the Metropolis; one Local Authority would be prepared to tax its district for these necessities of modern civilization, whilst another would refuse. In other towns these things were managed by the ordinary Corporation. Not only did the lesson from 1855 down to the present day show that these affairs could be well managed by one Authority, but that they must be. Take, again, the Fire Brigade. Since 1869 the Metropolitan Board of Works had had the control of it in the Metropolis; and did anyone believe that it would be well to divide the control so as to have different Fire Brigades for the different Municipalities? He would give one or two further illustrations. Main street improvements had been put in the hands of the Metropolitan Board of Works. The Metropolitan Board of Works acted under more than 100 Acts of Parliament, and this Authority had not worked so badly as some people expected. They had not heard much about danger to the Constitution—perhaps, in regard to the present Bill, they might hear more about it in the future; but it might be remembered that, in 1855, Lord Fortescue declared that the Metropolitan Board would be a menace to the Throne. Did anyone so regard it now? The Authority which, he trusted, they were going to constitute

by this Bill, was one which had had all these powers deliberately given to it by Parliament, and which had used them and performed its duty certainly far better than had been expected. It had also had powers given to it in respect of artisans' dwellings; but they had been mainly powers to enable it to clear large sites, at great cost to the rate-payers, and not powers to enable it to rebuild the houses pulled down. It was not only, however, in regard to the large main questions he had referred to that Parliament had exercised its judgment and given the Metropolitan Board of Works these powers. Powers had also been given to it in regard to matters requiring much detail work. In the construction of buildings they could exercise authority as to the thickness of the walls; they could also exercise authority as to the numbering of the houses, their cubic contents, and even as to the preparation of the sites, so that the old custom of speculative builders, under which the gravel was removed and sold, and houses built upon refuse, could be no longer carried out. All these powers over matters of detail had been given to the Central Authority, so that it could not be suggested that such Authority could not perform detailed work. In addition to the things he had mentioned, the Metropolitan Board of Works had power over offensive businesses, the storage of petroleum, and the regulation of slaughter-houses and cowsheds; but there were some matters in regard to which Parliament had not gone as far as it might. It had given the Metropolitan Board of Works power over tramways to a certain extent; but what was wanted in regard to the whole question of traffic was something more extended than anything they had now. The time of this Imperial Legislature should not be taken up with the discussion of such matters as London cab-fares, with the regulation of stage-carriages, and so forth. To his mind, a competent London Authority ought not only to be charged with the regulation of the things he had enumerated, and intrusted with the powers which other Corporations had, but it ought also to have control over street traffic to a greater extent than it had now, and control over steamboat traffic; and it ought to be a deliberative Assembly which would examine into Railway Bills, and gas and other projects affecting Lon-

don, before they were presented to the Imperial Parliament. Every year they had proofs of the absurdity of the present system. Railway Companies came and suggested improvements within the Metropolitan area. Their proposals were submitted to Committees of Gentlemen having no knowledge of local affairs. If hon. Gentlemen wanted to see the result of this method of procedure, let them go to Clapham Junction, and other similar districts, and see the large amount of land wasted, a large portion of which land might have been saved if there had been an efficient Central Authority understanding the localities, with power to examine schemes and see that they were presented to Parliament in a uniform and definite shape. What these matters required was definite control. In the course of its existence the Metropolitan Board had had given to it one function after another, and why? Because Parliament recognized the fact that these were matters which should be dealt with in London by a single Authority. The Metropolitan Board had discharged its functions, having regard to the limited number of its members, he thought he might say fairly well, certainly better than they might have expected. Matters could be pointed out in regard to which they had not discharged their duties well; therefore, he was putting it as strongly as his hon. Friend could expect. Were they going to change all this? Did the House of Commons wish to go back from the decisions it had deliberately arrived at during all these years? He thought not—he trusted not. What the Bill proposed was that such matters should, in future, be decided by a Central Authority, which should be representative. There were some other things as to which the Central Authority ought to have powers which it had not at the present time—and he must allude to them here, because it seemed to him that they would properly come in at this part of the observations he was making to the House on a question to which he had given the best study and attention of which he was capable. As to the question of the control of the water supply, they in London were probably in a worse position than any Municipality where the English language was spoken. He was not going now to enter into a contest with the hon.

Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) as to whether the statement of the Government analysts, to the effect that the water of London was unfit for human consumption, was or was not true. There was, at present, no Authority to deal with the Water Companies; and was it not the opinion of Gentlemen on both sides of the House that such an Authority should be constituted? In 1871 the Metropolitan Board of Works promoted a Bill to empower them to purchase the interests of the Water Companies; but the House had refused its consent to that measure, because it thought that the Board was not such a Representative Body as could be safely intrusted with such extensive powers. In 1878 the Board brought forward a Bill to enable them to provide an independent supply; but it met with the same fate, for the same reason. The fact was, London was helpless, supine, and voiceless on these matters seriously affecting her welfare. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) then brought in his Bill; and what was it that he proposed? He (Mr. Firth) would not go into the question of price; but the right hon. Gentleman proposed that there should be one Authority in London, who should be able to deal with the question. In 1880 a Select Committee sat to consider the question, and in its Report it proposed the same thing, as the Report said, "in the absence of any Municipal Authority." Well, it was exactly that Municipal Authority which the Bill asked them to constitute—that was to say, a Municipal Authority differing from the Metropolitan Board in that it would be representative. It would, therefore, be a Body to which the functions which he referred to might properly be given. The people of London were anxious that they should have someone to act in their name against powerful private organizations like the Water Companies. The Metropolitan Board, in 1871, was empowered to demand a constant supply; but that, he was afraid, was one of the matters the Board had almost entirely neglected. In 1869 was passed, as they knew, the Metropolitan Assessment Act, under which the Water Companies had been enabled to raise rates without increasing the supply—that was to say, to take a course unjust in itself, though

perfectly legal. How was it that such a power was conferred by the Act of 1869? Why, simply because neither the Corporation of the City nor the Metropolitan Board of Works substantially attended to the interests of Londoners, and took care that they were safeguarded in the passing of such an important Act. He took it that it was necessary that the people of London should have someone to speak in their name on the question of the Water Supply. Was the present state of things to go on—were they to be left in this condition year after year, with their rates increasing upon them without additional advantage, when they saw in such places as Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow the Municipality obtaining the purest water and the largest supply, and putting the profits into the pockets of the ratepayers instead of into the pockets of the Water Companies? The new Authority should have power to deal with the question of Lighting. He would undertake to show that the Metropolitan Board had not attended to the interests of the inhabitants of London at all in the matter, though, in 1860, the Vestries endeavoured to deal with it, finding themselves, in the end, beaten out of the field by the Gas Companies. The condition of the lighting in the Metropolis was more satisfactory now than it was in 1860. The recommendations of a Select Committee of the House of Commons had put it in a somewhat better position; but, under this Bill, control over all these matters would be given to the Central Authority. If the management of these things were handed over to a Central Authority, what would there be left for the independent Local Authorities to do? And, in considering that question, he must, of course, deal with what the Vestries now did. Probably, he might be giving information to some Members of the House—and, doubtless, those to whom he was not giving it would excuse him—when he said that in London there were 38 Local Authorities, 23 of which represented the old parishes, differing in size, and 15 of which were District Boards formed out of the union of parishes. These 38 Authorities were supposed to be directly elected. He said “supposed,” because the election of a London Vestry was more often than not an utter farce. [“No, no!”] Some hon. Members objected to that; then he would

give an illustration of his meaning. For instance, take the Islington Vestry election—Islington being the largest parish in the Metropolis. There were eight wards there, and in seven of them there was no contest last May. In Marylebone, the same was the case. In his own parish of Kensington, there was a contest. Hon. Gentlemen opposite did not seem to think that the fact of having no contest illustrated his point. He himself had thought it did. If they liked, they should have a contest. There was a contest in Kensington, and the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) was returned after a severe fight.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon—he is entirely mistaken.

MR. FIRTH said, the hon. and gallant Member was returned after a severe contest, according to the local Press. The parish had 170,000 inhabitants, and its rateable value was £1,700,000. Was it, or was it not, an illustration of good local control, when even so excellent a Gentleman as his hon. and gallant Friend was elected in such a parish by 36 votes? He himself had had about the same number, he believed. The election happened in this way—those who were present at the meeting held up their hands, and no one demanded a poll. Was that a farce, or was it not? If anyone differed from him, he had nothing more to say on the subject. If they thought that was a satisfactory condition of local government, he was not disposed to quarrel with them about it. If they thought that in a great borough such as he represented (Chelsea), it was a satisfactory state of things to have only some 500 persons voting at the election of the whole of the Vestries in the borough, he confessed he disagreed with them; but everyone could form his own opinion about it. The Vestry was the street authority—and here he came to the second principle of the Bill, and would ask whether there should be control over the action of the Local Authorities? In the case of streets, frequently, after they had been made by the Vestry, in came the Metropolitan Board of Works and tore them up to lay down a main sewer; then the Gas Company would come in, later on, to put down gas pipes; and, at another time, the Water Com-

pany to lay down or repair water mains. The result was that the roads were being constantly interfered with, that there was no unity of action, and no proper control over the authorities who disturbed them. They frequently saw streets and roads torn up a few days after they had been made at great expenditure of time and money. With regard to Vestry accounts, what was the system under which they lived? He could not suppose that the majority of Members in the House were aware of the hideous state of chaos into which the accounts had got—or the hideous method, or rather absence of method, in dealing with financial matters which characterized the London Vestries. They spent over £2,000,000 a-year, which was raised by rate. The Metropolitan Board of Works had fortunately assisted him with two Returns, to enable him to illustrate his point from unimpeachable authority. In 1874 the Metropolitan Board asked for Returns from the Vestries, showing the work they had done, under certain heads. These Returns were presented, and he had copies of them with him now. In 1882 similar Returns were obtained, and they were extremely instructive. He had compared the figures in both Returns, and had had the figures analyzed and certified by an experienced Vestry Clerk in London. Of course, the cost of paving in different districts varied; but these were the days before wood paving; and if the number of yards laid down in the 18 years was compared with the cost, it appeared from this Return that the average cost of all the paving throughout Chelsea was, approximately, 2s. per square yard; Paddington, about 4s.; Bethnal Green, 6s.; Camberwell, 8s.; St. George's (Southwark), 12s.; Kensington, 15s.; and St. Pancras, 17s. Either the paving in some parts of London was in a remarkable condition, or something should be done to bring these matters into greater harmony in the different districts. One of the heads of Return was for expenses on "Sanitary works other than new sewers." Under this head, St. Pancras returned an expenditure of £211,662. Lambeth was in every respect larger than St. Pancras, but she only returned £10,200; whilst Islington, which was largest of all, returned £1,364; so that St. Pancras, according to this Return, spent 150 times

more than Islington under this head. This was, surely, an illustration of the necessity of something in the shape of uniformity in the keeping of accounts and the carrying out of works in the Metropolis. Islington, as they had seen, returned her expenditure for the 18 years, 1856-1874, on sanitary works other than new sewers, at £1,364. She now returned her expenditure under the same head for the 25 years, 1856-1881, at £980,823—that was to say, that in seven years, 1874-1881, she expended on this item £979,000 more than in the 18 years, 1856-1874. Islington Vestry opposed the London Bill. Hackney expended in 1856-1874, under this head, £367. She expended in the years 1856-1881, no less than £130,150. Hackney District Board opposed the London Bill. St. Martin-in-the-Fields spent £1,000 in the first 18 years, and £11,000 in the next seven years; Wandsworth spent £528 in the years 1856-1874, and £86,776 in the years 1856-1881; but St. George's-in-the-East had executed a still more remarkable feat. Under this head she returned her expenses in the 18 years, 1856-1874, at £21,529, and in the 25 years, 1856-1881, at £19,867; so that she did the work of the seven years for £1,600 less than nothing! Nor was this by any means the only case in which the Vestries could perform feats like that. Limehouse, having made between six and seven miles of sewer for £78,731 in 1856-1874, returned that in the years 1856-1881 she made $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles of sewer for £9,964—that was to say, she made three miles of sewer in the last seven years for £69,000 less than nothing. St. Martin's-in-the-Fields made, in 1856-1874, 1,000 yards of sewer for £8,264. In the years 1856-1881 she constructed 1,200 yards of sewer for £2,350; so that, according to her own Return, she made 200 yards of sewer in the last seven years for nearly £6,000 less than nothing. Another example might suffice. Rotherhithe returned the cost of $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles of sewer, made in 1856-1874, at £21,618. In 1881 she had made 14 miles of sewer, but returned the cost as reduced to £19,259; so that she also made four miles of sewer for £2,000 less than nothing, on her own Return. In another way the Returns were equally instructive. Thus, Marylebone returned that in 18 years, 1856-1874, she made $25\frac{1}{2}$ miles of new sewer

for £80,135. For the 25 years, 1856-1881, she returned 28 miles of sewer at a cost of £161,616; so that, if the Returns were correct, she made the first 25½ miles at a cost of nearly £3,200 per mile, and the remaining 2½ miles at a cost of about £32,000 a-mile. These accounts showed the necessity of a satisfactory audit; and the Bill said there should be a satisfactory audit—that was to say, a valuable audit. One Vestry, to his knowledge, had appointed an auditor who could neither read nor write. [“Name!”] He should be glad to give more precise information privately, if hon. Members would ask him for it; but it did not seem desirable to give the name of one particular Vestry, when they all acted in very much the same manner. There could be no doubt that the audit of the Vestries was in an extremely lamentable condition. There were elected auditors, and, under the Metropolis Management Act of 1855, they had power to surcharge. But, curiously enough, the Act contained no power of enforcing the surcharge; and so it happened that, notwithstanding expenditure on all kinds of things not contemplated by the Act, there had never been any surcharge enforced in any London Vestry since their establishment in 1856. This was a very good illustration of the condition in which the accounts were. Was it too much to suggest that there ought to be something in the shape of control over this expenditure? If the Amendment of his hon. Friend went to anything, it went to the establishment of Bodies over whom there could be no control—to perpetuate the most lamentable chaos which had ever existed under the sun. With regard to Vestry functions other than those of street control, the Vestries frequently declined to exercise the authority Parliament had vested in them. Ought they, or ought they not, to carry out these Acts of Parliament? Parliament had decided that baths and wash-houses and mortuaries should be established under the authority of the Vestries, and yet very few of the Vestries had put up either of these. In one great Vestry, recently, a man’s body had been dissected on his own dining-room table. Was there no mortuary in the whole area? In Clerkenwell a similar thing had happened in a small dwelling, because there was no place provided by the parish to which the body could be removed for

examination. Very few Vestries had interested themselves in the matter of baths and wash-houses. Parliament had given them power to erect such buildings, but very few had availed themselves of it, although those which had—where the buildings had been established under satisfactory conditions, and something approximating to the value had been paid for the structures—generally found them to pay. He believed that in St. Martin-in-the-Fields the baths and wash-houses paid a profit. He had a right, then, to ask, should there not be a controlling power in the Metropolis to see that these things for the benefit of the people were carried out? Even where they were carried out, it was done in so irregular a manner, that it was essential that some central control should be exercised. Take, again, the Act with which the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens) was so honourably connected; no one knew better than the hon. Member how the Vestries had neglected to carry it out. Should there not be some controlling power to see that such a practical measure was carried out? As to the Sanitary Laws, his right hon. Colleague (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could, no doubt, testify as to the frightful irregularities which existed amongst the Local Authorities of the Metropolis with regard to them. The same thing might be said of the Adulteration Acts, and all the minor functions of the Vestries. The Bill provided that for these purposes there should be something like control over the Local Authorities. It had been suggested that it was a centralizing measure. [“Hear, hear!”] He was glad he had arrived at a point on which right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite distinctly contested the principle of the Bill. He would point out why he thought it a decentralizing measure. So far as the City was concerned, the Bill took from it, and gave to a Body representing the ratepayers, control over the Markets, the Coal Dues, and a good many other things—it took powers from a non-Representative Body, as far as London generally was concerned, and gave them to a Representative Body. The Bill would take some powers which at present Parliament alone had in its hands. It would take over the control and management of cabs and carriages, and give it to the new Municipal Authority. Surely, that

was a decentralizing operation. It took from the Gas and Water Companies the powers they possessed, and gave them to the representatives of the ratepayers; and, surely, in regard to these matters, it was a decentralizing measure. How could it be said to be a centralizing measure? It was so-called, presumably, because it took over the expenditure of the money of the ratepayers from the Vestries, who so miserably discharged the function. Well, in dealing with this question, if they were to have a central control, how were they to concede it? Should or should not the Central Council be directly elected? All would agree that it should. What, then, should be the qualification for the electorate? The qualification in this Bill was the same as that in other Municipalities. The City of London had recently brought into the field a champion who had quoted against the Bill the case of New York. There was no similarity between the case of London and that of New York. No reasonable comparison could be drawn between New York and London, or Paris and London. The qualification under the Bill for the electorate in London was to be the same as in other English Municipalities—that was to say, the rating and household franchise of 12 months' standing. In New York, everyone might vote who had lived a year in the State and six months in the City, even if he had lived in an hotel. Of course, there was a great difference between the two cases, and there was the greatest difference in the result. It had seemed to him a most extraordinary thing that the condition of New York should have been selected as an example of what was likely to result from this Bill. Anyone who was familiar with the condition of things in New York some years ago, anyone who had read *The New York Tribune* or *Times* during the autumn of 1871, would know what a fearful amount of corruption had existed. They would remember how some millions of dollars had been charged for the furniture of the City Hall, and how warrants to the extent of \$6,000,000, stated to be fraudulent, were signed one afternoon. The whole of the expenditure was controlled by the "Tamanny Ring," and the Mayor of New York at that time was the new City champion, Mr. Oakey Hall. There was no comparison whatever to be

drawn between what New York was and what London would be under this Bill. Then, what would be the result of the establishment of an Authority of this kind? Contrary to the assertions made against the Bill, he said it was a decentralizing and not a centralizing measure; and that so far from its tending to extravagance, its effect would be in the direction of economy. He did not think that under it the tendency would be towards increasing cost. Apart from other considerations, if it had the effect of producing harmony between the Authorities, that, in itself, must tend to economy. His hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) had given, as one illustration of this point, the fight which the Metropolis had had with respect to the discharge of the sewage into the Thames, which contest cost £40,000. They had not forgotten that contest, nor had they forgotten the contest about the Metropolitan Open Spaces, when the Metropolitan Board of Works prevented the Corporation of the City from expending the Grain Duties within the Metropolitan area. The Thames Sewage contest was not the only one which had been engaged in between those two great Bodies; and he believed, although they were united now against the Bill, that if they were to defeat the efforts of London after local self-government, they would continue on the war-path hitherto followed by them, and that these costly contests would recur. The Metropolitan Board of Works fought the Vestries; they fought the Gas and Water Companies; and in this way the amount of money expended was very large. Surely, then, if Parliament established a controlling Authority for the Metropolis, there must be economy. Well, they had been told that the School Board afforded an illustration against the Bill. But it did not seem to him that the question of the School Board had any place whatever in this argument, because the School Board had been established to do altogether new work—to take 300,000 children from the streets, and to provide school buildings and education for them. But this Bill had been established in order to harmonize that which already existed; to take it over and to put it into a new form. He had been watching to see whether his hon. Friend, in his opposition to the Bill, would strike at it as a Centralizing Bill, or as a measure destruc-

tive of local self-government; and he found that he contested it on the point that the functions of the Local Councils were not settled in the Bill. The functions of the Local Councils were to be settled by a Central Authority; and he (Mr. Firth) asked if it would not be better that those functions should be settled by a Body representing all the people amongst whom those functions were to be discharged, than by Act of Parliament, which would have to be amended whenever it was found desirable to change them? For his own part, he thought there was very little probability of the Central Authority taking more powers than the Bill conferred. It had been suggested that the budgets of the Local Authorities would be things which the Central Authority might control, and that their independence might, in that sense, be taken away. Now, it seemed to him that the budget of a District Council presented to a Central Council bore exact analogy to the budget supposed to be examined by the Treasury, and annually presented to that House by the Metropolitan Board of Works. He might have said that this budget itself was supposed to be presented, because it came forward at hours damaging to the health of the few hon. Members who thought it necessary to watch over it. However, the analogy was complete, and he contended that the argument with regard to the local budgets had no force as against this Bill. He said that the Bill would provide an absolute remedy for the evils which had arisen under the existing system. Every Local Body would discharge under it not only the duties now performed by the Vestries, but a great many more; the Central Body would delegate more duties to them than they had at present, because the Metropolitan Board of Works had no power to delegate to them any duties at all. Therefore, on that ground, also, he thought the danger apprehended was non-existent. Again, it was said that the Local Councils would be less attractive to ambitious men than the Vestries. He did not think that the Vestries were attractive at present, or that many persons knew much about them. But what was the alternative to the Bill? It was all very well to criticize the details of the Bill; but, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had pointed out, the

only alternative was the establishment of separate Municipalities; and he (Mr. Firth) thought it worth while to draw attention to what the effect of that would be. There would, of course, be a dozen School Boards. ["No, no!"] Not of absolute necessity, certainly; but he would point out that directly hon. Gentleman contested that proposition, they took the first step on the line which he was following for the purpose of showing the great necessity which existed for the establishment of a unified Body for all London. No scheme for separate Municipalities had been proposed either by the Corporation of the City of London or by any other Body. The effect of the establishment of separate Municipalities, so far as the Tower Hamlets were concerned, would be that the School Board rate would be doubled. But it was not necessary to argue the question of the establishment of separate Municipalities, inasmuch as no one had proposed such a scheme. Before sitting down he wished to say a few words with respect to a matter alluded to by his hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie)—namely, the attitude assumed by the various Authorities towards the Bill. It would, no doubt, have been too much to expect the Corporation of the City of London to support the Bill; that would have been contrary to the whole course of its recent history, and therefore he need not indulge in any such speculation. They had not forgotten how the Corporation of the City of London acted with regard to the Commission appointed to consider the question of Municipal Government; how they had dealt with the Bills of Sir George Grey in 1856 and 1858, with the Bill of Sir George Cornwall Lewis in 1859, and with the Bills of Mr. John Stuart Mill. Nor was it forgotten how they dealt with one proposal, by what he understood to be about the meanest of all methods of stopping a Bill—namely, by objecting to it on the ground that the Standing Orders had not been complied with. There had been proposed a good many other measures in the interest of the reform of London Government, all of which had been opposed by the Corporation of the City of London in the same way as they had opposed the measures he had more particularly referred to; and he would remind the House that evidence had been given before the Commission of

1854, that they expended large sums on secret service, which were dealt with in the accounts of the Chamberlain in such a manner that the money so expended could not very well be recognized. His hon. Friend had spoken of the amount of support given to this measure, and on that subject he wished to make one or two remarks. Although it had been suggested that Parliament had never been petitioned on this subject, there had been Petitions presented in favour of the Bill; and to-morrow he should present Petitions in its favour from a series of the largest free meetings ever held in London, according to his honest belief, on any question. But they had not canvassed London for the purpose of obtaining signatures to Petitions—first, because it would have been difficult to get a sufficient number of canvassers able to explain the Bill; and, secondly, because the operation would have cost a large sum of money. In that respect they had acted differently to the Corporation of the City of London, one of whose canvassers, he was informed by the lady who attended his (Mr. Firth's) chambers in the Temple, called upon her and ask her to sign a Petition against the Bill, on the ground that it was a Petition the object of which was to lessen the rates. He had no right to complain of the way in which the Corporation of the City of London had conducted their case against the supporters of the Bill, and that because he had read the past history of their opposition to other London Bills; he had no right to complain that Associations were started against it, and largely supported by City subsidies; he had no reason to complain that the City Authorities had expended thousands of pounds in placarding every hoarding, and in advertizing in every London newspaper, and in circulating in the houses of the people statements incorrect and grossly abusive of his humble efforts after reform; he had no reason to complain, nor did he complain, of all this, because he had read the history of their former proceedings before he went into the work, and knew what he should have to undergo. But there had recently been imported into the contest a feature which had, he believed, never appeared in such a contest before. It had remained for the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Mayor

(Mr. R. N. Fowler)—not content with the operations of the agents of the Corporation of the City, not content with prosy denunciations of what the supporters of the measure had done—absolutely to quote poetry against them. The right hon. Gentleman, not long since, at a public meeting put himself in the position of a Turkish Pasha, and spoke of those who would

“—tamely view old Stamboul's wall
Before the dogs of Moscow fall.”

The right hon. Gentleman did not give the context—

“Nor strike one blow for life or death,
Against the curs of Nazareth.”

He (Mr. Firth) was very much astonished to find the Lord Mayor of London quoting *The Bride of Abydos*. The poem was an old friend of his, and he confessed to finding some difficulty in understanding why the right hon. Gentleman should have selected that poem from which to make a quotation against the supporters of the Bill. But his surprise disappeared when he recalled the lines with which the poem began—

“Know ye the land where the cypress and
myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their
clime,
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of
the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime.”

He sincerely trusted that the “love of the turtle,” whilst it might “melt into sorrow,” would not “madden to crime.” Well, the attitude of the District Boards and the Vestries had been alluded to; but he did not think their position in this matter had been quite accurately stated by his hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie). He had no doubt his hon. Friend was of opinion that 33 Vestries and District Boards had come to a conclusion against the Bill; but, as a matter of fact, that was not the case. The decisions at which the Vestries had arrived were very various. There was a considerable number of them in favour of the establishment of one Municipal Body, and who said that further powers should be given to the Local Councils. Others, such as the Vestries of Greenwich, Deptford, and Lewisham, had all gone solid for the Bill. Therefore, he said, his hon. Friend was not quite correct as to the verdict which the Local Authorities had passed upon the main complaint amongst them,

[*First Night.*]

that the Bill did not give sufficient power to the Local Councils. That was a matter which he thought might be fairly dealt with in Committee. As far as he was aware, the meetings which had been held in support of the Bill were free meetings. He himself had most of the responsibility for the Kensington meeting, and he would tell the House in what respect he differed from his hon. Friend on that subject. Their intention was that there should be no tickets whatever, and no tickets of any kind were issued; but, upon the morning of the Saturday on which the meeting was held, he received from many parts of London cards which had been sent to Conservatives and others, inviting them to attend—he believed that many were sent to him by Conservatives, because he had many Conservative friends, some of whom agreed with him upon this question. However, they had a number of tickets which came from Upton, Finsbury, Stoke Newington, Bow, and other similar places, asking the people to whom they were sent to be “in their places” at Kensington Town Hall to support an amendment to be moved against the Bill at 7 o’clock. Now, he and his friends having called a perfectly free meeting at 8 o’clock, he asked hon. Members, on the supposition that they had been responsible for the meeting, what would they have done under the circumstances? Evidence came later on, and which they had by deposition in writing, that a considerable number of men were paid to come and interrupt. These men were booked from the Temple Station, and they went straight to Kensington. The promoters of the meeting had heard of their coming, and had them watched. He asked hon. Gentlemen interested in public meetings what they would have done under such circumstances? He would tell the House what he did, and what he thought he had a right to do. His hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Ritchie) had suggested that something was done which ought not to have been done. On the Saturday morning, he telegraphed to Chelsea what the facts were—namely, that opponents were coming to the meeting at 7 o’clock. Afterwards, they ascertained that the men had been paid to attend, and interrupt; and they asked all their friends to come as early as possible, and gave instructions that the doors of the

Hall should not be opened until half-past 7, and that everyone who was known should be admitted by a side door. [*A laugh.*] He might have been wrong in judgment, but as at present advised he should do the same again if he had a similar state of circumstances to deal with. What was the result? That they packed the whole front of the Hall. Because the men who came were instructed to storm the platform; and, indeed, they had a discussion at the back as to how the platform could be stormed. The men were paid from the same source as other men who had attended meetings to stifle free expression of opinion. He and those over whom he had any control had done their best to ascertain the opinion of the London people on this question. Having attended very large meetings held in every part of the Metropolis, his opinion was that London was very strongly in favour of the Bill. In the London Vestries there was a very strong feeling in favour of the Bill. A conference of Vestrymen favourable to the Bill had been held, and some of the most skilled Vestry Clerks in London strongly approved of the proposed measure. Mr. Gibb, the Vestry Clerk of St. Pancras, one of the largest of the Metropolitan parishes, had analyzed the Bill in a pamphlet of great length; he asserted that this was a measure which would work; and he used some of the arguments which he (Mr. Firth) had ventured to put forth that night as to the result of harmonizing the institutions which existed in the Metropolis. It was a very responsible thing for a man in the position of a Vestry Clerk to take up so strong a line with respect to a measure of this kind; but he thought he might fairly quote Mr. Gibb’s opinion, because it showed that there was a most intelligent opinion even in the Vestries in favour of the Bill. He (Mr. Firth) should have been glad if this question could have been regarded as in no sense a Party question. Although the Bill seemed to have amused some hon. Gentlemen opposite, there were many Conservatives in the part of the town he lived who were in favour of it—there were, of course, some Liberals who were opposed to it. An August Assembly, known as the “Kensington Parliament”—which turned out its Ministry upon Egypt—passed the London Government Bill *non sine contradicente*. It was the fact

that there were many Conservatives who thought that London should have the same rights as other towns had, and he would—he did not know whether he ought to say appeal; but he would suggest that this should not be treated as a Party question. Some time ago something was said about the political effect of the Bill. It was said that by the Bill a huge Caucus would be established. His hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) said there would be wirepullers in the Central Body it was proposed to set up. He (Mr. Firth) hoped that would not be so. His hon. Friend might take it from him that the most skilled Caucus drivers said that under the system of separate Municipalities a Caucus might be effectively worked; but they did not see how it was to be worked under this Bill. He only stated this as a fact for his hon. Friend's consolation. He thanked the House for the time and attention they had given to him while he had treated upon a somewhat dry subject, but one in which he had for many years taken a deep interest. It did seem to him that this Bill would, at least, give to London one voice. London at present was practically supine and voiceless; it had no one to speak in its name. Private Companies worked their own will upon it; but this Bill would give the people a deliberative body, who would be able to examine into the various projects affecting all London, and it would establish a body able to deal with the different bequests which had been left for the benefit of the poor; and, in addition, it would strengthen, and, he trusted, extend the public life and the public spirit of the Metropolis. He certainly hoped and expected that the best men of London—men who had rendered good service in various departments of public work all over the world—might be willing to join the body which would be established, and that in that body there should be representatives, not merely of one class, but of every class of the community; that the artisans themselves would send representatives to make their wishes known. He thought this was a Bill which would give the people of the Metropolis a citizenship which had long been wanting. There were many questions, as he had pointed out, upon which London had been practically united, upon which the brotherhood and citizenship of the whole

town had been completely recognized, and he thought this measure would tend very much to strengthen that position. There were some gentlemen outside who had described it as a revolutionary measure, and who seemed to anticipate a re-establishment of the riotous folk-mote of the Plantagenet period, or that there might be established a state of things analogous to that in which St. Paul's became a mart for newsvendor's, as it was in the time of Elizabeth, or a Cavalry barrack, as it was in the time of Cromwell. Such ideas were absurd. This was a Conservative measure in the best possible sense, in that it preserved all that was worth preserving, and extended it for the people of all London. The history in continuity of the Metropolis would be preserved unbroken. During the 1,900 years which had elapsed since Cæsar's 10th Legion first landed on English shores, the history of London had been the epitome of the history of England. The people were anxious that the old Guildhall, around which clustered memories they could ill afford to lose, should be theirs. The Guildhall where Whittington and Walworth ruled; where Lady Jane Grey was tried; where King Charles the First appealed to the Common Council to give up Hampden; where the Lords and Parliament declared for the Prince of Orange; where the old Corporation struck many a yeoman blow for English liberty. He thought it was the crowning glory of this great measure that in addition to endowing London with this grand heritage of the past, it would also confer upon the 4,000,000 of people who now lived within sight of the burnished cross of St. Paul's a living representative Municipal Government worthy of the capital of the world.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 —(Mr. W. M. Torrens.)

Motion agreed to.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow, at
 Two of the clock.

ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.

(Sir. Charles W. Dilke, Secretary Sir William
 Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain.)

[BILL 261.] CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended considered.

depended on the magistrates; but it must be remembered that the vast majority of magistrates at Quarter Sessions did not belong to the Party in favour of the extension of the franchise. It was said that an extension of the hours would be likely to lead to riots and disorder; but if there was any such danger as that, he would venture to say there was far greater risk in large and crowded constituencies like the Metropolitan boroughs, where the hours had already been extended, than in quiet rural districts. He did not think that was an argument deserving of much attention. He felt that there was no other course than to divide.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, this was a practical question for both Tory and Liberal county Members; and his right hon. Friend had said he was anxious and willing to consider this subject with regard to legislation, and to entertain any arguments practically put before him. Everyone agreed that polling places should only be kept open so long as was necessary; and until the general feeling of the counties had been ascertained, this proposition should not be hastily adopted. In the absence of such information, he must give his vote against the Motion.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS observed that this was a question which did not so much affect county Members. The House had nothing to do with the convenience of county Members in this matter. What they had to consider was the best means of giving voters a chance of recording their votes. The question really did not need much argument. It was simply a question whether voters should be fully enfranchised or not; and there was no doubt that if the hours of polling were not extended until 8 o'clock a large number of present voters would be disfranchised.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON said, he thought it of great importance that the hours should be extended, and he should support the Amendment.

MR. BROADHURST said, it would be useless to appeal to county authorities for information in favour of an extension of hours, for they were certain to be opposed to it. There was no existing authority in counties except Toryism.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he should apply to Associations.

MR. BROADHURST replied that the only authorities to be applied to were the Quarter Sessions Magistrates, and the case would be as hopeless as any that could be imagined.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he regarded this a perfectly right and proper Amendment, and he should vote for it; but, at the same time, there was a great difference between its being supported by the Government and being opposed by the Government; and he wished to suggest that some compromise should be aimed at.

MR. CAINE said, he did not intend to divide the House. There was no need to discuss the Amendment any longer, as the strongest speech in favour of it had been made by the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill.

MR. HEALY said, the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) had asked if there was no possibility of a compromise on the Bill. He would suggest to the Government a compromise which was not unfamiliar to them—namely, that they should arrange for their supporters to go into one Lobby whilst they went into the other.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 54; Noes 107: Majority 53.—(Div. List, No. 150.)

MR. WARTON said, he wished to propose an Amendment in page 1, line 11, to omit all the words after the word "which" to the end of the sub-section, in order to insert the words—

"Has at the last registration on the register the names of more than three thousand electors."

He did not wish to preclude the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) from bringing on his Amendment; therefore he would suggest that Mr. Speaker should put the Question so as to leave the hon. Member his opportunity. He (Mr. Warton) apologized to the House for not having put his Amendment on the Paper. He had not had time to do it. As to the words in the Bill, he ventured to think it was the wrong test to take the time of the passing of the Act, because they all knew that amongst a body of 3,000 electors the chances of life were such that some few were sure to die between the registration and the time the Act came into operation. It was quite within the

bounds of possibility that an alteration might be brought about which would prevent the measure coming into operation in certain places unless some such Amendment as that he proposed were accepted. In considering this matter they ought not to contemplate the Reform Bill—they should take things as they were, and discard altogether the possibility of any future Reform Bill. It was quite time to deal with any such Bill when it was passed. The Government wished to adopt a hurried mode of legislation to save them the trouble of preparing a Schedule. They could not take the trouble to look through the number of electors in the boroughs at the last election and make out a list.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 11, to leave out all the words after the word “which” to the end of the subsection, in order to insert the words “has at the last registration on the register the names of more than three thousand electors.”—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘has’ stand part of the Bill.”

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he proposed to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). It was rather long, but it seemed to make the matter clear. As to the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport as to the registration, there was no official statement as to the number of names on the Register. Until the list was printed it was no one’s business to count them; and no one, save, perhaps, the Revising Barrister and the Returning Officer, had any knowledge on the subject. There was always a good deal of doubt before the printing as to the number of electors on the Register, and the most careful estimates were generally found to be wrong in large registrations—perhaps by some 10 or 20 names. The Register was not printed until the 1st of January. He thought, therefore, they ought to take the Register in force rather than wait until the 1st of January for the “last registration.”

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he was sorry to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that the Government proposed to accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). They might have this anomaly—that a constituency which had only a little less

than 3,000 electors might acquire that number in a year or two, and then have a right to the extended hours for polling; but, supposing the constituency decreased, and from over 3,000 fell to below that number, they would have this absurd state of things existing—that whereas the hours of polling extended to 8 o’clock one year, the next year they would not go beyond 4 o’clock. Such a state of things would be intolerable, therefore he thought the words “at the passing of the Act” should remain in the Bill.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, there must necessarily be a difficulty in regard to want of certainty as to what the number of electors was. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Monaghan would make the matter clear, because, under it, it would be the ascertained number of electors that would be fixed.

MR. HARRINGTON said, that at a registration sometimes a large number of names were held over for appeal to the Revision Court, and the appeals were not heard until some time—perhaps months—after.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) had given a most conclusive reason against the 3,000 limit. As the Bill stood, it would exclude 141 boroughs in England and Ireland, which he considered a most serious matter, and one upon which it would be incumbent on him to take the sense of the House again a little later on. Let the House reflect upon these fluctuating numbers, and what the consequence of the course the Government proposed to take would be. A voter might, practically, have a vote given to him when the constituency to which he belonged numbered 3,000, but would have it withheld on the following year if the number fell to 2,999.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 12, to leave out the words “at the passing of this Act,” and insert the words “for the time being, as appears from the number of names entered in the register of electors for the time being in operation in such borough.”—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he had already stated the argument in favour

of the Amendment he was about to move—namely, that if it was right that the working man should have the opportunity of recording his vote at all, he ought not to be deprived of the opportunity of doing so at a reasonable hour, because he lived in a small instead of a large constituency. Another argument in favour of the Amendment was that they ought, as the Attorney General said, to legislate in this matter on practical grounds. At the next General Election there would be 141 constituencies of less than 3,000 electors which would be excluded from the operation of the Bill, on what ground, rational, political, or logical, he was unable to conceive. He therefore asked the House to agree to the substitution of 1,000 for 3,000 as the limit of the electorate of boroughs below which the Bill was not to apply.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 13, to leave out the words “three thousand,” in order to insert the words “one thousand,”—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, “That the words ‘three thousand’ stand part of the Bill.”

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not assent to the proposal of his hon. Friend. That proposal was to reverse the decision at which the House had arrived on a previous occasion, and could not, therefore, be entertained. With regard to the wishes of the constituencies, he might say that since his hon. Friend and others raised the question of 2,000 as against 3,000 a few nights ago, he had gone through the list of boroughs of between 2,000 and 3,000 electors, and had made as many inquiries as he possibly could in the time, with the result that he did not find that in more than four or five out of the whole number of them there seemed to be any strong desire for a change, and certainly there were many opinions against it. This was, therefore, not very conclusive of the matter. But he would point out that, in drawing the line even where they had drawn it, they had included some boroughs where there was no feeling in favour of the change. He thought, on the whole, that the Government had arrived at a fair decision.

MR. BROADHURST said, as was evident from the tone of hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House, this was

really no Party question. It was simply a matter of convenience, and of giving to everyone entitled to vote, whether he resided in a large or small borough, an opportunity of discharging his duties of citizenship without robbing his family of part of a day's wages. That being so, he sincerely hoped hon. Gentlemen would support the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (*Mr. H. H. Fowler*) in the proposal he had made.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) pointed out that the argument used with regard to boroughs of 3,000 electors was equally applicable to boroughs of 2,000 electors or less; because if the electorate of a borough of 3,000 might be reduced to 2,999, that of a borough of 2,000 might be reduced to 1,999, and so on. He had found great inconvenience result from extended hours of polling in his own constituency.

MR. H. SAMUELSON said, it did not matter in the least whether the borough in which a man who was entitled to vote lived contained 3,000 or 1,000 electors, or whether there were only 100. The question was, as to whether a man who worked three or four miles from the voting place could record his vote and get back to work without sacrificing his day's pay, or a portion of it. It was perfectly logical to place the question on that basis; and he should, therefore, vote for the Amendment.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he was glad that the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (*Mr. Broadhurst*) had discovered that this was not a Party question, because, if he remembered rightly, the hon. Gentleman had taken an opposite view of it a short time ago. But, to come back to the Amendment before them, he ventured to hope that the House would not for one moment think of disturbing the settlement arrived at the other night on this question. That settlement was one not entirely agreeable to all on that side of the House. He, himself, had not assented to it; and the Government did not support it entirely with their vote; but, the settlement having been made, Gentlemen on that side would make no attempt to disturb it; and he hoped the Government would stand by it.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he had been unable to discover what reason the Government had for insisting upon 3,000, as against a smaller number. He agreed

with the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Broadhurst) that this was no Party question; and he hoped the Government would see their way to substitute the number proposed by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton for that fixed by the Bill. He had listened attentively to the arguments on this subject; but had not been able to ascertain the reasons for insisting upon the latter number, and, therefore, in the hope of discovering what the reasons of the Government were, he should vote for the Amendment.

MR. PULESTON said, he could conceive no reason for any limit being placed in a Bill of this kind. He supposed, however, that the Government had some reason for insisting upon the limit of 3,000.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 94; Noes 43: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 151.)

Bill to be read the third time *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 231.]

(Colonel Colthurst, Mr. Finlateral, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Shaw.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered*.

MR. BIGGAR proposed the omission from Schedule 6 of the Athy and Kildare line. He said it would be within the knowledge of some hon. Members present that the other tramways mentioned in the Schedule were in the county of Cork, and that it was by the Members for the county of Cork that the Bill was brought in. To the part of the Bill which related to County Cork he raised no objection, for the simple reason that it was certified by the Members for County Cork that it was desirable that that part of the Schedule should remain unchanged. The case, however, was very different as to the Athy and Kildare line. The proposed line would touch three counties—namely Kildare, Kilkenny, and Queen's County. He was informed that the parts of the country which would be benefited by the proposed tramway would be the two ends of the line, which would be in Kilkenny and Kildare. His hon. Friend the Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon)

was anxious that he (Mr. Biggar) should raise no objection to the part of the scheme which affected Kildare, and personally he had no objection to the scheme. At the same time, he was not disposed to be guided by his own opinion, and therefore he telegraphed to the senior Member for Queen's County (Mr. Lalor), because that county was concerned in three-fifths of the project. His hon. Friend (Mr. Lalor) was born in the county, he knew its requirements thoroughly, and therefore his opinion upon the scheme was of great value. The hon. Member objected entirely to the guarantee proposed, and replied to his (Mr. Biggar's) telegram—"You are quite right about the tramway. Go against it." He therefore begged to move the omission from the Schedule of "Tramway No. 6."

Amendment proposed, in Schedule 6, to leave out the words "a Tramway and Light Railway from Athy (County Kildare) to Crettyard Bridge (Queen's County)."—(Mr. Biggar.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

MR. MELDON said, he would like to understand the question which the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) wished to raise on the present occasion. Under the Tramways Act of last Session a certain number of lines passed the Grand Juries, and obtained the Grand Juries' guarantee. When the presentments came before the Privy Council to be confirmed, it was held by the Privy Council that the amount of the capital of the Companies should have been specified, and that in the absence of such specification they had no power to confirm the presentment. A General Bill was then introduced into the House of Commons in order to correct the technical error which had been made, to give power, in fact, to Grand Juries at the next Assizes, if they thought fit to exercise it, to insert in the presentment the words which were accidentally omitted. The Bill would afford relief to all the Companies, who had expended their money and obtained the sanction of the Grand Juries; and he did not know that anyone in the country objected to it but the hon. Member for Cavan, who for some reason or other blocked the Bill, and made it a *sine quâ non* of taking off the block that the Companies to be relieved should

have their names inserted in the Schedule. That was accordingly done, and when the Bill came on for Committee the hon. Member for Cavan assented to all the names.

MR. BIGGAR: No, no. Mr. Speaker, I did nothing of the sort.

MR. MELDON said, that at all events the Schedule appeared on the Notice Paper for several days, the Bill came on for Committee, and in his (Mr. Meldon's) presence the Schedule, which included the name of the Company in question, was passed without comment from the hon. Member for Cavan. Unfortunately for the Company, the hon. Member for Cavan discovered that he (Mr. Meldon) was in some way or other interested in it; and he therefore made up his mind to do everything he possibly could to injure the interests of the shareholders, because of his (Mr. Meldon's) personal action.

MR. HEALY, rising to Order, asked whether the hon. Member was entitled to charge another hon. Member with a determination to injure the interests of the shareholders of a Company because of his (Mr. Meldon's) personal action?

MR. SPEAKER: It would be imputing motives which I am sure the hon. Gentleman would not wish to impute.

MR. MELDON said, he would withdraw the words he had used; but the fact remained that the circumstances of the case of the Company the hon. Member wished to exclude from the Bill were identical with those in the case of the Companies which he was prepared to include in the Bill. Was it to be supposed that relief should be given to four or five Companies, and that a Company exactly similarly circumstanced should be excluded from relief? Certainly no reason had been adduced why the House should make an exception of one Company. The lines traversed some portion of Queen's County and Kildare, they were passed by the Grand Jury unanimously, and he believed they had the support of a great majority of the ratepayers of the two counties. It was perfectly open to any ratepayer to object before the Grand Jury to the amendment in the presentment being made. The hon. Member for Cavan referred to the action of the senior Member for the Queen's County (Mr. Lalor), who was not very constant in his attendance at the House—he did not see the hon. Gentleman present that night. The

hon. Member for Cavan read a telegram he had received from the hon. Member for Queen's County. When he (Mr. Meldon) heard that the hon. Member for Cavan intended to press his opposition to the Athy and Kildare line, he (Mr. Meldon) had the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Lalor), who was now in Ireland, communicated with. The gentleman who waited upon the hon. Gentleman telegraphed—

"Saw Lalor. Won't consent. Showed me a telegram from Biggar to oppose, and he replied he would. Said O'Connor would be neutral, but would be guided by him."

This telegram was sufficient to show the nature of the opposition raised to the line in question. He (Mr. Meldon) did not think the House would consent to inflict a penalty of several hundred pounds upon the shareholders of a Company simply because the hon. Member for Cavan wished it.

MR. LEAHY regretted that the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had seen fit to oppose the inclusion of the Athy and Kildare line in the Bill. When the line was before the Grand Jury the ratepayers of Queen's County and Kildare petitioned in favour of it; in point of fact, there was not one opponent of the scheme to be found amongst the people of the district it affected. It would be a misfortune to the district if the tramway did not proceed, because the line would unquestionably be a means of developing the coal trade of Queen's County. He trusted his hon. Friend would withdraw his opposition.

MR. HEALY pointed out to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon), who made reference to the fact that the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Lalor) was not a regular attendant of the House, that he (Mr. Meldon) himself was not a diligent attendant. Had he been so he would have known that the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) took off his block to all the previous stages of the Bill simply because there was an agreement between the hon. and gallant Member for Cork County (Colonel Colthurst) and himself (Mr. Biggar) that the Bill was to be confined to Cork County. Of course, a Bill of this kind had no chance of passing unless it was assented to by hon. Members generally. The hon. Member for Cavan was, totally opposed, as, indeed, he (Mr. Healy) was, to the Tramways Act, and as it had turned out

he was perfectly right. It had been found that a more absurd Act was never passed. The Privy Council could not understand it, and it never could be worked. The hon. and gallant Member for Cork County (Colonel Colthurst) obtained the assent of the two hon. Members for the City of Cork (Messrs. Parnell and Deasy) to the Bill; in fact, their names appeared on the back of it. He (Mr. Healy) was asked by the Skibbereen Board of Guardians to oppose the Bill; but he did not oppose it, as he was inclined to do, because he felt that the promoters of the Bill were ratepayers in the district, and knew the requirements of the district. It was very easy to fling motives across the House. He might ask the hon. Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon) if he was a Director of 14 Tramway Companies; he might ask him what fees he got for the promotion of tramways? It must be remembered that if the hon. Member for Cavan had not withdrawn his block, the Bill would never have reached its present stage. When the block was removed, the hon. Member for Kildare saw his chance to spring on his Amendment, and he rushed over from Dublin, where he spent most of his time. He was sure that if his hon. Friend (Mr. Biggar) had ever supposed the Bill would have a general application, he would never have consented to withdraw his block. The hon. Member for Cavan and the hon. and gallant Member for Cork County met one another in the fairest possible way, the latter promising that he would never consent to the insertion of an Amendment which was contrary to the agreement the two had arrived at. He (Mr. Healy) held that the faith of the agreement had been broken by the inclusion of the Athy and Kildare line; and therefore he begged to move that the debate be now adjourned.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."
—(Mr. Healy.)

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the indulgence of the House while he made a few remarks in the way of personal explanation. When the Bill was intro-

duced by his hon. Friend and Colleague (Mr. Shaw) and himself, the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) objected to it as a General Bill. His hon. Friend and Colleague showed him the Schedule in which there were only mentioned five tramways in County Cork. At that time the promoters of the Bill were not aware of the existence of the Athy and Kildare line; but he was bound to say that his understanding—it might be an erroneous one—of the arrangement between his hon. Friend and Colleague and the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) was that they were at liberty to add such tramways as were similarly circumstanced to those already inserted, provided that the names of them were mentioned in the Schedule and submitted to the hon. Member for Cavan. When, therefore, his hon. Friend the Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon) wrote to him (Colonel Colthurst) acquainting him with the circumstances of the Athy and Kildare line, he considered himself justified in putting it in the Schedule. It remained in the Schedule for four or five days without any Notice of opposition being given; but on the day the Bill was down for Committee, he found it was blocked. The hon. Member for Cavan told him he would not remove the block, unless the Athy and Kildare tramway were omitted. He (Colonel Colthurst) was obliged to say that if, on Report, the objection remained the same, he would not object, nor did he now object, to hold himself bound by the agreement, however unreasonable he might consider it. He did not object to the omission of the tramway in question.

MR. BIGGAR said, he did not wish to kill the Bill; but he should support the Motion for Adjournment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 9; Noes 37: Majority 28.—(Div. List, No. 152.)

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after
Two o'clock.

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TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES, VOLUME CCLXXXIX.

SIXTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

In Bills, Read 1^o, 2^o, 3^o, or 1^a, 2^a, 3^a, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negated.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—*r. p.*, Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—*1st. Div.*, *2nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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 demic, Res. 1798, 1807, 1815
 Scotland—Artizans' Dwellings Act—Town
 Council of Leith, 391
 Artizans' Dwellings in Leith, 1419
 Licensing Acts—Illegal Action of the
 Dumfries Licensing Court, 397, 398,
 1419

CAMERON, Mr. D., *Inverness-shire*

Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands of
 Scotland), Report of the Royal Commission,
 Res. 1614
 Sheriff Court Houses (Scotland) Amendment,
 Comm. *cl. 8*, 934

CAMPBELL, Lord Colin, *Argyll*

Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands of
 Scotland), Report of the Royal Commission,
 1622
 Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 53

CAMPBELL, Sir G., *Kirkcaldy, &c.*

Civil Service—Civil Servants in Private Un-
 dertakings, 1085
 Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands of
 Scotland), Report of the Royal Commission,
 Res. 1622, 1632, 1633
 Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. 1466; *cl. 1*,
 1475, 1496
 Irish Agricultural Labourers—Annual Migra-
 tion into England and Scotland, 71, 72

CAMPBELL, Sir G.—cont.

Parliament—Business of the House, 811
 Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ire-
 land), 2R. 1036

**CAMPBELL, Mr. J. A., *Glasgow and Aber-
 deen Universities***

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 3,
 13
 General Register of Sasines, Edinburgh—The
 Engrossing Clerks, 1679
 Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1275
 Parliament—Order of Public Business, 1884

**CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Mr. H. (Secre-
 tary to the Admiralty), *Stirling, &c.***

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Rumoured fall
 of Berber, 2
 Steamers on the Nile, 413
 Ireland—Fisheries—Salmon Fisheries—Em-
 ployment of a Gun Boat, 1686
 Navy—Questions
 Armament of the Navy—63-ton Breech-
 loading Guns, 404
 Board of Admiralty—Retirement of Mr.
 A. Houghton, 1417
 Channel Squadron, 1098
 Chatham Dockyard, 1397
 H.M.S. "Vivid"—Fatal Casualty at Ply-
 mouth, 995
 Stoppage of Pay, 1399

CAMPERDOWN, Earl of

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the
 Bill do pass," *cl. 8*, 1216
 Secretary for Scotland, Comm. *cl. 5*, 1344;
 Schedule, 1364, 1366; Report, Amendt.
 1641

Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment Bill

(*Mr. Burt, Colonel Makins, Mr. Samuel Morley,
 Mr. John Corbett, Mr. Pell, Mr. Broadhurst*)
 c. Select Committee nominated June 16; List of
 the Committee, 549

CANTERBURY, Archbishop of

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the
 Bill do pass," *cl. 10*, 1219
 Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Corn-
 wall), 2R. 576

CARINGTON, Hon. R. C., *Bucks*

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. *cl. 1*,
 Amendt. 1491

**CARLINGFORD, Lord (Lord President of
 the Council)**

Cork Butter Market, 2R. 777
 Education Department—Over-Pressure in
 Board Schools, 236, 237, 1536, 1537, 1538
 Education Department—Parishes of Rothwell
 and Yetminster, Res. 731, 733
 Egypt—Conference—Negotiations with France,
 345
 Soudan—Rumoured fall of Berber, 346
 Ireland—Magistracy—Appointment of Magis-
 trates, Westmeath, 234

CARLINGFORD, Lord—cont.

Public Meetings—Nationalist and Loyalist Meetings in the North of Ireland, 1070, 1072

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Working and Effects, Motion for Papers, 367, 372, 375, 378, 386, 389

CARLISLE, Bishop of

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the Bill do pass," *cl.* 10, 1218

Newcastle Chapter, 2R. 1543

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), 2R. 575

CARNARVON, Earl of

Africa (South-West Coast)—Angra Pequena, 237; Motion for Papers, 788

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Rumoured fall of Berber, 232, 346

Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France)—Vote of Censure, 1333, 1770

Great Seal, Report, 778

Public Health—Outbreak of Cholera at Toulon, France, 1516, 1517

CARRINGTON, Lord

Public Health—Outbreak of Cholera at Toulon, France, 1204, 1516, 1518

CAUSTON, Mr. R. K., Colchester

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. 1467

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 595; *Consid. add. cl.* 1158, 1177

CECIL, Lord E. H. B. G., Essex, W.

Egypt (Army of Occupation), 821

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 606

Cemeteries Bill (*Mr. Richard, Mr. Henry*

H. Fowler, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Caine, Mr. Woodall) [Bill 21]

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o" June 25, 1305

Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Beresford Hope*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.," after debate, Question put; A. 176, N. 154; M. 22 (D. L. 134)

Main Question again proposed; Debate adjourned

Central Asia — Russian Advance — The Russo-Afghan Frontier—The Russian General Staff Map

Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 12, 83; Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross June 19, 800

CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J. (President of the Board of Trade), Birmingham

Bankruptcy Act, 1883 — Statement of Mr. Commissioner Kerr, 407

CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J.—cont.

Board of Trade—Questions

Lighthouses—Loss of the "Aurania," 414

Marine Department—Merchant Shipping Bill, 1084

Order in Council, 1786, 398, 399

Great Western Railway (No. 1), 3R. 987

Ireland—Fishery Piers and Harbours—Portpatrick Harbour Commission—Transcript of Evidence, 1545

Law and Police—Steamboat Robberies, 1869

Lighthouses—Commissioners of Irish Lights—

Bull Rock Lighthouse, 1083

Mercantile Marine—Hospitals at Bilboa, 1086

Merchant Shipping Acts—Ship "Egmont," 819

Merchant Shipping Bill, 1889, 1890

Protection of Industrial Property—The International Patent Convention, 1089

Railway Regulation Acts Amendment, 1393

CHAMBERS, Sir T., Marylebone

Superannuation Act—Clerks in the Admiralty and War Office, 819

CHANCELLOR, The Lord (Earl of SELBORNE)

Criminal Law Amendment, 3R. 1208; Motion "That the Bill do pass," *cl.* 8, 1217; *add. cl.* 1222; *cl.* 13, Amendt. 1223

Great Seal, Comm. 580

Ilyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. 561, 565

Ireland—Public Meetings—Nationalist and Loyalist Meetings in the North of Ireland, 1073, 1077

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Working and Effects, Motion for Papers, 383

Secretary for Scotland, Comm. *cl.* 1, 1337; *cl.* 5, 1345, 1348

Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment, 2R. 1857

CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, The (Right Hon. H. C. E. CHILDERS), Pontefract

Civil Service—Civil Servants in Private Undertakings, 1085

Examinations, 1421

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 891, 894, 896, 905, 906, 908; *add. cl.* 915, 916, 917, 924, 925, 929, 932

Education Department—Report of the Public Accounts Committee, 1886, 1887

Egypt—Conference, 1688, 1872, 1873

Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France), Vote of Censure, 1695

Excise—Destruction of Seized Tobacco, 420

Gold, Silver, and Bronze Coinage—Loss on Coining, 1546

Literature, Science, and Art—Fountaine Sale—Reliquary of St. Lachteen, 1096

Mint—Annual Report of the Deputy Master, 796

National Debt (Conversion of Stock)—Savings Bank Fund, 822

National Debt (Conversion of Stock), Comm. 214, 215, 217, 218, 219; *cl.* 1, 220, 222, 224, 225, 226, 227; *cl.* 3, 228, 229; *cl.* 5, 230; *cl.* 6, 330, 337, 341, 342, 344

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CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, The—*cont.*

- National Debt, 1883—Terminable Annuities (Conversion), 73
 Parliament—Business of the House, 247, 248, 424
 Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 880
 Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," 1547
 Superannuation Act—Clerks in the Admiralty and War Office, 819
 Trust Investments—Colonial Government Stocks, 1864

CHAPLIN, Mr. H., *Lincolnshire, Mid*

- Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 814; — Lincolnshire, 1235
 Egypt—Questions
 Conference, The, 1245, 1429, 1430, 1554, 1556
 Events in the Soudan, 1240
 State of the Prisons, 1794, 1795, 1796
 Parliament—Business of the House (Procedure on Wednesdays), Res. 672
 Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1568, 1569

CHILDERS, Right Hon. H. C. E. (*see* Chancellor of the Exchequer)CHURCHILL, Lord R. H. S., *Woodstock*

- Egypt—Conference, The—Questions
 1243, 1244, 1246, 1248, 1426, 1427
 General Gordon, 998
 Ministerial Statement, 1117, 1119, 1122, 1125, 1134
 Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Reported fall of Berber, 69, 92
 Great Western Railway (No. 1), 3R. 984
 Parliament—Business of the House, 248
 Parliament—Business of the House (Procedure on Wednesdays), Res. 669
 "Regina v. Bradlaugh"—The Lord Chief Justice, 89
 Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 643
 Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1570

Church Patronage Bill

(*Mr. Leatham, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Henry H.*

Fowler, Mr. Shield) [Bill 17]

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°"
June 18, 723

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House, affirming the principle that Church Patronage is a trust to be exercised for the benefit of the parishioners, is of opinion that no reform in the Law affecting Church Patronage will be efficient or satisfactory which does not enable the parishioners to veto the presentment to a benefice of any clergyman whom they consider unsuitable" (*Mr. Albert Grey*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 141, N. 83; M. 53 (D. L. 124)
 Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee

Church Patronage (No. 2) Bill

(*Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. John G. Talbot, Mr. Stanley Leighton*)

c. Ordered; read 1° June 16* [Bill 251]
 Read 2°*, and committed to the Select Committee on Church Patronage Bill

Civil List, The—Revenues of the Episcopal Sees of Scotland

Question, Mr. Webster; Answer, Mr. Courtney June 30, 1865

Civil Service, The

Civil Servants of the Crown in connection with Financial Undertakings, Questions, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley June 23, 1885

Civil Service Examinations, Question, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer June 26, 1421

Civil Service Pensions—Retirement Age, Question, Baron Henry de Worms; Answer, Mr. Courtney June 16, 420

CLARKE, Mr. E. G., *Plymouth*

- Parliament—Public Business, 829
 Parliament—Business of the House (Procedure on Wednesdays), Res. 668
 Representation of the People, Consid. *add. cl.* 1153, 1162, 1168, 1182; Motion for Adjournment, 1184

COLCHESTER, Lord

Elementary Education Act—Over-Pressure in Board Schools, 1541

COLEBROOKE, Sir T. E., *Lanarkshire, N.*

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 49

COLERIDGE, Lord

Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment, 2R. 1858

COLLINGS, Mr. J., *Ipswich*

Education Department—Speldhurst National School, 793

Elections (Hours of Poll), Consid. *cl.* 1, 1991

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 638

Smith's Trust Estate, 3R. 1230

Supply—Education, Science, and Art, 436, 446

COLLINS, Mr. E., *Kinsale*

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1014

COLLINS, Mr. T., *Knaresborough*

Cemeteries, 2R. 1330

Church Patronage, 2R. 767

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 277, 290, 293, 309, 611, 620, 649, 651, 840

Colonial Attornies Relief Act Amend- ment Bill [H.L.]

(Mr. Buszard)

- c. Committee*—R.F. June 12 [Bill 228]
 Committee*; Report June 26
 Read 3^d* June 27
 l. Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 24]

Colonial Prisoners Removal Bill [H.L.]

(Mr. Evelyn Ashley)

- c. Read 1^o* June 20 [Bill 257]
 Read 2^o, after short debate June 26, 1511

COLTHURST, Col. D. La Zouche, Cork Co. Ireland—National School Teachers' Act, 1875 —Amendment, 997

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act
 (1883) Amendment, Comm. 1768, 1769;
 Consid. 2001

COMMINS, Dr. A., Roscommon

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.*
 859, 866

Commons Regulation Provisional Order Bill (The Earl of Dalhousie)

- l. Read 3^a* June 16 (No. 100)
 Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 50]

Compensation for Improvements (Ire- land) Bill [Bill 71]

(Colonel Nolan, Mr. Martin, Mr. Biggar, Mr.
 O'Shea, Mr. Small, Mr. Sullivan)

- c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o"
 July 2, 1834
 Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned"
 (Mr. Trevelyan); after short debate, Question
 put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Congo River, and Treaty—See title Por- tugal

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill

(Sir Arthur Oway, Mr. Chancellor of the
 Exchequer, Mr. Courtney)

- c. Read 2^o* June 12
 Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr.
 Speaker do now leave the Chair" June 13,
 310; Debate adjourned
 Debate resumed June 13, 344; Question put,
 and agreed to; Committee; Report
 Read 3^o* June 16
 l. Read 1^a* (Earl Granville) June 17
 Read 2^a*; Committee negatived June 19
 Read 3^a* June 20
 Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 15]

Contagious Diseases Acts—Dockyard Police Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Sir William Harcourt June 26, 1397

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts

Foot-and-Mouth Disease

Questions, Mr. W. Lowther, Mr. Chaplin, Mr.
 James Howard, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answers,
 Mr. Dodson June 19, 814

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—cont.

Lincolnshire, Questions, Mr. Pell, Mr. Chap-
 lin; Answers, Mr. Dodson June 24, 1234
 Canadian Cattle, Questions, Mr. Pell, Colonel
 King-Harman; Answers, Mr. Dodson June 26,
 1416

Yorkshire, Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; An-
 swer, Mr. Dodson July 3, 1875

Sale of Carcasses, by Boards of Guardians, of
 Animals slaughtered under the Acts, Ques-
 tions, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Trovelyan
 June 16, 392

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878 (Districts) Bill (Mr. Hastings,

Sir Edmund Lechmere, Lord Moreton, Sir
 Eardley Wilmot, Mr. Duckham)

- c. Ordered; read 1^o* June 18 [Bill 253]
 Read 2^o, after short debate June 23, 1202

Copyright (Works of Fine Art and Photographs) Bill

(Mr. Hastings, Mr. Hanbury-Tracy, Sir Gabriel
 Goldney, Mr. Agnew, Mr. Gregory)

- c. Bill withdrawn* June 25 [Bill 183]

CORBET, Mr. W. J., Wicklow Co.

Morocco—Prisons, 1870

Cork Butter Market Bill

- l. Read 2^o, after short debate June 19, 771

County Courts (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. Findlater, Mr. Thomas Dickson)

- c. Committee; re-committed June 23, 1202
 [Bill 104]

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H. (Financial Secre- tary to the Treasury), Lisheard

Bank Holidays—Government Clerks, 1406

Civil Service Estimates—Non-Effective and
 Charitable Services—Mr. Corry Connellan's
 Pension, 1785, 1882

Civil Service Pensions—Retirement Age, 421
 Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5,
 889, 899; *cl.* 9, 909; *add. cl.* 922

Dean Forest and Hundred of St. Briavels Bill
 —Rights of the Free Miners, 1678

House of Lords—Allowances to Retired Officers
 —The Invested Fee Fund, 90

Inland Revenue Accounts—Banking Facilities,
 799

Ireland—Questions

Board of Works—Mento Estate, 413

House and Land Valuations—The County
 Valuator for Westmeath, 1094

Inland Navigation and Drainage—Barrow
 River, 74, 800

Intestate, &c. Estates—Estate of the late
 Mrs. Helen Blake, 1878, 1879

Land Law Act, 1881—Loans under the Act,
 995

Moneys Granted or Advanced, 404

Post Office—Purchase of the Friendly
 Brothers' Club, Dublin, 74

Literature, Science, and Art—Royal Edin-
 burgh Observatory, 73

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H.—*cont.*

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers' Act) (No. 4), *Consid.* 989
 Merchant Shipping, 2R. Amendt. 1736, 1737
 Middlesex Registry of Deeds, *Comm.* 1744
 National Debt (Conversion of Stock), *Comm.* cl. 6, 332, 333, 334
 Parliament—Business of the House (Procedure on Wednesdays), *Res.* 667, 668, 674, 677
 Public Offices—Annual Leave—The War Office, 1417
 Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), *Comm.* 1201, 1202; *Consid.* 1733, 1735
 Royal Courts of Justice, *Comm.* cl. 3, 1191, 1197; Motion for reporting Progress, 1198
 Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 933, 1514

Scotland—Questions

Chapel Royal—Warrant of 9th February, 1873, 1666, 1667
 Civil List—Revenues of the Episcopal Sees of Scotland, 1665
 Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands, Report of the Royal Commission, 1887
 General Register of Sasines, Edinburgh—The Engrossing Clerks, 1679
 Licensing Acts—Illegal Action of the Dumfries Licensing Court, 398

Trustees of Settlements, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 1203

COWEN, Mr. J., *Newcastle-on-Tyne*

Egypt—Army of Occupation, 821
 Conference, Ministerial Statement, 1129
 Parliament—Public Business, 1797
 Representation of the People, *Comm.* *add. cl.* 160
 Representation of the People, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1567

COWPER, Earl

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2), 2R. 554
 Ireland—Public Meetings—Nationalist and Loyalist Meetings in the North of Ireland, 1078

CRICHTON, Viscount, *Fermanagh*

Ireland—Magistracy—Captain M'Ternan, a Resident Magistrate, 1552, 1553
 Rev. John B. Frith, J.P., Enniskillen, 1551

Criminal Law Amendment Bill [H.L.]

(*The Earl of Dalhousie*)

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a" *June 24, 1208*; after short debate, on Question? *Cont.* 101, *Not-Cont.* 45; *M.* 56; resolved in the affirmative; Bill read 3^a
Moved, "That the Bill do pass"; Amendts. made; Question put, and agreed to; Bill passed (No. 107)
 Personal Explanation, The Earl of Milltown; Observations, Earl Cairns *June 27, 1518*
*3. Read 1^o * (Sir W. Harcourt) July 3 [Bill 271]*

Criminal Lunatics Bill

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)

c. Ordered; read 1^o * *June 19* [Bill 256]
 Read 2^o, after short debate *June 26, 1511*
 Committed to Standing Committee on Law, &c. *June 27*
 Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the Criminal Lunatics Bill on Thursday next, at Twelve of the Clock *July 3*

CROPPER, Mr. J., *Kendal*

Cemeteries, 2R. 1327
 Church Patronage, 2R. 744
 Elections (Hours of Poll), *Comm.* cl. 1, 1475
 Representation of the People, *Consid.* *add. cl.* 1154

Cross, Right Hon. Sir R. A., *Lancashire, S.W.*

Church Patronage, 2R. 742, 754
 Egypt—Conference, The, 1244
 Ministerial Statement, 1128, 1145, 1146
 High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings), 2R. 1848
 India—Bengal—Mortality in Gaols, 1412
 Law and Justice—County Palatine of Lancaster, 1790
 England and Wales—New Circuit Arrangements, 416, 417
 London Government, 2R. 1951
 Merchant Shipping, 2R. 1738
 Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), *Consid.* Motion for Adjournment, 1703, 1706
 Parliament—Palace of Westminster—Westminster Hall (West Front), 1663
 Representation of the People, *Comm.* *add. cl.* 293, 297, 590, 599, 870, 884, 885; *Consid.* *add. cl.* 1184
 Settled Land, *Comm.* cl. 1, 935

Cross, Mr. J. K. (Under Secretary of State for India), *Bolton*

Army (India)—Questions
 Indian Staff Corps—Promotion, 421
 Medical Department—Executive and Administrative Grades, 390
 Retiring Pensions, 807
 Asia (Central)—Russia and the Afghan Frontier, 800
 India—Questions
 Bengal—Mortality in Gaols, 1412, 1413
 Cholera, 1237
 Finance, &c.—Operations in the Home Market, 1093
 Public Health—Sanitary Precautions, 1414
 Railways—Candahar State Railway, 1398;
 —Contracts, 1100, 1101
 Statistical Abstract—Exports of Food Grains, 1413
 India (Madras)—Questions
 Gold Mines in Mysore—Concessions to British Officials, 1413
 Official Absenteeism, 392
 Salem Riots—Vijayaragharea Chariar, 426, 1665

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]

(*The Earl of Redesdale*)

l. Read 2^a, after debate *June 17, 552* (No. 103)
Committee *June 24, 1205*

Report * *June 26* (No. 158)

Read 3^a * *July 1*

c. Read 1^a * (*Lord Elcho*) *July 3* [Bill 270]

CUBITT, Right Hon G., Surrey, W.
Church Patronage, 2R. 764

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*)

c. Committee; Report *June 19, 886* [Bill 206]
Considered * *June 20*

Read 3^a * *June 23*

l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Thurlow*) *June 24* (No. 147)

Read 2^a *; Committee negatived *June 30*

Read 3^a * *July 1*

Royal Assent *July 3* [47 & 48 Vict. c. 25]

Customs—Searching of Passengers' Luggage

Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *June 26, 1402*

DALHOUSIE, Earl of

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the Bill do pass," *cl. 2, 1210; cl. 5, 1215; cl. 10, 1219; add. cl. 1222; cl. 12, 1223*

Secretary for Scotland, Comm. *cl. 1, 1338; cl. 2, 1339; cl. 5, 1341, 1342, 1348; Schedule, 1353, 1366, 1369; Report, 1645*

DALRYMPLE, Mr. C., Buteshire

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 43

DAVENPORT, Mr. H. T., Staffordshire, N.

Cemeteries, 2R. 1317

DAVEY, Mr. H., Christchurch

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. *cl. 1, 1484, 1491*

High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings), 2R. 1854

DAVIES, Mr. D., Cardigan, &c.

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl. 5, 898*

DAWNAY, Hon. G. C., York, N.R.

Africa (South)—Zululand—Boers, 1030

Dean Forest and Hundred of Saint Briavels Bill

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)

c. *Rights of the Free Miners*, Question, Colonel Kingscote; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June 30, 1677*

Moved, "That the Bill be read 2^o upon Monday next" *June 30, 1735*

Amendt. to leave out "next," add "21st July" (*Mr. Warton*) *v.*; Question proposed,

[cont.

Dean Forest and Hundred of Saint Briavels Bill—cont.

"That 'next,' &c.;" Amendt. and Motion withdrawn; Bill to be read 2^o upon Monday 14th July [Bill 184]

DEASY, Mr. J., Cork

Ireland—House and Land Valuations—County Valuator for Westmeath, 1094
Irish Land Commission—Mr. Edward Greer, a Sub-Commissioner, 1683

DE LA WARR, Earl

Education Department—Over-Pressure in Board Schools, 236, 1519

Education Department—Parishes of Rothwell and Yetminster, Res. 784

Morocco—Shereef of Wazan—Rumoured French Protectorate, 785

Public Health—Cholera—Outbreak at Toulon, France, 1204

DENBIGH, Earl of

Education Department—Parishes of Rothwell and Yetminster, Res. 783

DERBY, Earl of (Secretary of State for the Colonies)

Africa (South-West Coast)—Angra Pequena, Motion for Papers, 1656

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Working and Effects, Motion for Papers, 362, 385, 386

Parliament—House of Lords—Efficiency of the House, Motion for a Select Committee, 971

DE ROS, Lord

Ireland—Public Meetings—Nationalist and Loyalist Meetings in the North of Ireland, 1068

DE WORMS, Baron H., Greenwich

Civil Service Pensions—Retirement Age, 420

Corrupt Practices at Elections—Suspension of

Corrupt Boroughs, 1875

Egypt—Conference, 1425, 1426;—Ministerial Statement, 1131, 1132

Mission of Admiral Sir William Hewett—The Papers, 1102

Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France)—Vote of Censure, 1696

Morocco—Shereef of Wazan—Rumoured French Protectorate, 421

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl. 126*

Roumelia—Disabilities of Jews, 1088

Suez Canal—Neutralization, 821

DICKSON, Mr. T. A., Tyrone

Ireland—Law and Justice—Strabane Quarter Sessions—Criminal Business—Petition of Justices, 390

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), Consid. 1708

Parliament—Order of Public Business, 1885

Post Office—Irish Mails, 1676, 1677

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1591

DILKE, Right Hon. Sir C. W. (President of the Local Government Board), *Chelsea, &c.*

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. 1464; *cl.* 1, 1471, 1473, 1474, 1475, 1479, 1488, 1491, 1492, 1493; Amendt. 1494, 1497; Consid. *cl.* 1, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1995

London Government, 2R. 1946, 1952, 1953

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), Consid. 1703

Police, 2R. 1721

Poor Law (England and Wales)—Emigration of Pauper Children, 798

Farnham Workhouse, 806

Public Health—Cholera in France, 1242

Small-Pox in London, 1239

Public Health (Metropolis)—Small-Pox Epidemics, Res. 1807, 1812; Previous Question moved, 1815

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 862, 866

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Great Western Railway (No. 1), 3R. 980

Local Government Board (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers' Act) (No. 4), Consid. 989

Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1569

Smith's Trust Estate, 3R. 1226

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DIXON-HARTLAND, Mr. F. D., Evesham

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Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 814, 815, 1875

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Newcastle Chapter, 2R. 1541

Dynamite Outrages, The — The United States of America

Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice *June* 16, 410

East Indian Unclaimed Stocks Bill

(Mr. Kynaston Cross, Mr. Courtney)

c. Ordered; read 1st *July* 2 [Bill 269]

EBBRINGTON, Viscount, Twerton

Elections (Hours of Poll), Consid. *cl.* 1, 1991

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill

(Mr. James Campbell, Admiral Sir John Hay, Mr. Dalrymple)

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o" *June* 11, 3

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "no measure is satisfactory which proposes to continue, for the provision and maintenance of ecclesiastical buildings belonging to one religious denomination, any system of compulsory general assessment" (Mr. Arthur Elliot) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 103, N. 160; M. 57 (D. L. 116)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" Debate adjourned [Bill 19]

ECROYD, Mr. W. F., Preston

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 857

Educational Endowments (Ireland) Bill

[H.L.] (The Lord President)

l. Presented; read 1st *July* 1 (No. 173)

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Balham Board School, Question, Sir Trevor Lawrence; Answer, Mr. Mundella *June* 16, 405

Home Lessons in Board Schools, Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Raikes; Answers, Mr. Mundella *June* 19, 813

Over-pressure in Board Schools, Questions, Earl De La Warr, Lord Houghton; Answers, Lord Carlingford *June* 13, 236; Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Raikes; Answers, Mr. Mundella, 240; Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. Mundella *June* 19, 812; Observations, Earl De La Warr, Lord Norton; Reply, Lord Carlingford; short debate thereon *June* 27, 1519;—*Shoreditch Board of Guardians*, Question, Lord Algermon Percy; Answer, Mr. Mundella *June* 12, 85

Report of the Public Accounts Committee, Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *July* 3, 1886

Speldhurst National School, Question, Mr. Jesse Collings; Answer, Mr. Mundella *June* 19, 793

The Education Act, 1870, Sec. 9, Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, Mr. Mundella *June* 24, 1236

Education Department—Parishes of Rothwell and Yetminster

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, the recent action of the Education Department with regard to the parishes of Rothwell and Yetminster is contrary to public policy and to the intention of the Education Act of 1870" (The Lord Stanley of Alderley) *June* 19, 779; after short debate, on Question? resolved in the negative

Yetminster and Llansilin School Boards, Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Sir Massey Lopes; Answers, Mr. Mundella *July* 3, 1867

EGERTON, Hon. A. F., *Wigan*

Cemeteries, 2R. 1323

Parliament—Business of the House (Procedure on Wednesdays), Res. 672

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Affairs of the Soudan—P.P. No. 22 (1884), Question, Observations, The Earl of Gallo-way, The Duke of Marlborough; Reply, Earl Granville June 30, 1656

Events in the Soudan—Rumoured fall of Berber, Question, The Earl of Carnarvon; Answer, The Earl of Kimberley June 13, 232; Question, The Earl of Carnarvon; Answer, Lord Carlingford June 16, 346

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Terms of the Agreement with France—Vote of Censure, Notice of Motion, The Earl of Carnarvon June 26, 1333; Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, Earl Granville; short debate thereon July 1, 1770; Observations, Earl Granville, The Marquess of Salisbury July 3, 1856

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(Questions)

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Suakin and Nile Railway, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 17, 588

Proposed Railway between Suakin and Berber, Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington June 20, 999

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Military Operations, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Beresford, Mr. Chaplin; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington June 24, 1239

Rumoured fall of Berber, Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman June 11, 2; Questions, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, 68; Questions, Mr. Bourke, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 12, 91; Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 13, 244; Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. J. Lowther, Viscount Folkestone, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Gladstone June 17, 585; Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 19, 808; June 30, 1686

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Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice July 3, 1875

The Mahdi, Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington July 1, 1792

Steamers on the Nile, Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman June 16, 412

The Army of Occupation, Questions, Mr. Bourke, Lord Eustace Cecil, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington June 19, 820

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Speech of M. Ferry, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 26, 1431

Administrative Reforms—Mr. Clifford Lloyd, Questions, Mr. Coleridge Kennard, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice; Question, Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy; [no reply] July 3, 1871

Mission of Admiral Sir William Hewett—Treaty with Abyssinia, Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 20, 999;—*The Papers*, Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 23, 1102

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Re-organization—Cruelties and Abuses in Goals—Dr. Crookshank's Report, Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *July 3, 1889*; Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Gladstone, 1888

State of the Prisons, Questions, Mr. W. E. Forster, Mr. Healy, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *July 1, 1893*

Egypt (The Terms of the Agreement with France)—The Vote of Censure

Notices of Motion, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Arthur Arnold *June 25, 1894*; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *June 26, 1891*

The Soudan, Questions, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *June 26, 1892*

Moved, "That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion on Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France)" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *June 30, 1889*; after short debate, Question put; A. 148, N. 190; M. 42

D. L., A. and N., 1899

[See title *Suez Canal*]

ELCHO, Lord, *Haddingtonshire*

Post Office—Sunday Work in Post Offices, 1544

Elections (Hours of Poll) Bill

(*Sir Charles Dilke, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain*)

c. Order for Committee (*on re-comm.*) read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *June 26, 1863*

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee" (*Mr. E. Stanhope*) v.; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker, &c.," put, and agreed to; Committee; Report

[Bill 97]

Considered *July 3, 1886*

[Bill 261]

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill (*The Lord Sudeley*)

l. Royal Assent *June 23* [47 & 48 Vict. c. xlii]

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)

c. Report * *June 11* [Bill 195]

Read 3^o * *June 12*

l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Sudeley*) *June 13* (No. 122)

Read 2^a * *June 23*

Committee *; Report *June 24*

Read 3^a * *June 26*

Royal Assent *July 3* [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxvi]

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)

c. Report * *June 18* [Bill 232]

Read 3^o * *June 19*

l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Sudeley*) *June 20* (No. 136)

Read 2^a * *June 27*

Committee *; Report *June 30*

Read 3^a * *July 1*

Royal Assent *July 3* [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxxiv]

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]

c. Report * *July 2*

[Bill 227]

Read 3^o * *July 3*

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EMLY, Lord

Cork Butter Market, 2R. 771

EWART, Mr. W., *Belfast*

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1025

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Committee*; Report June 24 (No. 77)

Read 3^a* June 27

Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 21]

Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act (1877) Amendment Bill*(Mr. Sykes, Colonel Dawson)*c. Committee*; Report June 16 [Bill 208] Considered*; read 3^a June 197. Read 1^a* *(The Earl of Feversham)* June 20
Read 2^a* July 3 (No. 135)**FITZGERALD, Lord**

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l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 39]

Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill

(The Lord Sudeley)

l. Read 2nd * June 13 (No. 105)

Committee*; Report June 16

Read 3rd * June 17

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GRANTHAM, Mr. W., *Surrey, E.*Representation of the People, *Comm. add. cl.* 298, 308, 841, 853; *Consid. add. cl.* 1154, 1158, 1169, 1175

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- Egypt (Affairs of the Soudan)—P.P. No. 22 (1884), 1661, 1662
- Conference, Ministerial Statement, 1043, 1055, 1057, 1058, 1059
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- Morocco — Shereef of Wazan — Rumoured French Protectorate, 787
- Parliament—House of Lords—Efficiency of the House, Motion for a Select Committee, 960, 961, 967; Amendt. 972
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- Suez Canal, Explanation, 1333

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- Board of Trade—Lighthouses—Loss of the "Aurania," 414
- Ireland—Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Sale of Carcases, by Boards of Guardians, of Animals slaughtered under the Act, 392, 393, 394
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- Lighthouses—Commissioners of Irish Lights—Bull Rock Lighthouse, 1082, 1083
- Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1277
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- Telephone Companies—Licences to, 1233
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- Public Health—Cholera in France, 1242
- Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1502

Great Seal Bill [H.L.]

(*The Lord Chancellor*)

- l. Committee, after short debate *June* 17, 580
- Report *June* 19, 778 (No. 83)
- Read 3* *June* 20
- c. Read 1* (*Mr. Courtney*) *July* 1 [Bill 268]

Great Western Railway (No. 1) Bill

- c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3*" (*Sir Charles Forster*) *June* 20, 976
- Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day three months" (*Mr. William Fowler*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
- Main Question put, and agreed to (Queen's Consent signified); Bill read 3^o

Greek Marriages Bill [H.L.]

(*The Earl of Milltown*)

- l. Royal Assent *July* 3 [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 20]

GREGORY, Mr. G. B., *Sussex, E.*

- Cemeteries, 2R. 1330
- Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 899
- High Court of Justice (Provincial Sitzings), 2R. 1847
- Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Comm. 1742
- National Debt (Conversion of Stock), Comm. *cl.* 6, Amendt. 327, 341
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HAMILTON, Right Hon. Lord G. F., *Middlesex*

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- Egypt—Conference, 1242, 1243, 1247
- Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 262
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HAMILTON, Mr. I. T., *Dublin Co.*

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HARCOURT, Right Hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
(Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Derby*

- Church Patronage, 2R. 746
- Contagious Diseases Acts—Dockyard Police, 1397
- Convict Prisons (Great Britain)—Roman Catholic Chaplains—Power of making Reports, 1402
- Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands of Scotland), Report of the Royal Commission, Res. 1626, 1628
- Customs — Searching Passengers' Luggage, 1402
- Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France)—Vote of Censure, 1698
- Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Director of Public Prosecutions, 410
- Law and Police—Reported Outrage at Windsor Castle, 244
- London Government, 2R. 1924, 1929, 1930, 1933, 1934, 1946, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1959
- Lunacy Commissioners—The "Bastilles of England," 684
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- Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), *Consid.* 1704, 1705
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- Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement, 1057
- Parliament—House of Lords—Efficiency of the House, Motion for a Select Committee, 972

HARRINGTON, Mr. T., *Westmeath*

- Army (Commissariat)—Garrisons in Ireland, 996
- Colonial Prisoners Removal, 2R. 1512
- Elections (Hours of Poll), *Comm. cl. 1*, 1493; *Consid. cl. 1*, 1994
- Ireland—Questions
 - Arrears of Rent Act, 1882—Colonel Digby, J.P., *Westmeath*, 808
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 - House and Land Valuations—County Valuator of *Westmeath*, 1094
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- Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), *Comm. Amendt.* 1200, 1201
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1028

HARTINGTON, Right Hon. Marquess of (Secretary of State for War), *Lancashire, N.E.*

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HAYTER, Colonel Sir A. D. (Financial Secretary to the War Office), *Bath*

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 - Military Examinations, 1872
- Quartermasters—Sergeant Major Walsh, 1683
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- Army (Auxiliary Forces)—East Kent Mounted Rifles—Disorderly Proceedings at Margate, 243
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- Elections (Hours of Poll), *Comm.* 1468; *cl. 1*, 1474, 1476; *Consid. cl. 1*, 1992
- Ireland—Questions
 - Fisheries—Salmon Fisheries—Employment of a Gunboat, 1685, 1688
 - Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)—Mr. Edward Greer, 1547, 1684
 - Municipal Governing Bodies—Public and Private Acts, 1861
 - Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), 812
- Ireland—Law and Justice—Employment of Criminals as Witnesses for the Crown in Criminal Trials, 1082
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 Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment, Consid. 1999; Motion for Adjournment, 2000
 West Indies—English Church at Grenada, 1784

HENEAGE, Mr. E., *Great Grimsby*

- Egypt—Conference, 1247
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HENRY, Mr. M., *Galway*

- Literature, Science, and Art—The Fountaine Sale—The Reliquary of St. Lachteen, 1096

HERBERT, Hon. S., *Wilton*

- Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. *cl.* 1, 1471, 1473, 1484; Motion for reporting Progress, 1499

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HICKS, Mr. E., *Cambridgeshire*

- Hackney Carriage Laws (Metropolis) Bill, 1090
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 Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1038

High Court of Justice (Provincial Sitings) Bill (*Mr. Whitley, Mr. Jacob*

Bright, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Lewis Fry, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Agnew)

c. Moved “That the Bill be now read 2^o” July 2, 1836

Amendt. to leave out “now,” add “upon this day three months” (*Mr. Morgan Lloyd*); Question proposed, “That ‘now,’ &c.;” after short debate, Question put; A. 87, N. 64; M. 23 (D. L. 14)

Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2^o [Bill 121]

HILL, Mr. A. S., *Staffordshire, W.*

- Law and Justice (England and Wales)—New Circuit Arrangements, 416

HOLLAND, Sir H. T., *Midhurst*

- Africa (South)—Zululand—A British Commissioner, 75
 Parliament—Business of the House, 1422

HOLLOND, Mr. J. R., *Brighton*

- Public Health—Peel Grove Burial Ground, 1418

HOME, Lieutenant-Colonel D. Milne,
Berwick-on-Tweed
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HOPE, Right Hon. A. J. B. Beresford,
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demic, Res. 1819
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HOWARD, Mr. J., Bedfordshire
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and-Mouth Disease, 815
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226; cl. 3, 230; cl. 5, ib.
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 &c. 467, 474

HUNTLY, Marquess of
Secretary for Scotland, Comm. cl. 1, 1337;
cl. 5, 1343; Schedule, Amendt. 1354, 1358,
1366

Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) Bill [H.L.]
(The Lord Sudeley)

7. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2"
 June 17, 555
Amendt. to leave out ("now,") add ("this
day six months") (*The Earl of Powis*);
after short debate, on Question, That
("now,") &c.? Cont. 70, Not-Cont. 94;
M. 24; resolved in the negative
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897, 907
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—Vote of Censure, 1697
Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. cl. 1, 1477
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Supply—Public Education in England and
Wales, &c. 486, 487, 489

**Improvement of Lands (Ecclesiastical
Benefices) Bill [H.L.]**
(The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury)

7. Presented; read 1^a * June 19 (No. 131)
 Read 2^a * July 1
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INCE, Mr. H. B., Hastings
Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Comm. 1743
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O'Donnell, Mr. Buchanan, Sir R. Assheton
Cross; Answers, Mr. J. K. Cross June 26,
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Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer,
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*Gold Mining Companies in Mysore—Conces-
sions to British Officials, &c.*, Question, Mr.
O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross June 26,
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M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross June 16,
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The Salem Riots—Vijayaragharea Chariar,
Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. J.
K. Cross June 16, 426; June 30, 1665

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tions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. J. K.
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swers, Mr. J. K. Cross, Lord Edmond Fitz-
maurice, The Marquess of Ilarlington
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Railways—Contracts, Questions, Mr. H. H.
Fowler, Mr. Anderson; Answers, Mr. J. K.
Cross June 23, 1099

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Statistical Abstract—Exports of Food Grains, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross June 26, 1413
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Indian Marine Bill [H.L.]

(*The Earl of Kimberley*)

l. Presented; read 1st * June 30 (No. 170)

Industrial Property, Protection of—The International Patent Convention, Question, Mr. B. Samuelson; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain June 23, 1089

Intestates Estates Bill [H.L.]

(*Mr. Courtney*)

c. Adjourned Debate on Question [21st April], "That the Bill be now read 2^o" resumed June 30, 1735; Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2^o [Bill 168]

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Intestate, &c. Estates—Estate of the late Mrs. Helen Blake, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Colonel Nolan; Answers, Mr. Courtney July 3, 1878

Irish Agricultural Labourers—Annual Migration into England and Scotland, Questions, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 12, 71

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"Results Fees," Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 20, 990

The Irish Language, Question, Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 27, 1550

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Belfast Workhouse School—Assault on a Pupil, Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 19, 792

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Road Sessions, Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan, Questions, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan July 3, 1863

The High Sheriff of Drogheda, Questions, Colonel King-Harman, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 26, 1407

The Post Office at Athlone—Opening of Letters, &c. by Magistrates, Question, Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan July 1, 1783

Mr. Mathew S. Cassan (the Queen's County), Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 16, 403

Rev. John Brien Frith (Co. Fermanagh), Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 17, 582; Questions, Mr. Small, Viscount Crichton, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 27, 1551

Mr. Albert Hutton (Co. Cavan), Questions, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 19, 790

Mr. Keogh, Sessional Crown Solicitor for Meath, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 23, 1097

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Wicklow County—Appointment of Mr. Martin Langton, Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 23, 1091

Captain M'Ternan, a Resident Magistrate, Question, Viscount Crichton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 27, 1552

Counties of Meath and Dublin (Messrs. N. and J. Markly), Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 23, 1083

Major Percy, a Resident Magistrate, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 23, 1699

Mr. Robert Staples, of Durrow—Inflammatory Language, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 16, 410

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Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881

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- Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-
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- Ireland—Magistracy—High Sheriff of Dro-
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- Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 1823
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- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ire-
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- Dean Forest and Hundred of St. Briavels Bill
—Rights of the Free Miners, 1677

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- Church Patronage, 2R. 766
- Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement,
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- Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Comm. 1744,
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- Parks (Metropolis)—Cyclists in the Parks,
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- Parliament—House of Lords—Creation of
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- Smith's Trust Estate, 3R. 1224

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- Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement,
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LAMINGTON, Lord

- Metropolitan Railway (Park Railway and Par-
liament Street Improvement), 1061

Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill

- i. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. xli]

*Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Loans
under the Act*
Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, Mr. Courtney
June 20, 995

**Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Working
and Effects**

- Moved, That there be laid before the House
“Return of the cases in which the Land Court
has disallowed an application to fix a fair
rent on the grounds specified in subsection
(4.) of section 8. of the Land Act of 1881;
and of the cases in which the landlord has
claimed such disallowance under the said
subsection, and the Court has refused the
said claim; together with any reasons given
for the said decisions in each case;
“Return of the cases in which the Court has
fixed the value of a tenancy, on the applica-
tion of a landlord, with a view to the pur-
chase of the same under the 3rd subsection
of section 1. of the Land Act of 1881;
“Return of the number of cases of application
for fixing a fair rent in which the Court has
fixed the said rent higher than the ‘present
rent,’ with the percentage in each case”
(*The Duke of Argyll*) June 16, 346; after
debate, Motion amended, and agreed to

**Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Irish
Land Commission**

Sub-Commissioners

- Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan
June 23, 1085
- Case of *Andrew McCall (Co. Cavan)*, Question,
Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 19,
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- Mr. Edward Greer, Questions, Mr. Biggar,
Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 27,
1546; Questions, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Healy;
Answers, Mr. Trevelyan June 30, 1683
- Sittings at Kilrush—The Kildysart Board of
Guardians*, Questions, Mr. O'Brien, Mr.
Kenny; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan July 1,
1781

**Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Irish
Land Commission—Appeals—Case of
R. Johnston v. Mary McAtasney and
Patrick Moan**

- Motion for Papers (*The Lord Castletown*)
June 30, 1639; Motion agreed to; Ordered
to be laid before the House

**LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)
(Questions)**

- Admiralty Causes*, Question, Sir Henry Selwin-
Ibbetson; Answer, The Attorney General
June 19, 798
- Employment of Criminals as Witnesses for the
Crown in Criminal Trials*, Question, Mr.
Healy; Answer, The Attorney General
June 23, 1082
- New Circuit Arrangements*, Questions, Mr.
Arthur Arnold, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr.
Staveley Hill, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir Matthew
White Ridley, Mr. Barran, Mr. Hicks, Mr.
Warton; Answers, The Attorney General
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"*Regina v. Bradlaugh*"—*Judgment of the Lord Chief Justice*, Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The Attorney General *June 12*, 87

The County Palatine of Lancaster, Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Attorney General *July 1*, 1790

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *June 16*, 410

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Reported Outrage at Windsor Castle, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *June 13*, 244

Steamboat Robberies, Question, Mr. Moore; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *July 3*, 1869

The Dynamite Outrages—*The Nelson Column*, Question, Sir Robert Peel; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *June 12*, 90

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Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Yeomanry Riots at Lichfield, 804

Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France) —Vote of Censure, 1691

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers' Act) (No. 4), Consid. 1292, 1296, 1298

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Post Office—Head Post Office at Bristol, 81

Scotland—Queen's Park, Edinburgh — Permission to play Football during the Autumn and Winter Months, 1409

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(*The Earl of Onslow*)

l. Presented; read 1^a * *June 20* (No. 134)

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Yetminster and Llansilin School Boards, 1867, 1868

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Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Working and Effects, Motion for Papers, 333

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Army (Auxiliary Forces) — Staffordshire Yeomanry—Riots at Lichfield, 1399

LEWIS, Mr. C. E., *Londonderry*

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 68

Egypt—Conference, 1687

Post Office—Irish Mails, 1677

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LEWISHAM, Viscount, *Kent, W.*

Cemeteries, 2R. 1326

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—The Mahdi, 1792

Licensing Act (1872) Amendment Bill*(Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Armitage)*

- c. Ordered; read 1^o * June 13 [Bill 248]
 Read 2^o, after short debate June 23, 1203
 Committee*; Report June 25
 Read 3^o * June 26
 l. Read 1st * (*Earl of Rosebery*) June 27 (No. 160)

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 Lichfield, 1062

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 Bill do pass," cl. 12, Amendt. 1222
 Hyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. 565

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Meteorological Department—Weather Predictions, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 23, 1094

Royal Edinburgh Observatory, Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Courtney June 12, 73

Sale of the Blenheim Pictures, Question, Mr. Cyril Flower; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 16, 417

South Kensington Exhibitions (Expenses), Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Mundella July 3, 1869

The Fontaine Sale—The Reliquary of St. Lachtene, Question, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer June 23, 1096

The Royal Academy, Question, Sir Robert Peel; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 30, 1689; Question, Mr. J. B. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone July 3, 1888

LLOYD, Mr. M., Beaumaris

High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings), 2R. 1842

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.* 293, 299; Consid. *add. cl.* 1151, 1173

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 200]
 Read 3^o * June 19
 l. Read 1st * (*Lord President*) June 20 (No. 137)
 Read 2nd * June 27
 Committee*; Report June 30
 Read 3rd * July 1
 Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxxv]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dundalk Waterworks) Bill

[H.L.]

- c. Report * July 2 [Bill 223]
 Read 3^o * July 3

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 11 [Bill 189]
 Read 3^o * June 12
 l. Read 1st * (*Lord President*) June 13 (No. 123)
 Read 2nd * June 23
 Committee*; Report June 24
 Read 3rd * June 26
 Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxvii]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 198]
 Read 3^o * June 19
 l. Read 1st * (*Lord President*) June 20 (No. 138)
 Read 2nd * June 27

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 4) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 19 [Bill 202]
 Consideration, as amended, deferred, after short debate June 20, 989
 Considered June 25, 1287
 Read 3^o * June 26
 l. Read 1st * (*Lord President*) June 27 (No. 161)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 5) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 205]
 Read 3^o * June 19
 l. Read 1st * (*Lord President*) June 20 (No. 139)
 Read 2nd * June 27
 Committee*; Report June 30
 Read 3rd * July 1

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 6) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 210]
 Read 3^o * June 19
 l. Read 1st * (*Lord President*) June 20 (No. 140)
 Read 2nd * June 27
 Committee*; Report June 30
 Read 3rd * July 1

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act) (No. 7) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Read 2^o * June 13 [Bill 235]
 Report * June 25
 Read 3^o * June 26
 l. Read 1st * (*Lord President*) June 27 (No. 162)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Naas, &c.) Bill [H.L.]

c. Read 2° * June 20 [Bill 220]
Report * July 2
Read 3° * July 3

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Labourers Act (Carrick-on-Suir) Bill [H.L.]

c. Report * July 2 [Bill 219]
Read 3° * July 3

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Bandon Waterworks) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

c. Report * June 11 [Bill 188]
Read 3° * June 12
l. Read 1° * (Lord President) June 13 (No. 124)
Read 2° * June 23
Committee *; Report June 24
Read 3° * June 26
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxviii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke)

c. Report * June 17 [Bill 190]
Read 3° * June 18
l. Read 1° * (Lord Carrington) June 19 (No. 132)
Read 2° * June 27

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain)

c. Select Committee nominated June 16; List of the Committee, 549
June 26, Mr. George Elliot disch.; Viscount Folkestone added.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain)

c. Report * June 25 [Bill 212]
Read 3° * June 26
l. Read 1° * (Lord Carrington) June 27 (No. 163)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke)

c. Read 2° * June 17 [Bill 239]
Considered * July 3

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke)

c. Read 2° * June 17 [Bill 240]
Report * July 2

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke)

c. Read 2° * June 17 [Bill 241]
Report * June 25
Read 3° * June 26
l. Read 1° * (Lord Carrington) June 27 (No. 164)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke)

c. Read 2° * June 17 [Bill 242]
Report * June 25
Read 3° * June 26
l. Read 1° * (Lord Carrington) June 27 (No. 165)

Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) Bill

(Mr. George Russell, Secretary Sir William Harcourt)

c. Report * June 18 [Bill 226]
Read 3° * June 19
l. Read 1° * (Lord Carrington) June 20 (No. 141)
Read 2° * June 27
Committee *; Report June 30
Read 3° * July 1
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxxi]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. xliii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. xliiv]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law (No. 3) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. xlv]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Read 1° * June 13 (No. 119)
Read 2° * June 23
Committee *; Report June 24
Read 3° * June 26
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxiii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. xlvii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. xlviii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. xlviii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) Bill

(The Lord Carrington)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [17 & 48 Vict. c. xlix]

**Local Government Provisional Orders
(Poor Law) (No. 9) Bill**

(*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)

- c. Report * June 11 [Bill 191]
Read 3^o * June 12
l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Carrington*) June 13 (No. 120)
Read 2^a * June 23
Committee *; Report June 24
Read 3^a * June 26
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxiv]

**Local Government Provisional Orders
(Poor Law) (No. 10) Bill**

(*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)

- c. Report * June 11 [Bill 192]
Read 3^o * June 12
l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Carrington*) June 13 (No. 121)
Read 2^a * June 23
Committee *; Report June 24
Read 3^a * June 26
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxv]

**Local Government Provisional Orders
(Poor Law) (No. 11) Bill**

(*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 213]
Considered * June 23
Read 3^o * June 25
l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Carrington*) June 26 (No. 156)
Read 2^a * June 27

**Local Government Provisional Orders
(Poor Law) (No. 12) Bill**

(*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 214]
Read 3^o * June 19
l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Carrington*) June 20 (No. 142)
Read 2^a * June 27
Committee *; Report June 30
Read 3^a * July 1
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxxii]

**Local Government Provisional Orders
(Poor Law) (No. 13) Bill**

(*Mr. George Russell, Mr. Chamberlain*)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 215]
Read 3^o * June 19
l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Carrington*) June 20 (No. 143)
Read 2^a * June 27
Committee *; Report June 30
Read 3^a * July 1
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxxiii]

**Local Government Provisional Order
(Poor Law) (No. 14) Bill**

(*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)

- c. Read 2^o * June 17 [Bill 243]
Report * June 25
Read 3^o * June 26
l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Carrington*) June 27 (No. 166)

**Local Government Provisional Order
(Poor Law) (No. 15) Bill**

(*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)

- c. Read 2^o * June 17 [Bill 246]
Report * June 25
Read 3^o * June 26
l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Carrington*) June 27 (No. 167)

London Government Bill [Bill 171]

(*Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Sir Charles W.*

Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. George Russell)

- c. Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Mr. Gladstone
June 26, 1432

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o" July 3, 1924

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "while ready to consider the question of a reform in the Government of London, this House declines to assent to a proposal by which the control over the levying and expenditure of rates would be vested in one central body to the practical extinction of the local self-government of the various cities and boroughs of the Metropolis" (*Mr. Ritchie*) v.; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. W. M. Torrens*); Motion agreed to; Debate adjourned

LONGFORD, Earl of

Cork Butter Market, 2R. 777

Criminal Law Amendment, 3R. 1208

Ireland—Magistracy—Appointment of Magistrates—Westmeath, 232

LOPES, Sir M., Devonshire, S.

Education Department—Education Act, 1870,
Sec. 9, 1236

Yetminster and Llansilin School Boards,
1868

Police, 2R. 1732

LOTHIAN, Marquess of

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the Bill do pass," *cl.* 10, 1219

Parliament—House of Lords—Efficiency of the House, Motion for a Select Committee, 972
Secretary for Scotland, *Comm. cl.* 5, 1343, 1366

LOWTHER, Right Hon. J., Lincolnshire, N.

Egypt—Questions

Army of Occupation, 821

Conference, 1557

Events in the Sudan—Berber, Rumoured

Fall of, 586, 588;—M. Cuzzi, 408

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers' Act) (No. 4) Consid. 989

Parliament—Order—Rules of Debate, Personal Explanation, 828

Representation of the People, *Comm. add. cl.* 600, 814, 626, 656, 834, 838, 855

Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1566

LOWTHER, Hon. W., Westmoreland

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 814

Ireland—Moneys Granted or Advanced, 404

LUBBOCK, Sir J., London University

Representation of the People, *Comm. add. cl.* 616

*Lunacy Commissioners, The—The “Bas-
tilles of England”*

Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Sir
William Harcourt *June 17, 1884*

LYMINGTON, Viscount, Barnstaple

Elections (Hours of Poll), *Consid. cl. 1, 1890*

LYONS, Dr. R. D., Dublin

Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1459; Comm.
1748, 1754

Parliament—Business of the House, 1102

Representation of the People Bill, Third
Reading (Entry in the Votes), Amendt. 1574,
1576

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ire-
land), 2R. 1597, 1601, 1602, 1603

McARTHUR, Sir W., Lambeth

Trust Investments—Colonial Government
Stocks, 1864

McARTHUR, Mr. A., Leicester

Islands of the Western Pacific—Samoa, 1391

MACARTNEY, Mr. J. W. E., Tyrone

Medical Act Amendment, Comm. 1751; Mo-
tion for Adjournment, 1762

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Prac-
tices), *Consid. 1709*

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 1824

Public Meetings (Ireland)—The Nationalist
Meeting at Dromore, Personal Explanation,
1923, 1924

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland)
Act (1883) Amendment, Comm. 1768

McCARTHY, Mr. J., Longford

India (Finance, &c.)—Operations in the Home
Markets, 1093

Madras—Official Absenteeism, 391

Ireland—Magistracy—Fermanagh—Sentence
on a Clergyman, 1550

Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Sec. 8—

Police Protection at Soran, Co. Long-
ford, 392

Ireland—Charges against Irish Officials—Mr.
French, &c., Motion for a Select Committee,
721

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Prac-
tices), *Consid. 1705*

McCARTHY, Mr. J. Huntly, Athlone Bo.

Egypt—Administrative Reforms—Mr. Clifford
Lloyd, 1872

Ireland—Questions

Law and Justice—Proselytizing, 1403

Magistracy—Co. Athlone—Religious Per-
suasions of County Officials, 1679

National Education—The Irish Language,
1550

Post Office at Co. Athlone, 1783

Medical Act Amendment, 1237

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 1833

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland)
Act (1883) Amendment, *Consid. 2001*

McCOAN, Mr. J. C., Wicklow

Army (Ordnance Department)—Breech-Load-
ing Guns, 796

Egypt (Finance)—Loan Operations, 317, 322,
325

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 1822

MACFARLANE, Mr. D. H., Carlow Co.

Army—War Department—Mr. Lynam Thomas,
Motion for a Select Committee, 310

Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands of
Scotland), Report of the Royal Commission,
Res. 1604, 1628, 1638

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl. 5*,
Amendt. 886, 889, 890, 891; *add. cl. 909*,
915, 916, 917, 921

Inland Revenue—Excise—Adulteration of To-
bacco, 86

Parliament—Business of the House, 247, 1559

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.*

295, 883; *Consid. add. cl. 1152; cl. 7, 1254*

McGAREL-HOGG, Sir J. M., Truro

Hampstead Heath Act, 1871, 1792

London Government, 2R. 1934, 1965, 1966

Parliament—Public Business, 1798

MAC IVER, Mr. D., Birkenhead

Board of Trade—The Order in Council, 1786,
398, 399

Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 1385, 1386

Venezuela—Cession of the Island of Patos,
412

McKENNA, Sir J. N., Youghal

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 1825

Representation of the People, *Consid. cl. 7*,
1255

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ire-
land), 2R. 1036

*MACKINTOSH, Mr. C. FRASER-, Inverness,
&c.*

Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands of
Scotland), Report of the Royal Commission,
1619

McLAGAN, Mr. P., Linlithgowshire

Scotland—Poor Law—Inspectors of the Poor,
1099

MACLIVER, Mr. P. S., Plymouth

Great Western Railway (No. 1), 3R. 988

Law and Justice—Assizes—Plymouth and Exe-
ter, 1870

Navy—H.M.S. “Vivid”—Fatal Casualty at
Plymouth, 995

Representation of the People Bill, Third
Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1573

Madagascar—The Consular Reports

Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer,
Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June 12, 84*

MAGNIAC, Mr. C., Bedford

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl. 5*,
903, 907

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. *cl. 1, 1498*

Suez Canal—The International Consulting
Committee, 1103, 1104

MAKINS, Colonel W. T., Essex, S.
Cemeteries, 2R. 1331
Medical Act Amendment, Comm. 1753
Merchant Shipping, 2R. 1739

Manchester Ship Canal Bill

c. Read 2°, after debate June 26, 1372

**MANNERS, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R.,
Leicestershire, N.**

Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement,
1139

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl.
92, 619, 652, 656

MARJORIBANKS, Hon. E., Berwickshire
Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands of
Sootland), Report of the Royal Commission,
Res. 1637
Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. cl. 1, 1493,
1495

MARLBOROUGH, Duke of

Egypt (Affairs in the Soudan)—P.P. No. 22
(1884), 1658

**Married Women's Property Act (1882)
Amendment Bill**

(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)

l. Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 14]

MARTIN, Mr. P., Kilkenny

Representation of the People, Consid. cl. 7,
1254

*Mauritius, The—Mr. Napier Broome,
Acting Governor*

Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, Mr. Evelyn
Ashley July 3, 1867

MAXWELL, Sir H. E., Wigtonshire

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Berber—M.
Cuzzi, 408

Berber, Reported fall of, 2, 245, 586

India—Candahar State Railway, 1398

Ireland—Fishery Piers and Harbours—Port-
patrick Harbour Commission—Transcript
of Evidence, 1545

Portugal—Congo Treaty, 408, 1395, 1396

East Coast of Africa—The Steam Yacht
"Maud," 248

Post Office—Sunday Work in Post Offices, 1544

Post Office (Scotland)—Telegraph Depart-
ment—Extra Pay for Sunday Work, 407

Medical Act Amendment Bill [H.L.]

(*Mr. Mundella*)

c. Question, Mr. Justin Huntly M'CCarthy; An-
swer, Mr. Mundella June 24, 1237

2R. June 24, 1259; after debate, Debate ad-
journed

Debate resumed June 26, 1455; after short
debate, Bill read 2° [Bill 207]

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr.
Speaker do now leave the Chair" June 30,
1747; Moved, "That the Debate be now
adjourned" (*Colonel King-Harman*); after

[cont.

Medical Act Amendment Bill—cont.

debate, Question put; A. 55, N. 87; M. 32
(D. L. 145)

Original Question again proposed, 1762

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn"
(*Mr. Biggar*); Question put; A. 45, N. 86;
M. 41 (D. L. 146)

Original Question again proposed; Moved,
"That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr.
Macartney*); after short debate, Question
put; A. 33, N. 75; M. 42 (D. L. 147)

Original Question put; A. 78, N. 29; M. 49
(D. L. 148)

Committee—R.P.

MELDON, Mr. C. H., Kildare

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland)
Act (1883) Amendment, 1993, 1999

Mercantile Marine

Board of Trade—Marine Department—Light-
houses—Loss of the "Aurania," Question,
Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain June 16,
414;—*The Merchant Shipping Bill*, Ques-
tion, Mr. Charles Palmer; Answer, Mr.
Chamberlain June 23, 1084

Hospitals at Bilbao, Question, Dr. Cameron;
Answer, Mr. Chamberlain June 23, 1086

*Merchant Shipping Acts—The Ship "Eg-
mont"*

Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer,
Mr. Chamberlain June 19, 818

Merchant Shipping Bill

[Bill 1]

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr.
Holms*)

c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate
on Amendt. on Second Reading [19th May],
To leave out "now," add "upon this day six
months" (*Mr. Mac Iver*) June 30, 1736

Question proposed, "That 'now' &c.; "
Moved, "That the Adjourned Debate be
postponed until Monday next" (*Mr. Court-
ney*); after short debate, Motion agreed to;
Debate further adjourned

Questions, Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Gorst, Lord
Claud Hamilton, Mr. A. J. Balfour; An-
swers, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir William Har-
court July 3, 1889

*Meteorological Department—Weather Pre-
dictions*

Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Faw-
cett June 23, 1094

METROPOLIS (Questions)

Metropolitan Improvements—Waterloo Place,
Question, Sir Robert Peel; Answer, Mr.
Shaw Lefevre June 12, 91

Public Health—Small-Pox, Question, Mr.
O'Donnell; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke
June 24, 1239; Question, Dr. Cameron;
Answer, Mr. George Russell June 30, 1674

The Parks—Cyclists in the Parks, Questions,
Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre
June 19, 810

The Peel Grove Burial Ground, Question, Mr.
John Hallond; Answer, Sir William Har-
court June 26, 1418

Metropolis—Public Health—Small Pox Epidemics

Moved, "That, in view of the alarming increase of Small Pox in London, this House calls upon Her Majesty's Government at once to apply to the Metropolis those rational principles of prompt and direct preventive administration, the efficacy of which in circumscribing Small Pox Epidemics has been demonstrated by the experience of Glasgow and other large towns" (*Dr. Cameron*) July 1, 1798; after debate, Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put" (*Sir Charles W. Dilke*) [House counted out]

Metropolitan Police Bill

(*The Earl of Dalhousie*)

1. Read 1st June 13 (No. 118)
 Read 2nd June 17
 Committee*; Report June 19
 Read 3rd June 20
 Royal Assent June 23 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 17]

Metropolitan Railway (Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement) Bill

Question, Observation, Lord Lamington; Reply, Lord Sudeley June 23, 1861

Middlesex Registry of Deeds Bill

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Attorney General*)

- c. Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" June 30, 1740; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
 Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee;" after further short debate, Question put; A. 126, N. 33; M. 93 (D. L. 144) [Bill 169]

MILLTOWN, Earl of

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the Bill do pass," cl. 2, 1216; Personal Explanation, 1518

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2), Comm. cl. 3, Amendt. 1206; add. cl. 1222

Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement, 1058

MILNER, Sir F. G., York

Drink Shops in Alexandria, 809

Representation of the People, 3R. 1453

MINTO, Earl of

Secretary for Scotland, Comm. 1334; cl. 1, 1337, 1338; Report, 1652

Mint, The—Annual Report of the Deputy Master

Question, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer June 19, 796

MOLLOY, Mr. B. C., King's Co.

Medical Act Amendment, Comm. 1762

MONK, Mr. C. J., Gloucester City

Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Director of Public Prosecutions, 410

MOORE, Mr. A. J., Clonmel

Law and Police—Steamboat Robberies, 1869

MORGAN, Right Hon. G. Osborne (Judge

Advocate General), Denbighshire

Cemeteries, 2R. 1324

MORLEY, Earl of (Under Secretary of State for War)

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Irish Militia, 1860

Yeomanry Riot at Lichfield, 551, 552

MORLEY, Mr. J., Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 198

Morocco

The Prison at Tangier, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice July 3, 1870

The Grand Sherref of Wazan—Rumoured

French Protectorate, Question, Dr. Cameron;

Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 13,

239; Question, Baron Henry De Worms;

Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 16,

421; Question, Observations, Earl De La

Warr; Reply, Earl Granville June 19, 785

MOUNT-EDGCOMBE, Earl of

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall), 2R. 567

MOUNT-TEMPLE, Lord

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the Bill do pass," cl. 5, 1213; cl. 10, 1218

MOWBRAY, Right Hon. Sir J. R., Oxford University

Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 1383

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), Sheffield

Education Department—Questions

Balham Board School, 405

Education Act, 1870—Sec. 9, 1236

Educational Endowments (Scotland)—Report of the Commissioners, 425

Home Lessons in Board Schools, 813, 814

Over-Pressure in Board Schools, 240, 241,

813;—Shoreditch Board of Guardians,

86

Speldhurst National School, 794

Yetminster and Llansilin School Boards,

1868, 1869

Literature, Science, and Art—South Kensington Exhibitions (Expenses), 1869

Medical Act Amendment, 1237; 2R. 1259,

1277, 1278; Comm. 1749, 1755, 1762

Parliament—Business of the House, 247

Poisonous Patent Medicines, 798

Supply—Education, Science, and Art, 427,

441, 442, 446

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J.—cont.

Public Education in England and Wales,
 &c. 455, 457, 464, 474, 481, 486, 489,
 494, 502, 503, 504, 506, 509, 514, 517,
 529, 538, 540, 541, 543, 544, 547, 548

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill

(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Solicitor General*)

c. Moved, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered" *June 30, 1702*

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Sir R. Assheton Cross*); after short debate, Question put; A. 35, N. 139; M. 104 (D. L. 140)

Original Question again proposed, 1707; after short debate, Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Sir Eardley Wilmot*); Question put; A. 32, N. 85; M. 53 (D. L. 141)

Original Question again proposed; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Hicks*); Question put; A. 22, N. 83; M. 61 (D. L. 142)

Original Question again proposed; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill considered; Further Proceeding on Consideration, as amended, deferred

MUNTZ, Mr. P. H., Birmingham

High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings), 2R. 1848

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1590

National Debt Act, 1883—Terminable Annuities (Conversion)

Question, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *June 12, 72*

National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Bill

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*)

c. Order for Committee read, Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," *June 12, 207*

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "it is inexpedient, with a view to the reduction of the burthen of the Public Debt, to effect such Conversions of Stock as will add to the capital values which must be redeemed if the Debt they represent is to be extinguished" (*Mr. J. G. Hubbard*); v. Question proposed, "That the words, &c.," after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker, &c." put, and agreed to; Committee—R.F.

Committee—R.F. *June 13, 327*

Committee*; Report *June 16* [Bill 186]

The Savings Banks Fund, Question, Mr. J. G. Hubbard; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *June 19, 822*

Considered* *June 19*

Read 3^d* *June 20*

l. Read 1st* (*Lord Thurlow*) *June 23* (No. 145)

Read 2nd* *June 26*

Committee*; Report *June 27*

Read 3rd* *June 30*

Royal Assent *July 3* [47 & 48 Vict. c. 23]

National Debt (Conversion of Stock) — [Consolidated Fund]

c. Res. considered in Committee *June 13, 327*
 Resolution reported *June 16*

Naval Discipline Act (1866) Amendment Bill

(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Thomas Brassey*)
 c. Ordered; read 1^o* *June 26* [Bill 263]

Naval Enlistment Bill [H.L.]

(*The Earl of Northbrook*)

l. Presented; read 1st* *July 3* (No. 175)

NAVY

(Questions)

Armament of the Navy—63-ton Breech-loading Guns, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *June 16, 404*

Board of Admiralty—Retirement of Mr. A. Houghton, Question, Mr. H. S. Northcote; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *June 26, 1417*

Dockyards—Position and Pay of Shipwrights, Question, Mr. Henry Allen; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *June 26, 1420*

Chatham Dockyard, Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *June 26, 1396*

H.M.S. "Vivid"—Fatal Casualty at Plymouth, Question, Mr. MacIver; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *June 20, 995*

Stoppage of Pay, Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *June 26, 1398*

The Channel Squadron, Question, Mr. Harrington; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *June 23, 1098*

Netherlands, The—See title *Straits Settlements*—*Rajah of Tenom*—Crew of the "Nisero"

Newcastle Chapter Bill [H.L.]

(*The Lord Bishop of Durham*)

l. Presented; read 1st* *June 17* (No. 130)

Read 2^d, after short debate *June 27, 1541*

Committee* *June 30*

Report* *July 1*

NEWDEGATE, Mr. C. N., Warwickshire, N.

Medical Act Amendment, Comm. 1759

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 114, 141, 283; Consid. add. cl. 1174; 3R. 1447

New Parishes Acts and Church Building Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*)

l. Presented; read 1st* *July 1* (No. 171)

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., Galway Co.

Army—War Department—Mr. Lynam Thomas, Motion for a Select Committee, 312

Compensation for Improvements (Ireland), 2R. 1834, 1835

NOLAN, Colonel J. P.—*cont.*

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 893

Ireland—Questions

Board of Works—Mento Estate, 413

Commissioners of National Education—
Mr. Martin Huban, a National School
Teacher, 1095

Intestates, &c. Estates—Estate of the late
Mrs. Helen Blake, 1879

State of Ireland—Police Barracks at New
Garden, Tuam, 80

Meteorological Department—Weather Predic-
tions, 1094

Representation of the People, *Consid. add. cl.*
Motion for Adjournment, 1155; Amendt.
1159, 1160, 1164, 1172

NORTHBROOK, Earl of (First Lord of the
Admiralty)

Africa (South-West Coast)—Angra Pequena,
Motion for Papers, 788

NORTHCOOTE, Right Hon. Sir S. H.,
Devon, N.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 67
Egypt—Conference, 823, 1882, 1883; Minis-
terial Statement, 1110, 1114, 1115, 1116

Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France)
—Vote of Censure, 1304, 1431, 1694, 1701

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Prac-
tices), *Consid.* 1711

National Debt (Conversion of Stock), Comm.
218; *cl.* 1, 222, 225; *cl.* 6, 342

Parliament—Business of the House, 247, 424,
824

Sittings of the House—Commencement of
Public Business, 239

Parliament—Business of the House (Proce-
dure on Wednesdays), Res. 675, 677

Representation of the People, Comm. *add. cl.*
190, 191, 279, 280, 646; 3R. 1438

Representation of the People Bill, Third
Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1562, 1566,
1567, 1570, 1571; Amendt. 1572

Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew
of the "Nisero," 1916

NORTHCOTE, Mr. H. S., *Exeter*

Board of Admiralty—Retirement of Mr. A.
Houghton, 1417

Law and Justice—Assizes—Plymouth and
Exeter, 1870

Parliament—Public Business, 1797

Trade and Commerce—Paper Manufactures—
Post Cards, 1862

NORTON, Lord

Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the
Bill do pass," *add. cl.* 1220

Education Department—Over-Pressure in
Board Schools, 1526

Education Department—Parishes of Rothwell
and Yetminster, Res. 783

Secretary for Scotland, Report, 1651

O'BEIRNE, Colonel F., *Leitrim*

Army—Quartermasters—Serjeant—Major
Walsh, 1682

O'BRIEN, Sir P., *King's Co.*

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin
County), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1506

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Mallow*

Customs—Searching of Passengers' Luggage,
1402

Ireland—Questions

Burial Grounds—Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo,
1674

Irish Land Commission (Sub-Commissioners)
—Kildysart Board of Guardians, 1781,
1782

Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Ma-
croom Union, 1669; —Evictions at
Gweedore, 1789

Royal Irish Constabulary—Extra Police
(Limerick)—Correspondence, 414; —Mr.
P. N. Fitzgerald, Case of, 1405

Ireland—Charges against Irish Officials—Mr.
French, &c., Motion for a Select Committee,
689, 701

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ire-
land), 2R. 1030

O'CONNOR, Mr. A., *Queen's Co.*

Army—Army Reserve—Case of James
Cushley, 802

Sanitary Condition of Naas Barracks, 799

Colonial Prisoners Removal, 2R. 1512

House of Lords—Allowances to Retired Offi-
cers—The Invested Fee Fund, 90

Inland Revenue Accounts—Banking Facilities,
798

Ireland—Questions

Inland Navigation and Drainage—Barrow
River, 74, 799

Magistracy—Mr. Mathew S. Cassan
(Queen's Co.), 403; —Wicklow Co.—Ap-
pointment of Mr. Martin Langton, 1091,
1092

Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Elec-
toral Division and Union of Edenderry,
King's Co., 70; —Mountmellick Union—
Alleged Illegal Claim to Vote, 402, 403,
801

Post Office—Telegraph Clerks at the Post
Office, Belfast, 72

Prisons Act, 1877—Conveyance of Pri-
soners on Committal, 75

Prisons—Religious Persuasion of Warders
in Maryborough Gaol, 401

Royal Irish Constabulary (Belfast)—Reli-
gious Persuasion, 409

Ireland—Charges against Irish Officials—Mr.
French, &c., Motion for a Select Committee,
679, 686, 687, 698, 703

Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1462

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ire-
land), 2R. 1514

O'CONNOR, Mr. T. P., *Galway*

Egypt—Questions

Administrative Reforms—Mr. Clifford
Lloyd, 1871

Conference, 1430, 1884

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324, 325

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. *cl.* 1, 1494

O'CONNOR, Mr. T. P.—*cont.*

Ireland—Questions

- Intestate, &c. Estates—Estate of the late Mrs. Helen Blake, 1878, 1879
 Labourers' Act—The Select Committee, 1879
 Magistracy—Mr. Murray Ker, J.P.—Case of — Mullen, 1668
 Public Meetings—Nationalist Meeting at Dromore, Personal Explanation, 1922, 1923
 Royal Irish Constabulary—Visit of the Lord Lieutenant to Belfast, 1663, 1664
 Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers' Act) (No. 4), *Consid.* 989; *Amend.* 1287, 1292, 1296, 1298, 1299, 1304
 Medical Act Amendment, *Comm.* 1755, 1757, 1765
 Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), *Consid.* 1706
 Parliament—Order—Rules of Debate, Personal Explanation, 829
 Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 1822
 Representation of the People, *Consid. add. cl.* 1153, 1164, 1167, 1176
 Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1569

O'DONNELL, Mr. F. H., *Dungarvan*

- Africa (South)—Zululand, 1241
 Egypt (Internal Affairs), 1410
 India—Questions
 Bengal—Mortality in Gaols, 1411, 1413
 Cholera, 1237, 1238, 1239
 Madras—Gold Mines in Mysore—Concessions to British Officials, 1413
 Public Health—Sanitary Precautions, 1414, 1415, 1416
 Statistical Abstract—Export of Food Grains, 1413
 Portugal—Congo Treaty, 1395
 Public Health—Small-Pox in London, 1239
 Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," 1919

ONSLow, Earl of

- Parliament—House of Lords—Efficiency of the House, Motion for a Select Committee, 958

ORANMORE AND BROWNE, Lord

- Criminal Law Amendment, Motion "That the Bill do pass," *cl.* 10, 1218
 Ireland—Public Meetings—Nationalist and Loyalist Meetings in the North of Ireland, 1076, 1077

Ordinance Survey

- Question, Sir Henry Hussey Vivian; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *June* 19, 804

O'SHEA, Mr. W. H., *Clare*

- Post Office—Telephone Companies, 1678

O'SULLIVAN, Mr. W. H., *Limerick Co.*

- Ireland—Prevention of Crime Act, 1832—Extra Police, Ardagh, Co. Limerick, 803

OTWAY, Sir A. J. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Rochester*

- Elections (Hours of Poll), *Comm. cl.* 1, 1473, 1478, 1479, 1480, 1481, 1482
 Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 1381
 National Debt (Conversion of Stock), *Comm. cl.* 1, 222; *cl.* 6, 338
 Parliament—Private Business—Estate Bills—New Standing Order, *Res.* 1285
 Representation of the People, *Comm. add. cl.* 308, 309, 835, 836, 842, 871, 875, 884, 886
 Royal Courts of Justice, *Comm. cl.* 3, 1188
 Smith's Trust Estate, 3R. 1228
 Supply—Public Education in England and Wales, &c. 487, 488, 489, 548

PAGET, Mr. R. H., *Somersetshire, Mid*

- Colonial Prisoners Removal, 2R. 1512
 Criminal Lunatics, 2R. 1511
 Gold, Silver, and Bronze Coinage—Loss on Coining, 1546
 National Debt (Conversion of Stock), *Comm. cl.* 3, 228
 Representation of the People, *Consid. add. cl.* 1163, 1173
 Supply—Public Education in England and Wales, &c. 526, 548

PALMER, Mr. C. M., *Durham, N.*

- Board of Trade (Marine Department)—Merchant Shipping Bill, 1084

Parliament

LORDS—

- House of Lords—Electric Lighting*, Question, Lord Greville; Answer, Lord Sudeley *June* 19, 784

Parliament—House of Lords—Efficiency of the House

- Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of promoting the efficiency of this House" (*The Earl of Rosebery June* 20, 937; after debate, *Amend.*, insert after ("promoting") ("by life peerages or otherwise") (*The Earl Granville*); on Question? *Cont.* 44, *Not-Cont* 86; *M.* 42; resolved in the negative
Div. List, Cont. and Not-Cont., 973
 On Question, "That the original Motion be agreed to?" *Cont.* 38, *Not-Cont.* 77; *M.* 39; resolved in the negative
Div. List, Cont. and Not-Cont., 974

COMMONS—

THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure*
 Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the Criminal Lunatics Bill on Thursday next, at Twelve of the Clock *July* 3

ORDER

- Rules of Debate* [Debate of *June* 17], Personal Explanation, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Reply, Mr. Gladstone *June* 19, 824

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—cont.

NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE

Adjournment of the House (Rule 2)—Straits Settlements—Rajah of Tenom—Crew of the "Nisero," Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (Mr. Storey) July 3, 1891; after debate, Motion withdrawn

Eighth Rule—"Blocking"—The Copyhold Emfranchisement Bill, Question, Mr. Waugh; Answer, Mr. Halsey June 12, 85

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Questions, Mr. Rylands, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Macfarlane, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Mundella June 13, 247; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, The Chancellor of the Exchequer June 16, 421; Observations, Mr. Gladstone; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 19, 824; Questions, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Firth, Mr. Edward Clarke; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, 829; Questions, Mr. Rylands, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. H. S. Northcote, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Mr. Gladstone July 1, 1797; Questions, Mr. J. A. Campbell, Mr. T. A. Dickson, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answers, Mr. Gladstone July 3, 1884;—*Scotch Bills*, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Sir William Harcourt June 19, 811;—*The Medical Act Amendment Bill*, Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith, Dr. Lyons; Answers, Mr. Gladstone June 23, 1102;—*Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill*, Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 24, 1248;—*Affairs in Zululand*, Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 26, 1422;—*Evening Sitting—Duty of the Government to keep a House*, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 27, 1559;—*Police Superannuation Bill*, Question, Major General Alexander; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 30, 1687

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Commencement of Public Business; Observation; Sir William Harcourt; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Sir William Harcourt June 13, 239

House of Lords

Allowances to Retired Officers—The Invested Fee Fund, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Courtney June 12, 90

Creation of Peers, Notice of Question, Mr. Labouchere July 2, 1819; Notice of Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett July 3, 1861

Corrupt Practices at Elections—Suspension of Corrupt Boroughs, Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, The Attorney General July 3, 1875

Palace of Westminster—Westminster Hall (West Front), Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre June 30, 1663

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—cont.

The Parliamentary Franchise—Exclusion of Tenants of Artizans' Dwellings, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Attorney General June 19, 794

"Regina v. Bradlaugh"—Judgment of the Lord Chief Justice, Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The Attorney General June 12, 87

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

Took the Oath

June 30—The Marquess of Normanby

New Peer

June 24—James Earl of Seafield in the Peerage of Scotland, created Baron Strathpey of Strathpey in the counties of Inverness and Moray in the Peerage of the United Kingdom

Sat First

June 17—The Viscount Torrington, after the death of his uncle
The Earl of Sandwich, after the death of his father.
June 30—The Earl of Doncaster (Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry), after the death of his father

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

June 11—For Surrey County (Mid Division), *v.* Sir Henry William Peek, baronet, Chiltern Hundreds
June 20—For Leicester Borough, *v.* Peter Alfred Taylor, esquire, Manor of Northstead, in the county of York
For Warwickshire County (Northern Division), *v.* William Bromley-Davenport, esquire, deceased

New Members Sworn

June 16—Joseph Ruston, esquire, Lincoln City
Justin Huntly McCarthy, esquire, Athlone Borough
June 23—Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Wellington John Fitz-Wygram, baronet, Southampton County (Southern Division)
Sir John Whittaker Ellis, baronet, Surrey (Mid Division)
June 27—James Allanson Picton, esquire, Leicester Borough
July 3—Philip Albert Muntz, esquire, Warwick County (Northern Division)

Parliament—Business of the House (Procedure on Wednesdays)

Moved, "That on Wednesdays, if the Debate on the first Order of the Day, or any Order that has been reached by Two o'clock (not being a proceeding in Committee, nor on the Consideration of a Bill as amended, nor on the Consideration of Lords Amendments) be continued until Five o'clock, Mr. Speaker

Parliament—Commons—Business of the House
(*Procedure on Wednesdays*)—cont.

shall put the Question then under discussion ; and, if the Previous Question, or a Motion of Adjournment, or an Amendment to the Main Question shall have been moved, they shall be severally put, and afterwards the Main Question shall be put without further Debate (*Mr. Stevenson*) June 17, 658 ; after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Puleston*) ; Question put ; A. 115, N. 92 ; M. 23 (D. L. 122)

Parliament—Private Estate Bills—New Standing Order

Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone June 19, 817

Moved, "That in the case of any Estate Bill, the Committee on the Bill shall report specially to the House if the Bill contains provisions extending either the term or the area of any Settlement of Land, and the Report of the Committee shall be printed and circulated with the Votes" (*Mr. Arthur Arnold*) June 25, 1279 ; after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Ordered, That the said Resolution be a Standing Order of the House

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork City*

Ireland—Public Meetings—Nationalist Meeting at Newry, 79

Ireland—Charges against Irish Officials—Mr. French, &c., Motion for a Select Committee, 715

Post Office—Irish Mails, 1676

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. add. cl. 1510 ; Consid. 1734

PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, S.*

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 122

PEDDIE, Mr. J. DICK-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 23,

51

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. cl. 1, 1473,

1474 ; cl. 2, Amendt. 1499

Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1456 ; Comm. 1747, 1752

Scotland—Chapel Royal—Warrant of the 9th February, 1873, 1667

Educational Endowments—Report of the Commissioners, 425

PEEL, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* SPEAKER, The)

PEEL, Right Hon. Sir R., *Huntingdon*

Law and Police—Dynamite Outrages—The Nelson Column, 90

Metropolitan Improvements—Waterloo Place, 91

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 653, 657

Switzerland—The Salvationists, 80

PELL, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act—Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Canadian Cattle, 1416

Lincolnshire, 1234

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 300, 650, 865

Representation of the People: Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1530, 1562, 1563, 1567 ; Amendt. 1573

PERCY, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. Motion for reporting Progress, 307, 308, 589, 598, 610

PERCY, Lord A. M. A., *Westminster*

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. add. cl. 925

Education Department—Over-Pressure in Board Schools—Shoreditch Board of Guardians, 85

London Government, 2R. 1956, 1959

Medical Act Amendment, Comm. 1762

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 876, 883

Supply—Public Education in England and Wales, &c. 480, 481, 486

Personal Estate (Scotland) Bill

(*Mr. Cochran-Patrik, Mr. Sellar, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Webster, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Dalrymple*)

c. Ordered ; read 1^o * June 26 [Bill 262]

Peru and Chili—The Peruvian Bondholders

Questions, Mr. Williamson, Sir Henry Tyler, Mr. Raikes ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 20, 993

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Sudeley*)

l. Committee * June 17 (No. 70)

Report * June 19

Read 3^a * June 20

c. Read 1^o * June 24 [Bill 259]

Read 2^o * July 1

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*

Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1263 ; Comm. 1750

Poisonous Patent Medicines—Legislation

Question, Mr. Warton ; Answer, Mr. Mundella June 19, 798

Police Bill

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o" June 30, 1712

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Viscount Folkestone*) ; after short debate, Question put ; A. 18, N. 56 ; M. 38 (D. L. 143)

Police Bill—cont.

Original Question again proposed, 1723 ; after debate, original Question put, and agreed to ; Bill read 2^o [Bill 56]

Police Burghs (Scotland) Bill—See title Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill**POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES) (Questions)**

Emigration of Pauper Children, Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke June 19, 1897

The Pauper Training Ship "Exmouth," Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. George Russell June 13, 1891

Farnham Workhouse, Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke June 19, 1896

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill

(Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Gray, Mr. Mayne, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. Marum)

c. Read 2^o, after short debate July 2, 1890 [Bill 22]

PORTMAN, Hon. W. H. B., *Dorsetshire*
Great Western Railway (No. 1), 3R. 979

Portugal

The Congo River—Seizure of the British Yacht "Maud," Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 13, 1898

The Congo Treaty, Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 16, 1898; Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 26, 1895; Questions, Mr. Jacob Bright; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 27, 1894

POST OFFICE (Questions)

Abstraction of Eviction Notices, Stoneybridge, South Uist, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 27, 1898

Appointment of Surveyors' Clerks, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Fawcett July 3, 1896

Head Office at Bristol, Question, Mr. Lewis Fry; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre June 12, 1891

Meteorological Department—Weather Predictions, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 23, 1894

Post Office Annuity and Insurance—The Tables, Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 17, 1892

Sunday Work in Post Offices, Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Lord Elcho; Answers, Mr. Fawcett June 27, 1894

The Irish Mails, Questions, Mr. Gray, Mr. Parnell, Mr. T. A. Dickson, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Small, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Fawcett June 30, 1896

Telegraph Department

Question, Mr. Houldsworth; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 17, 1898

POST OFFICE—cont.**Telephone Companies**

Amalgamation of Companies, Questions, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Fawcett June 30, 1898

Licences to Telephone Companies, Questions, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Gray; Answers, Mr. Fawcett June 24, 1892

The Telephone—Press Rates, Questions, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 16, 1897; Question, Mr. Houldsworth; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 26, 1898

Telephone Call Offices—The Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company, Question, Mr. Briggs; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 12, 1892

Telephonic Communication—Rate of Maintenance—The Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company, Question, Mr. Jacob Bright; Answer, Mr. Fawcett June 12, 1892

Telephonic Communication between Liverpool and Birkenhead, Questions, Mr. Whitley; Answers, Mr. Fawcett June 12, 1891

Post Office Protection Bill [H.L.]

(The Lord Thurlow)

l. Presented; read 1^a* July 1 (No. 172)

POWERSCOURT, Viscount

Cork Butter Market, 2R. 774

Ireland—Public Meetings—Nationalist and Loyalist Meetings in the North of Ireland, 1070

POWIS, Earl of

Hyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. Amendt. 559

Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882

Extra Police—Ardagh, Co. Limerick, Question, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 19, 1893

Sec. 8—Police Protection at Soran, Co. Longford, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 16, 1892

Sec. 14—House Search by the Police, Durrus, Bantry, Co. Cork, Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan June 20, 1896

Seizure of Seditious Documents—Mr. J. F. O'Regan, Questions, Mr. William Redmond; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan July 3, 1896

Prisons (England and Wales)

Chatham Convict Prison—Visit of Major Blair, R.M., to one of the Crossmaglen Convicts, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan July 1, 1893

Convict Prisons (Great Britain)—Roman Catholic Chaplains—Power of making Reports, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Sir William Harcourt June 26, 1892

Taunton Gaol, Question, Mr. E. Stanley; Answer, Sir William Harcourt June 26, 1895

Public Health

Cholera, The, Questions, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answers, Mr. George Russell June 30, 1894

[cont.]

[cont.]

Public Health—containing several to be added

Reported Outbreak at Toulon, France, Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Lord Carington June 24, 1204; Questions, Mr. Gray, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, 1242; Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, Lord Carington June 27, 1516

Small-Pox in London, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke June 24, 1239; Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. George Russell June 30, 1674

The Peel Grove Burial Ground, Question, Mr. John Holland; Answer, Sir William Harcourt June 26, 1418

Public Health Acts Amendment Bill

(Mr. Dodds, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Arnold Morley)

c. Read 2^o * June 26 [Bill 113]

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order Bill

(The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland)

c. Bill withdrawn * June 12 [Bill 221]

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill

(The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland)

c. Report * June 20 [Bill 229]

Read 3^o * June 23

l. Read 1st * (E. of Dalhousie) June 24 (No. 149)

Read 2nd * June 27

Committee *; Report July 3

Public Libraries Acts Amendment Bill

[H.L.]

c. Read 1^o * July 3 [Bill 273]

Public Offices, The

Bank Holidays—Government Clerks, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Courtney June 26, 1405

Superannuation Act—Clerks in the Admiralty and War Office, Question, Sir Thomas Chambers; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer June 19, 819

The Annual Leave—The War Office, Question, Mr. Ion Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Courtney June 26, 1416

PUGH, Mr. L. P., Cardiganshire

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. add. cl. 918

PULESTON, Mr. J. H., Devonport

Egypt—Conference, 1430, 1883, 1884

Elections (Hours of Poll), Consid. cl. 1, 1997

Parliament—Business of the House (Procedure on Wednesdays), Res. Motion for Adjournment, 878

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 287, 309

Queensland

English Emigrants, Question, Mr. Samuel Smith; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley July 3, 1865

The Queensland Labour Trade, Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley June 30, 1671

RAIKES, Right Hon. H. C., Cambridge University

Education Department—Home Lessons in Board Schools, 814

Over-Pressure in Board Schools, 241

Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement, 1130

Egypt (Terms of the Agreement with France)—Vote of Censure, 1698

Peru and Chili—Peruvian Bondholders, 994, 995

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 201, 618, 640; Consid. add. cl. 1177

Railway Regulation Acts Amendment Bill

Question, Mr. B. Samuelson; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain June 26, 1398

RAMSAY, Mr. J., Falkirk, &c.

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. cl. 5, 905

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland), 2R. 55

Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1578

RANKIN, Mr. J., Leominster

Post Office Annuity and Insurance—The Tables, 582

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 158

RATHBONE, Mr. W., Carnarvonshire

Cemeteries, 2R. 1310

Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 1380

READ, Mr. Clare S., Norfolk, W.

Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. cl. 5, Amendt. 891, 906; add. cl. 932

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 621, 627

REAY, Lord

Secretary for Scotland, Comm. Schedule, 1362

BEDESDALE, Earl of (Chairman of Committees)

Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment (No. 2), 2R. 552, 555; Comm. 1205; cl. 2, Amendt. ib.; cl. 3, Amendt. 1206, 1207; add. cl. ib.

Hyde Park Corner (New Streets), 2R. 564

REDMOND, Mr. J. E., New Ross

Islands of the Western Pacific—Samoa, 394, 1389, 1391, 1394

New South Wales—The "Foreign Senate," 1670, 1671

Queensland Labour Trade, 1671

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1027

REDMOND, Mr. J. E.—*cont.*

Southern Pacific—The Torres and Louisiana Groups—Kidnapping of Natives—The Labour Schooners "Jessie Kelly" and "Eileen," 394, 396

REDMOND, Mr. W. H. K., *Wexford*

Ireland—Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Sec.

14—House Search by the Police, Durrus, Bantry, Co. Cork, 996, 997

Seizure of Seditious Documents—Mr. J. F. O'Regan, 1876

Medical Act Amendment, Comm. 1758, 1759

Merchant Shipping Acts—Ship "Egmont," 818

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), *Consid.* 1706

Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1577

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 1032, 1514, 1590, 1601

"*Regina v. Bradlaugh*."—*Judgment of the Lord Chief Justice*

Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The Attorney General *June 12, 87*

Representation of the People Bill

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate*)

c. Committee [Eighth Night]—R.P. *June 12, 92*
[Bill 119]

Committee [Ninth Night]—R.P. *June 13, 249*

Committee [Tenth Night]—R.P. *June 17, 589*

Committee [Eleventh Night]; Report *June 19, 830*

Considered *June 23, 1146*; after long debate, Debate adjourned [Bill 249]

Adjourned Debate resumed *June 24, 1248*

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^o" *June 26, 1432*; after debate, Motion agreed to, nemine contradicente; Bill passed [Bill 260]

l. Read 1st* (*Earl of Kimberley*) *June 27 (No. 159)*
Notice of Motion, Earl Cairns *July 1, 1770*

Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes)

Observations, Mr. Pell *June 27, 1560*

After debate, Moved, "That the honourable Member for South Leicestershire having called attention to the fact that the Question, that the Representation of the People Bill be read the third time, was challenged by him, the entry in the Votes of the proceedings on the Third Reading of the Bill be corrected by omitting from the Votes the words 'Nemine Contradicente'" (*Sir Stafford Northcote*)

Amendt. to insert after "him," "and by another Member" (*Mr. Pell*); Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" Amendt. withdrawn

Original Question again proposed, 1574; after short debate, Question put; A. 82, N. 125; M. 43

Div. List, A. and N., 1681

Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) Bill

(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan*)

c. Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *June 19, 812*

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That this House will, upon Thursday, resolve itself into the said Committee" *June 23, 1199*

Amendt. to leave out "upon Thursday," insert "To-morrow, at Two of the clock" (*Mr. Harrington*) v.; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question put, and agreed to; Committee deferred

Committee; Report *June 26, 1500* [Bill 124]
Considered, after short debate *June 30, 1733*

RICHARD, Mr. H., *Merthyr Tydvil*

Cemeteries, 2R. 1305

Church Patronage, 2R. 762

RICHMOND AND GORDON, Duke of

Secretary for Scotland, Report, 1648

RITCHIE, Mr. C. T., *Tower Hamlets*

Army—Small Arms Factory at North Bow, 1680, 1681

London Government, 1432; 2R. Amendt. 1943, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954

Merchant Shipping, 2R. 1736, 1737

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 837

Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1571

ROGERS, Mr. J. E. Thorold, *Southwark*

Civil Service Examinations, 1421

Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl. 135

ROSEBERY, Earl of

Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement, 1059

Parliament—House of Lords—Efficiency of the House, Motion for a Select Committee, 937, 943, 961, 967, 972

Secretary for Scotland, Comm. cl. 1, 1336, 1337; cl. 5, Amendt. 1339, 1342, 1344, 1347; Schedule, 1370; Report, 1649

ROSSE, Earl of

Railways (Ireland)—Parsonstown and Portumna Railway, 1780

Roumania—Disabilities of Jews

Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *June 23, 1088*

ROUND, Mr. J., *Essex, E.*

Police, 2R. 1727

Royal Courts of Justice Bill

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)

c. Committee—R.P. *June 23, 1187* [Bill 139]

Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Sudeley*)

- l. Read 2* *June 16* (No. 114)
Committee*; Report *June 17*
Read 3* *June 19*
c. Read 1* (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) *July 1* [Bill 267]

RUSSELL, Mr. C., Dundalk

High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings),
2R. 1845

RUSSELL, Mr. G. W. E. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board), Aylesbury

India—Public Health—Sanitary Precautions,
1415, 1416
Poor Law (England and Wales)—Pauper
Training Ship "Exmouth," 242
Public Health (Cholera), 1684, 1685
Metropolis—Small-Pox, 1674

RUSTON, Mr. J., Lincoln City

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. 1467

RYLANDS, Mr. P., Burnley

Church Patronage, 2R. 735
Parliament—Business of the House, 247, 1797

ST. AUBYN, Sir J., Cornwall, W.

Smith's Trust Estate, 3R. 1227

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) Bill [H.L.]

(*The Earl of Mount Edgumbe*)

- l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2*" *June 17, 567*
Amendt. to leave out ("now,") add ("this day six months") (*Lord Bramwell*); after debate, on Question, That ("now") &c.?
Cont. 39, Not-Cont. 57; M. 18
Div. List, Cont. and Not-Cont. 579
Resolved in the negative; Bill to be read 2* this day six months (No. 102)

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill [Bill 109]

- (*Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*;
c. 2R. deferred, after short debate *June 19, 932*
2R. *June 20, 999*; after long debate, Debate adjourned
Adjourned Debate resumed *June 26, 1513*; after short debate, Debate further adjourned
Debate resumed *June 27, 1583*; after debate, Debate further adjourned

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Yorkshire) Bill (*Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Barran, Mr. Caine, Mr. Isaac Wilson, Sir Matthew Wilson, Mr. Pease*)

2R. *June 18, 769*; Debate adjourned [Bill 79]

SALISBURY, Marquess of

Education Department—Over-Pressure in
Board Schools, 1533, 1536, 1537, 1538

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Egypt—Conference, Ministerial Statement,
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—Vote of Censure, 1776; Explanation,
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cl. 5, 1342, 1348; Report, 1651; Notice to
amend Amendment, 1857

SALT, Mr. T., Stafford

Supply—Public Education in England and
Wales, &c. 489

SAMUELSON, Mr. B., Banbury

Protection of Industrial Property—The Inter-
national Patent Convention, 1089
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SAMUELSON, Mr. H. B., Frome

Elections (Hours of Poll), Comm. cl. 1, 1478,
1479, 1484; Consid. cl. 1, Amendt. 1987,
1996

School, &c. Buildings (Ireland) Bill

(*Colonel Colthurst, Mr. William Shaw, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Blennerhassett, Mr. Patrick Martin*)

- c. Committee (on *re-comm.*); Report; Consi-
dered; read 3* *June 16* [Bill 244]
l. Read 1* (*Lord FitzGerald*) *June 17* (No. 129)
Read 2* *June 24*
Committee*; Report *June 26*
Read 3* *June 27*
Royal Assent *July 3* [47 & 48 Vict. c. 22]

SCLATER-BOOOTH, Right Hon. G., Hants, N.

Egypt—Conference, The, 1246, 1423
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Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Prac-
tices), Consid. 1704
National Debt (Conversion of Stock), Comm.
214
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Representation of the People, Comm. add. cl.
837; Consid. add. cl. 1157, 1161

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Artizans' Dwellings Act—Town Council of
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missioners, Question, Mr. Dick-Peddie; An-
swer, Mr. Mundella *June 16, 425*
General Register of Sasines, Edinburgh—The
Engrossing Clerks, Question, Mr. J. A.
Campbell; Answer, Mr. Courtney *June 30,*
1679

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Licensing Acts—Illegal Action of the Dumfries Licensing Court—The "Ship" Inn, Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, Mr. Courtney, The Lord Advocate June 16, 397; Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate June 26, 1419

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The Chapel Royal—Warrant of 9th February, 1873, Questions, Mr. Webster, Mr. Dick-Peddie; Answers, Mr. Courtney June 30, 1666

The Civil List—Revenues of the Episcopal Sees of Scotland, Question, Mr. Webster; Answer, Mr. Courtney June 30, 1665

The Queen's Park, Edinburgh—Permission to play Football during the Autumn and Winter Months, Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre June 26, 1409

Scotland—Crofters and Cottars (Highlands and Islands)—Report of the Royal Commission

Amendt. on Committee of Supply June 27, To leave out from "That," add "the Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners upon the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland demands the immediate attention of the Government, with the view to giving legislative and administrative effect to its recommendations" (Mr. Macfarlane) v., 1604; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, [House counted out]

Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, Mr. Courtney July 3, 1887

SCOTT, Mr. M. D., *Sussex, E.*

Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), Consid. 1705, 1706

Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1579

Sea Fisheries Act (1868) Amendment Bill [H.L.] (The Earl of Ravensworth)

l. Presented; read 1st June 13 (No. 125)

Read 2nd June 17

Committee; Report June 19

Read 3rd June 20

c. Read 1st (Sir H. Vivian) June 27 [Bill 265]

Secretary for Scotland Bill [H.L.]

(The Earl of Dalhousie)

l. Committee, after debate June 26, 1884 (No. 79) Report June 30, 1640 (No. 157)

Notice to amend Amendment, The Duke of Argyll; Question, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answer, Earl Granville July 3, 1857

SELBORNE, Earl of (see CHANCELLOR, The LORD)

SELLAR, Mr. A. C., *Haddington, &c.*

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SELWIN-IBBETSON, Sir H. J., *Essex, W.*

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Settled Land Bill [H.L.]

(Sir R. Assheton Cross)

*c. Read 2^o * June 12 [Bill 247]*

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l. Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 18]

SEXTON, Mr. T., *Sligo*

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Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland)

*c. Read 2^o * June 16 [Bill 245]*

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SMALL, Mr. J. F., Wexford Bo.

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Ireland—Magistracy—Religious Beliefs, 1406

Rev. John Brien Frith, Enniskillen, 1551

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SMITH, Mr. S., Liverpool

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c. Read 3^d, after short debate June 24, 1224

SOLICITOR GENERAL, The (Sir FARRER HERSHELL), Durham

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Question, Mr. Jones-Parry; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice July 3, 1862

Southern Pacific, The—The Torres and Louisiade Groups—Kidnapping of Natives—The Labour Schooners "Jessie Kelly" and "Eileen"

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Representation of the People Bill, Third Reading (Entry in the Votes), 1561, 1562, 1566, 1570, 1571, 1572, 1573, 1576, 1581, 1583

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STANLEY, Hon. E. L., *Oldham*
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Prisons (England and Wales)—Taunton Gaol, 1405

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STEVENSON, Mr. J. C., *South Shields*
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STEWART, Mr. J., *Greenock*
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STOREY, Mr. S., *Sunderland*
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Questions, Mr. Storey, Mr. Brogden; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 19, 815; Questions, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Storey; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 27, 1547; Questions, Mr. Storey; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 30, 1688; Questions, Mr. Storey, Mr. Brogden, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice July 3, 1873; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (Mr. Storey), 1891; after debate, Motion withdrawn

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c. Report of Select Comm.* June 27 [No. 245]

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Ireland—Education Department—Party Emblems at Armagh—Catholic Emblems, 1877
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Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) Bill
(*The Earl of Milltown*)

l. Read 2nd* June 17 (No. 104)
Committee*; Report June 19
Read 3rd* June 24
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. 19]

Summary Jurisdiction (Repeal, &c.) Bill
(Mr. Hibbert, *Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)

c. Select Committee nominated June 11; List of the Committee, 69
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Committee (*on re-comm.*); Report, after short debate June 23, 1198 [Bill 55]
Considered*; read 3rd June 24
l. Read 1st* (Lord Chancellor) June 26 (No. 155)
Read 2nd* July 3

Superannuation Act—Clerks in the Admiralty and War Office
Question, Sir Thomas Chambers; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer June 19, 819

Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment Bill [H.L.]

(The Lord Chancellor)

- l. Presented; read 1st * June 24 (No. 152)
Read 2^a, after short debate July 3, 1857

SUPPLY

Civil Service Estimates—Non-Effective and Charitable Services—Mr. Corry Connellan's Pension, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Courtney July 1, 1784; Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Gladstone July 3, 1881

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Railways (Ireland) — Parsonstown and Portumna Railway, 1780

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., Preston

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TORRENS, Mr. W. T. M'C., Finsbury

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Commercial Negotiations with Spain, Question, Mr. J. Stewart; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 30, 1681
The Commercial Treaty, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice June 23, 1091
The Paper Manufactures—Post Cards, Question, Mr. H. S. Northcote; Answer, Mr. Fawcett July 3, 1862

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill

(Colonel Colthurst, Mr. Findlater, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Shaw)

- o. 2R., Debate adjourned June 17, 657 [Bill 231]
Read 2^o * June 23
Committee *—R.F. June 27
Committee; Report June 30, 1767
Considered July 3, 1997; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (Mr. Healy); Question put; A. 9, N. 37; M. 28 (D. L. 152) [House counted out]

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 25 [Bill 233]
Read 3^o * June 26
l. Read 1^a * (Lord Carrington) June 27 (No. 168)

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill

(Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Trevelyan)

- c. Report * June 18 [Bill 234]
Read 3^o * June 19
l. Read 1^a * (Lord Carrington) June 20 (No. 144)
Read 2^a * June 27

Tramways Provisional Orders Bill

(Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms)

- c. Report * June 17 [Bill 180]
Considered * June 20
Read 3^o * June 23
l. Read 1^a * (Lord Sudeley) June 24 (No. 150)
Read 2^a * June 27

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill

(Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms)

- o. Report * June 11 [Bill 193]
Considered * June 12
Read 3^o * June 13
l. Read 1^a * (Lord Sudeley) June 16 (No. 126)
Read 2^a * June 24
Committee *; Report June 26
Read 3^a * June 27
Royal Assent July 3 [47 & 48 Vict. c. lxxx]

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3)

Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)

- c. Report * June 17 [Bill 194]
- Considered * June 20
- Read 3^o * June 23
- l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Sudeley*) June 24 (No. 151)
- Read 2^a * June 27
- Committee *; Report July 3

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 4)

Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)

- c. Report * June 11 [Bill 196]
- Considered * June 12
- Read 3^o * June 13
- l. Read 1^a * (*Lord Sudeley*) June 16 (No. 127)
- Read 2^a * June 24
- Committee * June 26
- Report * June 27
- Read 3^a * June 30

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Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County), Comm. cl. 2; 1500, 1503, 1505, 1507, 1508, 1509; *add. cl. ib.* 1510, 1511

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(Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Henry Allen, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Ince, Mr. Elton)

c. Ordered; read 1^o June 19 [Bill 255]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^o" June 23, 1203; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (Mr. Courtney); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Debate further adjourned, after short debate June 30, 1769

Trust Investments—Colonial Government Stocks

Question, Sir William M'Arthur; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer July 3, 1864

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Union Officers' Superannuation (Ireland)

Bill [H.L.] (The Lord President)

l. Presented; read 1^o June 23 (No. 146)

Bill withdrawn * June 26

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Representation of the People, Consid. *add. cl.* 1168

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Wales (New South) — The "Foreign Senate"

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WALKER, Mr. S. (Solicitor General for Ireland), *Londonderry Co.*

Ireland—Municipal and Governing Bodies—Public and Private Acts, 1862

Tramways and Public Companies Act, 1883—Granard Junction Tramway Company, 1788

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WARTON, Mr. C. N.—*cont.*

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Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Comm. 1742, 1746

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Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Holms*)

c. Report * June 11 [Bill 182]

Considered * June 12

Read 3^o * June 13

1. Read 1^a * (*Lord Sudeley*) June 16 (No. 128)

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